

October 30, 2017

17-26 Wksp.

A Public Forum Workshop meeting of the Caribou City Council was held 6:00 p.m. on Monday, October 30, 2017 in Council Chambers with the following members present: Mayor Gary Aiken, Philip McDonough II, Nicole Cote, Timothy Guerrette, and Jody R. Smith. Deputy Mayor David Martin and Joan L. Theriault were absent and excused.

Dennis L. Marker City Manager.

Department Managers: Gary Marquis, Supt. of Parks & Recreation; Michael Gahagan, Police Chief; Penny Thompson, Tax Assessor; Scott Susi, Fire Chief; David Ouellette, Public Works Director; Lisa Plourde, Housing Director; Anastasia S. Weigle, Library Director; and Wanda Raymond, Finance Director.

Spectrum covered the meeting.

Members of the Public attending: Nelson Ketch, Jan Murchison, Gail Hagelstein, Deborah Nichols, and Pat Mahoney.

PUBLIC FORUM WORKSHOP

The Public Forum Workshops are a requirement of the 2012 City Charter. This change is to allow a better understanding of the budgets and to allow discussion between the Council, Department Managers, and the Public.

From the adopted City Charter:

Expense Budget. 5.06 [a](3)(ii) On or before November 1st: The City Manager will have each City Department Head present a written detailed Expense Budget Report to both the City Council and the City's citizens in a public forum where both the City Council and Caribou's citizens can ask questions and provide input to the City Manager and each Department Head.

Capital Expense Budget. 5.06[b](3)(ii) On or before November 1st: The City Manager will have each City Department Head present their written detailed Capital Expense Budget Report to both the City Council and Caribou's citizens in a public forum where both the City Council and Caribou's citizens can ask questions and provide input to the City Manager and each Department Head.

Mayor Aiken opened the Public Forum Workshop.

City Manager Marker offered insight into the City's budget process:

- Administration and Staff started the process back in September, by gathering together anticipated expense and capital expenses
- The Manager has met with the Department Managers and gone over their budgets
- The Historical data was assembled
- A Council Retreat was held with the Council and Department Managers to review the issues facing their Department in 2018
- This evening, Administration and Staff will present the 2018 Draft Budget in order to answer questions and obtain feedback from Council and citizens
- Manager Marker anticipates that additional work sessions will be held to refine the Budget
- A formal Public Hearing on Budget has been scheduled for November 13th. This is a required by the Charter

- The 2018 Expense and Capital Budgets needs to be adopted in December
- The 2018 Revenue Budget doesn't get finalized until April 2018

City Manager Marker offered insight into the draft 2018 Budget:

- The draft 2018 Budget has about a 6% increase over 2017 Budget
- The Manager and Department Managers recognize that there may be the need to pare down the Budget and that is the prerogative of the City Council
- Out of the 19 operational funds, there are five that are projected to come in less than 2017. They include: Nylander Museum, General Assistance, Fire & Ambulance, Emergency Management, and Caribou Trailer Park
- Increases are projected in General Government, Tax Assessing, Airport, Insurance & Retirement, and Unclassified
- Enterprise Funds are Economic Development, Housing & Section 8, and Snow Trail Maintenance
- Capital Improvements Budget includes a 22% increase

City Manager Marker highlighted the major differences between the current 2017 Budget and the draft 2018 Budget:

- An expense increase of \$727,724, with wages being 40% of the increase
- Anticipated 2018 cost for health insurance is approximately \$80,000 lower than 2017 even though health insurance plan costs have risen. The reduction is due to the types of plan selected by the employees.
- Worker Compensation cost is increasing by \$76,535
- Draft budget includes the cost for paving additional .5 mile of road
- Increases to building maintenance, economic development, Birdseye property cleanup, and Public Works Capital Equipment

10 General Government:

- Wages/salaries for ambulance billing is moving from Fire/Ambulance to General Government
- The reason for the increase in the office supplies line is the move of ambulance billing to General Government
- Anticipated mass mailings is the cause of the increase in postage line
- Budgeted \$30,000 for a consultant to come in and look at the City's fee structure, plus the City's revenues and trends
- There are software increases
- Professional dues increasing
- Don't expect anyone to attend any national conferences
- Election cost increasing
- Health insurance costs increasing with the rolling of ambulance billing personnel into General Government
- Bad Debt Allowance would be a new General Government line item

Councilor Theriault asked why ambulance billing was moving into General Government. Manager Marker stated that it is "financial arm of the City and he wants to make sure that it is under the Finance

Director". Finance Director Raymond explained why there is a difference this year with social security and retirement. The Mayor questioned whether this is the best way to handle Bad Debt Allowance or whether it should be a minus in the Revenue Budget.

11 Economic Development - Enterprise Fund (TIF):

- 50% of City Manager's wages
- 100% of Christina Kane-Gibson's wages
- Central Aroostook Chamber is requesting \$11,000 but would consider "in-kind" assistance towards that amount – local businesses have expressed concerns that the City isn't being supportive of local businesses by not financially supporting the Chamber – the draft Budget includes \$5,000 for the Chamber
- GIS licensing and maintenance
- Increase in mileage reimbursement
- For the past three or four years \$50,000 has been budgeted for the Revolving Loan Fund and currently there is approximately \$200,000 in that account. For 2018, the City Manager recommends not budgeting an additional \$50,000.

The Mayor questions whether the City has an agreement to provide CEGC \$50,000. Councilor McDonough asked the City Manager to see if there is any documentation regarding this.

- Monies for NMDC
- \$10,000 for the Franchise Study

The Mayor wants to have another meeting with the person conducting the Franchise Study.

- \$10,000 for a new rental assistance program
- Continuing with TOS, Winter Carnival, Caribou Days, possible new event – Wine & Dine
- Slum & Blight – increased to \$105,000
- New Fire Station – site design costs - \$40,000
- Brownfield Grant application is being prepared

Councilor Theriault wonders how many City businesses are Chamber members and how much they pay in dues.

12 Chamber/Nylander Museum

- Proposed change for 2018 – rather than using a janitorial service it is proposed to pay four hours a week for a custodian
- Public Works Department has been working on a ramp – P.W. Director Ouellette stated that the ramp doesn't need a handrail – Council discussion about whether a handrail is ADA required
- Building maintenance has been reduced to \$3,000
- Nylander Board Members: Gail Hagelstein, Deborah Nichols, and Nelson Ketch attended the meeting and answered Councilor questions
 - So far attendance is about 600 and expect the number to be 700 before the end of the year, which would be double the 2016 attendance.

- Open Summer – Saturday and Sunday, through the Winter will be open only one day a week
- Deborah Nichols is starting a program called “Explore your own Backyard”.
- 5.01c Friends of the Nylander donations – approximately \$1,500 for display cases
- Approximately \$300 has been given to the museum and that will be used for program needs and equipment
- The museum needs new windows and lighting
- Applying for grants
- Two Nylander/Ketch Family Reunions have been held at the museum
- Councilor Theriault questioned the expense for internet and landline phone. Gail stressed the need to have a landline phone in the museum and called it a “safety issue”.
- 1,400 hours of volunteer time a year

17 Health & Sanitation

- Slight increase in the Tri-Community expense
- Health Officer is paid out of this account

18 Municipal Buildings

- Lion’s Building - Increased by \$500 for general maintenance
- Replace lights on the front of the Municipal Building
- The City Manager plans to replace the backup power for the Municipal Building
- Not sure if one of the boilers for the Municipal Building will last the winter. Currently the building has two oil-fired boilers plus a pellet boiler. The pellet boiler hasn’t worked for the past two years. The Recreation Department wants to take the pellets out of the hoppers at other municipal building sites and use them at the Wellness Center. Discussion centered on whether a generic motherboard would work so the pellet boilers could be used.

18 General Assistance

- General Assistance Administrator noted that there are very few changes
- The monthly maintenance fee for the GA Tracker program has increased from \$75 to \$80 a month
- Continuing to request non-reimbursement GA monies
- Reducing State GA from \$1000 to \$500

22 Tax Assessing

- Tax Assessor Thompson asked if there were any questions
- One of the reasons for the increase is the new Zoning Administrator position. This position will take on Planning Board, zoning issues, site plan review for new commercial development and multi-family development, someone to be a back-up for the building department, help with economic development and to be the face for the public for that, and to handle all those things that aren’t being done now.
- Zoning Administrator position adds \$80,000 to \$100,000 to the budget

24 Housing - Enterprise Fund:

- Housing Director Plourde stated that most lines went down except for postage, professional dues, and advertising.
- Ms. Plourde estimates that the funding will be the same as this year, which was \$104,000.

24 Library

- Library Director Weigle noted that there are few changes between 2017 Budget and the draft 2018 Budget. The reduction in health insurance costs is a big change as it had been budgeted for family and single coverage is all that is needed.
- The Library is moving to change its hours on Thursday and Friday and open later. Ms. Weigle would prefer to remain open, but it is a staffing issue.
- Ms. Weigle noted that she was brought in to “build up” the Library, but as the Library becomes busier she will need more staff.
- The users of the Library are more than children. Users include people seeking employment and college students.
- New Library computers have been purchased out of a trust account.
- The Library does have a monthly contact with Oak Leaf Systems for computer maintenance.

31 Fire and Ambulance

- Fire Chief Susi stated other than the personnel change with ambulance billing, the budget has stayed pretty stagnant.
- The expenses are in the CIP Budget with \$94,000 for turnout gear and putting money away for the next remount.
- The Fire Station is now heated with propane

Mayor Aiken requested, if this hasn't already been done, that all projected cost numbers for diesel, gas, and heating oil be the same throughout the Budget.

- Paid Call Volunteers are paid in November
- The City is still waiting for unemployment compensation dollar amounts
- Workers compensation for Fire and Ambulance is \$77,840
- Fire's turnout gear is 15-years old
- For 2018, the cost of having the ladder truck certificated is budgeted to be paid out of one line item rather than spread over two or more lines

Mayor Aiken questioned the amount budgeted in vehicle repair line. He suggested that the amount could be lower because the department has had several new vehicles. The Mayor commented on the tire and batteries lines.

35 Police

- Chief Gahagan stated that there are only minor increases in salaries and benefits.
- The Chief is recommending a \$20,000 decrease in the Overtime line as the 12 shifts are working well as long as he has a full force.

Mayor Aiken stated that he had a question about Equipment Reserve. The Chief commented that the number there was an error and that it will be corrected.

39 Emergency Management

- The elimination of \$6,250 from Line 108 CEM Rent is the biggest change.
- It was noted that within Councilor's budget printout that a couple of numbers had been transposed and they have now been corrected.

38 Protection

- Streetlights and hydrant rental fees are paid out of this account

40 Public Works

- Public Works Director Ouellette noted that the biggest changes were in wages, health insurance and Worker Compensation.
- Asking for additional \$50,000 for paving the gateway roads into Caribou
- Percentage of good road scores PCI are starting to come up
- Director Ouellette used \$2.25 for diesel price in the draft Budget

50 Recreation

- Supt. Marquis has had to adjust a few of the lines within the Budget, including the electric line that was keyed in wrong for the 2017 Budget. This error wasn't caught until the Council had approved the 2017 Budget.
- Marquis requested approval from Council to remove the pellets from other buildings' hoppers and move them to the hopper at the Wellness Center.
- Starting 2018, Paul Soucie Sports Complex will see more use during the time that the new park and school are being built.
- Most lines are remaining the same

51 Parks

- Supt. Marquis stated that they need some new tools.
- Largest increase is the Civic Beautification line. During 2017, a few areas in Caribou didn't receive the attention that they should have.
- The minimum wage goes from \$9 to \$10 in January.
- The City has 12 parks. The Flora-Dale Park is probably the City's least used park. There is an old fishway that goes through the park.

52 Snow Trail Maintenance

- The City upfront the costs and the State pays us back through a grant.
- The groomers fill up at Public Works Department

60 Airport

- Increases for the building maintenance and property insurance lines

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- Both the air consultant and fixed-base operator (FBO) contracts are up for renewal.
- With T-Hangar project, it has been determined that the design of the building was flawed. The Manager has a meeting on the November 1st concerning this.

Councilor McDonough mentioned that the City will have to determine rental fees for the hangar project once it is completed.

61 Trailer Park

- Water costs have been reduced and the sewer fee is budgeted the same
- Insurance on the property has gone up a little
- Streetlight line needs to be adjusted downward

65 Cemeteries

- Draft 2018 Budget amount is the same as the 2017 Budget

70 Insurance and Retirements

- Currently there is a placeholder of \$30,000 for Workers Compensation until the end of the year.
- There is another placeholder for Unemployment Compensation until the actual number comes in at the end of the year.

The Mayor questions about Workers Compensation, Unemployment Compensation, and General Liability line. Finance Director Raymond stated that she doesn't believe we will need the \$30,000 that is in Workers Compensation line.

80 Unclassified

- Includes tax lien and abatements costs
- The special assessment on the Birdseye site could be abated over multiple years.

96 Section 8 FSS

- This is a grant position and the City has had the grant for the last 30 years
- The current year's grant was for approximately \$48,000 and for next year they are requesting \$65,000. They won't know if the grant is approved and the dollar amount until 2018.
- Housing pays rent for the two offices used by Housing Director and the FSS Coordinator.

Capital Improvements Budget

- \$100,000 for the Birdseye site clean up
- \$2,500 for Vital Record Restoration – in future years 2019 and 2020, the budget includes monies to have the Code Book placed online and maintained by a third party.
- Fleet vehicles – anticipating that one of the current vehicles will have to be replaced in 2020 or 2021. Discussion.
- Municipal Buildings – Parking Lot Reserves – Once the High Street Project is complete, Director Ouellette wants to use some of the \$94,000 in the reserve to pave the Police and Municipal Building parking lots.
- Municipal Buildings – there is a place holder there for the boiler for City Office.

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- Tax Assessing – setting monies aside for a future revaluation plus a computer for the Zoning Administrator that can handle the GIS and maybe CAD software – Discussion as to the need for CAD software
- Library – discussion about starting a program to replace the exterior of the Children’s Wing..
- Fire and Ambulance – 44 sets of turnout gear for \$94,000 – monies for the new ambulance that has already been approved by Council – it is anticipated that there will be the need for remounts in 2020 and 2022 so recommending that \$50,000 is put into the reserve for the next several years. The \$117,000 expense for the new fire truck has been moved down into the debt reserve. The last payment for the new truck is 2021. Then the City will need to start saving for a replacement ladder truck.

Councilor McDonough requested that the CIP to be broken into sub-categories so the Council will know exactly what is being paid for.

- Police Department – replace Chief, dispatcher, and vehicle computers – there is money for body cameras, vests, and future Taser and gun replacements. Annual replacement of a police cruiser. Looking in 2021 to replace radio and dispatch systems with each of them being a \$100,000 expense.
- Protection – LED Streetlights – City is looking to replace lights with LED. In the CIP, the Manager has the City replacing the current streetlights with LEDs in 2019.
- Public Works – Looking to acquire a trackless sidewalk machine and a new pickup.
- Street Reconstruction – money for major projects; such as, High Street.
- Grimes Mill Road – deficit in the account and it needs to be cleaned up plus the City should be putting additional monies away for any extra work that Grimes Mill Road needs done
- Roof repairs needed at Public Works – the roof is 29 years old
- Recreation – replacement of the recreation van
- The \$75,839.68 for the Splash Park is in the Foundation Account – expect that to be done in 2019
- Most of the work on the New Teague Park is be done in 2019
- Looking to build a Disc Golf Facility in North Caribou and putting money away for the Collins Pond dam project.
- Will not have use of the ski trails at the Country Club this winter because of the ongoing logging operation.
- Shows a negative in the Airport account as the City has to expend the money and wait for reimbursement.
- Debt reduction for the pellet boilers
- Nylander Reserve

2018 Budget Hearing is scheduled for November 13th.

Another Workshop was scheduled for November 8th at 6:00 p.m. Council comments and suggestions are due by November 3rd.

Workshop adjourned at 8:33 p.m.

Jayne R. Farrin, Secretary