

October 29, 2018

18-20 Wksp.

A Public Forum Workshop meeting of the Caribou City Council was held 5:00 p.m. on Monday, October 29, 2018 in Council Chambers with the following members present: Mayor David Martin, Deputy Mayor Nicole Cote, Philip McDonough II, Joan L. Theriault, Timothy Guerrette, and Hugh Kirkpatrick.

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; Hope Rumpca, Library Director; Carl Grant, Finance Director; and Kenneth G. Murchison, Zoning Administrator.

Christopher Bouchard of the Aroostook Republican covered the meeting.

Council Candidates: Christine Lister and Christopher Lydon.

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 Martin opened Public Forum Workshop by leading everyone in saying the Pledge of Allegiance.

City Manager Marker noted that the 2019 Budget as presented this evening shows an increase of 5.7% over the adopted 2018 Budget.

- In 2018, Ambulance billing was moved to General Government and for 2019 the Manager is recommending that billing returns to Fire and Ambulance.
- Historically the annual CIP funding has been approximately \$700,000. The 2019 CIP appropriation is \$1,200,000.
- The CIP plan for 2020 includes \$50,000 for a CUD consolidation study. The City's Comprehensive Plan has a goal of looking at consolidating the CUD into the City. This could allow the cost of hydrant rentals to be paid by the users rather through the taxpayers.
- Ambulance calls – discussion centered non-member town calls and mutual aid towns. Chief Susi commented that the ambulance department is staffed for Caribou. On call costs were discussed. All revenues go to the General Fund.

- Councilor Goughan asked Chief Susi if he had any concerns about “Mission Creep”. He provided his definition of this to which the Chief responded that he isn’t concerned with “Mission Creep.
- The Clerk noted that the \$7,000 in the budget for elections doesn’t include the cost of holding a Special River Road election. That an additional \$1,650 is needed above the \$7,000 if a Special election is to be held.
- Discussion about current lighting in the Wellness Center gym and that there are 15 lights that are not working. The Supt. is looking to replace the current lights with LED and is planning to work with Efficiency Maine. Councilor Goughan commented that lights are a maintenance item.
- Disc Golf – Councilor Goughan wonders if this could be provided by the private sector rather than the Rec Department. Discussion about marketing the Rec Department so that it would encourage people to move here. The Rec Department does collect a good amount of revenue through non-resident fees.
- Ice rink discussion
- Flora-Dale Park – the City hasn’t yet declared the park surplus property.
- Police Chief explained the meaning of ALICE – Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, and Evacuate. There are elders in Caribou that do suffer from elder abuse.
- DMRO Program has helped reduce the Public Works’ need for CIP funding. What the Director is requesting are items that they haven’t been able to obtain through DMRO.
- Councilor Goughan asked for more communication between Council and Department Heads about CIP purchases or whether Management decides not to purchase an item that is on the CIP schedule.
- The monies to pay the City’s share of High Street project hasn’t segregated into a separate High Street account, but rather were in the Road Reconstruction Fund. The City has been using monies from the Road Reconstruction Fund to pay for River Road expenses. The 2019 CIP includes \$275,000 for High Street project. Additionally the City is looking to do something to North Main Street in the near future.
- The CIP Budget includes financing the River Road repair project at \$145,000 for the 10 years.
- Library Director Rumpca stated that the Library averages 31 new patrons per month since January. Councilor Goughan asked the Director about her marketing of the Library. Councilor McDonough stated that there has been a marked improvements to the overall operating of the library and its exposure.
- Tax Assessor Thompson would rather do valuation adjustments in-house rather than bringing in an outside company to do a complete revaluation. She feels that the process and valuation changes would be more accepting to the taxpayers to have local people do the work rather than bringing in an outside company. Council discussion about using outside company versus doing it in-house.
- Zoning Administrator Ken Murchison oversees Caribou Housing. He explained the proposed 2019 Budget. Lisa Plourde does inspections for Caribou Housing. Steve Wentworth does construction inspections. The Mayor stated that it is redundant for the City to be doing inspections at the new school being built.
- Discussion about the Biomass Boilers. The Mayor suggested scrapping boilers.
- The Clerk noted that monies for Vital Records Restoration weren’t in the proposed CIP.

- Council consensus: No more than 3% increase over the 2018 adopted budget.
- It was noted by Councilor Goughan, that the City ended 2017 with a surplus of \$450,000, the City received a one-time gift from Tri-Community Landfill of \$270,000, and the City received a reduction from the RSU that has since gone up. In total the City received about \$700,000 in one-time money for 2018. The City will be receiving about \$600,000 from Aroostook Waste Solutions (Tri-Community Landfill) and Councilor Goughan wants the Council to have a discussion regarding the use of these funds. Councilor Goughan praised how the landfill is operated.
- Discussion about a temporary fix for the River Road. Councilor Goughan wants to see something done to get the road opened. He wants it filled in with material and pack it in, use jersey barriers, and open as soon as possible.
Director Ouellette's recommendation is to wait, he would feel much more comfortable to get the project ready and when the road is froze to open it to traffic.
Discussion about liability and signage.
Council consensus: To get the River Road open as soon as possible.

Motion made by T. Guerrette, seconded by J. Theriault, to adjourned the Public Forum Workshop. (7 yes) So voted.

Jayne R. Farrin, Secretary