

Council Agenda Item #1: Roll Call

The Caribou City Council held a regular meeting Monday, March 23, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers with the following members present: Mayor R. Mark Goughan, Deputy Mayor Thomas Ayer, Joan L. Theriault, Nicole L. Cote, Hugh A. Kirkpatrick, and Douglas C. Morrell. Jody R. Smith was absent and excused.

Dennis L. Marker, City Manager was present.

Department Managers and Staff: None.

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, this meeting was closed to the public and was broadcasted via Spectrum and Caribou's YouTube Channel.

Council Agenda Item #2: Invocation / Inspirational Thought

Mayor Goughan read an invocation.

Council Agenda Item #3: Pledge of Allegiance

The Mayor led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Council Agenda Item #4: Public Forum

The Mayor commented that the Council considered not have the meeting but decided to go forward with the public as long as sound and video was working.

- Darren Woods, Director of the Aroostook County Emergency Management – Councilor Kirkpatrick read an excerpt of an email from Director Woods. He wants to bring to the attention of the Council the seriousness of the current situation with COVID-19. He noted that Chief Gahagan is the local EMA Director.
- Jayne R. Farrin, City Clerk – Encouraged tax club participates to put their monthly payments in the mail rather than dropping them off at City Office. There is a June 9th Primary Election and that it isn't too early to request an absentee ballot.

Clerk Farrin commented on the proposed Pandemic Leave Policy – “Traveling for a family emergency should not be considered as traveling voluntarily.”

- On-line commenter – noted that City Offices is open, but the Council meeting is closed.

Councilor Theriault noted the requirement of no more than 10 individuals being together at one time and that is why the meeting is closed to the public.

Council Agenda Item #5: Financial Report for February 2020

Motion made by H. Kirkpatrick, seconded by N. Cote, to accept the Financial Report for February 2020 as presented. (6 yes) So voted.

Council Agenda Item #6: New Business & Adoption of Ordinances and Resolutions

- a. Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Seasonal Weight Limits on Roads

Motion made by T. Ayer, seconded by D. Morrell, to approve seasonal road weight limits of 34,000 pounds for the following road: Albair Road, Sawyer Road, Thompson Road,

West Gate Road, Maysville Siding Road, Plante Road, Railroad Street, and Dow Siding Road. (6 yes) So voted.

b. Discussion Regarding Business Assistance Programs due to COVID-9

Manager Marker wants local businesses to be aware of federal government programs that might be able to help through the Small Business Administration (SBA). He noted that City might be able to assist through the City's revolving loan fund program which has a balance of nearly \$800,000. The Mayor noted that it is too early with too many unknowns and directed administration to keep Council informed as to what is happening in other communities, what advice is MMA giving, and what is happening at the state and federal levels. He offered that this should be an agenda item going forward.

To help local businesses, Councilor Kirkpatrick suggested that individuals could go purchase gift certificates from area businesses. Councilor Morrell suggested that a workshop on this topic should be held by Council. The Mayor expressed his thanks to the business community.

c. Discussion Regarding City Leave Policy for Pandemic Situations

Manager Marker briefly reviewed the newly enacted Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) and a proposed Pandemic Leave policy for city staff that would remain in place until the state's emergency status is lifted. The adoption of a Pandemic Leave policy would require the Council to adopt by an ordinance..

Questions from Council included:

- How will the City recoup wages?
- What documentation will be required so everyone is treated fairly?
- Will the City will exempt health care workers?
- What is MMA's recommendation and what are other communities doing regarding FFCRA?
- What is the timeline for ordinance adoption?

Manager Marker noted that the loss to the City is the productivity of accomplishing something, but from a budgetary standpoint we've already got it in the budget. Councilor Morrell agreed the loss of productivity is a loss to the City.

Council Agenda Item #8: Old Business

a. Discussion and Possible Action Regarding 2020 Revenue Projections

The 2020 revenue projections were reviewed during the March 9, 2020 Council meeting. Since that meeting, the COVID-19 Pandemic has resulted in several federal and state edicts that greatly impact the State's economy and potential tax revenues. Because of this Manager Marker recommended reducing the state revenue sharing projection by \$100,000 to \$825,000 which would bring the 2020 estimated revenues to \$10,631,162.

Discussion points:

- Possible 2 mil increase due to RSU 39's Budget
- Extend an invitation to the Supt. of School to attend a Council meeting
- Citizens vote on the final RSU 39 Budget
- This year more of the annual property taxes could be going to the RSU 39 versus towards the City's budget

- The alignment of costs between outside communities and the City of Caribou concerning Fire & Ambulance has the City receiving an additional \$477,000 in revenue
- Members of the RSU 39 Board are elected
- The new school could be an economic development tool and draw families to the area
- According to the Charter, each year the Revenue Budget is to be adopted by March 15th

Motion made by N. Cote, seconded by J. Theriault, to adopt the proposed 2020 Revenue Projections Budget as amended (reducing state revenue sharing by \$100,000). (6 yes) So voted.

The Mayor offered that these are hard times and that maybe the Expense Budget should be looked at. Councilor Morrell agreed with the Mayor and commented that cuts might need to be done.

- b. Discussion and Possible Action Regarding City Membership in the Aroostook Area Chamber of Commerce

Motion made by H. Kirkpatrick, seconded by T. Ayer, pay \$2,500 to join the Aroostook Area Chamber of Commerce. (6 yes) So voted.

Council Agenda Item #8: Reports and Discussion by Mayor and Council Members

Deputy Mayor Ayer: Planning Board is working on Chapter 13 and it is looking like it will be done this year.

Mayor Goughan: The Mayor wants to get the Council's story out to the taxpayer. He suggested the City should send two tax bills in one envelope with one bill for the City and the other for RSU 39 and County. Mayor Goughan asked the manager to investigate available options.

Council Agenda Item #9: City Manager's Report

- Library is closed to the public while the staff continues to work
- Wellness Center is closed to the public while the staff continues to work
- Public Works isn't normally opened to the public
- Police Department lobby is still open to the public
- City Office is still open to the public
- Fire & Ambulance Department lobby is still open to the public
- Ambulance 22 has been setup as the COVID-19 response vehicle
- The community has been very supportive of Fire & Ambulance's request for PPE equipment donations.

Discussed LED conversion, River Road and Public Safety building. The City is looking to setup a business Zoom account.

Council Agenda Item #10: Reports by Staff and Appointed Officials

None.

Council Agenda Item #11: Executive Session(s) (May be called to discuss matters identified under Maine Revised Statutes, Title 1, §405.6)

a. Personnel Matters Regarding Compensation of City Employees under (6)(A)

7:43 p.m. Motion made by T. Ayer, seconded by J. Theriault, to move to executive session to discuss personnel matters regarding compensation of City Employees under MRSA Title 1, §405(6)(A). (6 yes) So voted.

8:09 p.m. Council returned from executive session.

No action was taken.

b. Economic development and Real Estate under (6)(C)

8:10 p.m. Motion made by T. Ayer, seconded by N. Cote, to move to executive session to discuss real estate matters under MRSA Title 1, §405(6)(C). (6 yes) So voted.

8:25 p.m. Council returned from executive session.

No Action was taken.

c. Discussion Regarding Collective Bargaining Contract with Police Officers under (6)(D)

Mayor Goughan asked for confirmation that there was no need to have an executive session regarding the police union contract. Manager Marker confirmed that the request was made to postpone that discussion until the next meeting. There was general discussion of the grievance process under the union contract and the Council's role in the matter. It was noted that the Council would need to act in a jury manner and determine if the Chief and Manager acted appropriately in the case. If the grieving party is not satisfied with the Council's decision then the issue could be moved to arbitration..

Council Agenda Item #12: Next Meeting(s): April 6 & 20

Council Agenda Item #13: Adjournment

Motion made by D Morrell, seconded by H. Kirkpatrick, to adjourn the meeting at 8:27 p.m. (6 yes) So voted.

Jayne R. Farrin, Secretary