

Council Agenda Item #1: Roll Call

The Caribou City Council held a City Council Budget Workshop on February 26, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers with the following members present Councilors Ayer, Boma, Morrell, Theriault, Willey and Mayor Smith. Councilor Goughan was present via Zoom.

Dennis L Marker, City Manager and Danielle Brissette, City Clerk were present.

Council has excused Councilor Boma from the March 8, 2021 meeting.

Staff members and parties with interest in agenda items connected through electronic Zoom Meeting.

The meeting was broadcasted via Spectrum, and Caribou's YouTube Channel.

Mayor Smith led the Pledge of Allegiance

Council Agenda Item #2: Review of Preliminary 2021 Budget

Councilor Goughan provided a re-cap from the Capital Budget meeting that was held on Tuesday February 23, 2021. He stated that the department heads were present and did what they are supposed to do which is advocate for their departments. Long term goal is to make the capital expenditure the same year after year rather than having the big fluctuations. He said that all in all he thought it was a good process.

Councilor Morrell stated that it was a good meeting, everyone had their opinions and shared them, and now it is time to get down to business.

Councilor Boma reaffirmed the same and had no additional comments.

Manager Marker stated that coming out of the capital meeting we looked at taking another \$10,000 from the Airport budget because in 2023 we will have a major project and the City's portion would be close to \$30,000 and that we have the next 3 years to put that aside.

He explained the process and how the current proposal was reached. Currently in the numbers we're showing from an operations standpoint we have \$222,000 less in operations this year then what was budgeted last year which is roughly \$80,000 less then what was budgeted in 2019 for operations. We recognize that last year we were significantly impacted. We anticipate that this year there will be more of the same with the pandemic. The programs that were previously offered in 2019 will not all be available due to the pandemic. An additional \$10,000 has been removed from the seasonal employee line at the rec department.

On the capital side, we had \$125,000 for major road repair fund, this has historically been built up in the events of a major road repair needing to be done or a major cooperative effort with MDOT such as High Street or North Main Street. We anticipate that next year there will be some major work that needs to be done on Bennett Drive. We believe that next year we will possibly need to find \$150,000 in that major road line to accommodate the project. There is currently \$55,000 in that fund. We have removed \$75,000 from that line that was proposed. This would anticipate that this year and next year we would put \$50,000 in that budget to cover that project. This item has had funds used to help with the River Road to cover some of the purchasing of houses, road work and engineering.

This year we are about average for snowfall but above average for temperatures. With the current temperatures not as much salt and sand has been used, this has made it possible to reduce those lines by \$11,000.

There were 2 new positions listed in the budget, one was a grant writer, this person would be focused on getting the grants through administrating the grants and also help on personnel issues as far as doing wage studies and updating personnel policies and could work in administration. This would have been a new position and we have pulled that out. Another position was looking at a Public Works employee to assist with Fleet Management to make sure we know what is in the fleet, maintaining the equipment and monitoring what is being used. This would have enabled the current public works director to be more of a city-wide facility maintenance person. He would be the one to come in to check the boilers, monitor the buildings more and have one person dedicated to that service overall. This position being cut takes roughly \$42,000 and the grant writer position was roughly \$40,000.

Right now, the current proposed budget is \$222,000 less than the 2020 budget, and less then we had in the actual expenses from 2019.

Currently we know the cost of the County has gone up 5.95%. The goal with the school district is to maintain the budget where it is at. Up to this point it had been assumed that the school would have a 2% increase which would result in a 0.5 mil increase over all with all three budgets. If the school can maintain and not increase their budget, then the full 0.5 mil would not be needed this year.

Councilor Theriault would like to increase the Nylander budget so that they can get some repairs or even have a part time employee. Their original request was \$22,400 and they are down to \$19,000.

Manager Marker stated that he met with the Nylander board and they expressed concern that a department of the City is being run by volunteers. They stated that the volunteers need training to do activities such as inventory and documenting the items in the Nylander Museum.

Councilor Morrell asked if the Nylander could be moved into a different location such as the basement of the library. Manager Marker noted that the basement of the Library houses city archives and the Aroostook Geneological Society files.

Deputy Mayor Ayer would like to know how much they received at the museum for donations and what they are used for.

Manager Marker stated that according to the City's records, they are not getting donations as a museum. No monies collected has hit our accounts. One of the concerns is that with a city provided person, they could monitor the expenses and supplies. This would make it so that board members would not need to be out buying the items or trying to coordinate these things.

Councilor Willey stated that it would be a shame to eliminate the Nylander. She has not thought about rehousing and she doesn't see where else the exhibits could be housed. As a schoolteacher she was able to use the museum to assist with lessons and that they have wonderful programs to help with education.

Councilor Theriault stated that she does not think she could support making the museum go away. She would like to try to find money to get an employee. She stated that having an employee would help to catalog items in the museum and make a description to put items on display.

Councilor Boma stated that the museum needs the space right where it is.

Deputy Mayor Ayer stated that if anything were done with the building the items should stay here and go to the Nylander family where they came from. He does not support closing the Nylander, it is an educational tool to the children in the community.

Mayor Smith stated that we should look at the building and address some of the issues that it may have. He does not support closing the Nylander.

Manager Marker explained that there was quite a bit of work done at the location last year from constructing ramps, cleaning up some bushes and adding fresh paint. He stated that the collection was turned over in the 1930's/40's and he would like to know what is currently in the building. There is currently a vista worker in the budget for \$8,000 to cover our share of the worker. The vista worker program is coordinated by Bill Flagg and a group that he is working with.

Mayor Smith asked if the Council had any further comments on the budget. None were raised.

Council set a Public hearing for Monday, March 15, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. location to be determined.

Council Agenda Item #3: Executive Session(s) (May be called to discuss matters identified under Maine Revised Statutes, Title 1, §405.6)

Council did not enter executive session.

Council Agenda Item #4: Next Meeting

March 8, 15, 22

Council Agenda Item #5: Adjournment

Motion made by Deputy Mayor Ayer, seconded by Councilor Morrell to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 p.m.

Roll Call Vote: T. Ayer - Yes, C. Boma - Yes, D. Morrell - Yes, R.M. Goughan - Yes J. Theriault - Yes, L. Willey - Yes, J. Smith - Yes (So voted)

Danielle Brissette, Secretary