

Council Agenda Item #1: Roll Call

The Caribou City Council held a City Council Meeting on Monday, August 22, 2022, in Council Chambers with the following members present: Mayor Smith, Deputy Mayor Boma, Councilors Goughan, Morrell, Morrill, and Willey. Councilor Theriault was present via Zoom.

Manager Thompson was present for the meeting.

Department Managers Carl Grant (Finance Director), and Gary Marquis (Superintendent of Parks and Recreation) were present for the meeting.

The meeting was covered by Melissa Lizotte of the Aroostook Republican and broadcasted via Spectrum and YouTube.

Council Agenda Item #2: Invocation / Inspirational Thought

Mayor Smith read an invocation

Council Agenda Item #3: Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Smith led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Council Agenda Item #4: Public Forum

Troy Haney, Caribou resident extended his gratitude to Gary and the staff of the Wellness Center for all their help with the Caribou Cares about Kids four-day event. He explained that a one-day event can be a challenge, but that they were able to complete the events seamlessly and did a terrific job.

Councilor Willey read an email from Timothy Stholberg:

“My name is Timothy Stohlberg. My wife and I reside at 234 Bailey Road. Since our relocation in 2009, we have experienced poor internet services. The consequences of this have been far-reaching. In addition to parish ministry, I do mediation for the Maine Court System. During the COVID Pandemic, mediation was largely done by ZOOM. Because of the poor internet connection at our residence, I was consistently forced to go to my office in Presque Isle to do my mediations. Additionally, when any of our children have come to visit, if they have had any work related business beyond basic emails, they are also forced to go to Presque Isle. The economic challenges facing Caribou are considerable; they will largely go unabated unless all Caribou citizens have access to reliable and business ready internet services. Like a good highway and/or rail system, a good internet infrastructure is absolutely necessary for everyone.

Thank you for considering this important matter.

Timothy P. Stohlberg”

Councilor Morrill read an email from Dave McIntyre:

“Good after noon. My name is Dave McIntyre. I am submitting this letter to the City Council for your upcoming meeting.

The Caribou Utilities District 100% "Last Mile" fiber optic network is a great option! It will provide service for ALL of my 14 properties in Caribou, both benefiting myself as a landlord as well as my tenants; and revenue for Caribou Utilities and City of Caribou. Win Win!

Sincerely, Dave McIntyre”

Mayor Smith read an email from Melissa Swanberg:

“Dear members of the Caribou City Council,

I am writing to express my support for the municipal broadband option.

As the mother of three young children, I have seen firsthand how important it is to have reliable and affordable high speed internet. The need for this service is not going away. In the last few years, my household has relied on our internet connection for remote schooling, remote work, and entertainment. When our internet connection is down, it has often meant that our daughters are unable to connect to their classrooms and that my husband, a family physician, is unable to connect to his patients.

We have lived in several other communities with more competition among internet service providers and have seen the benefits: lower prices and better service. The idea of having municipal broadband with an open access network is extremely appealing. A Harvard study showed that municipal broadband was more affordable than broadband offered by incumbent internet service providers in the vast majority of instances. The cost of municipal broadband tended to be fixed over several years, whereas other companies usually charged low “teaser” rates for the first year which rose drastically after the first 12 months.

I am much more inclined to trust that my local community has my best interests at heart than an incumbent internet service provider who is looking to maximize profits. It is time to help Caribou become a more attractive home for individuals, families, and businesses. Let’s get Caribou completely connected and let’s do it the right way. The benefits are clear and undeniable.

With all of my gratitude and respect,

Melissa Swanberg”

Council Agenda Item #5: Minutes

- a. June 13, 2022 – Regular City Council minutes
- b. June 27, 2022 – Regular City Council minutes
- c. July 25, 2022 – Regular City Council minutes
- d. August 1, 2022 – Special City Council minutes

Motion made by Councilor Morrill, seconded by Councilor Willey to move the slate and accept the minutes as presented.

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

Council Agenda Item #6: Bid Openings, Awards, and Appointments

There were no items scheduled for discussion.

Council Agenda Item #7: Public Hearings and Possible Action items

There were no items scheduled for discussion.

Council Agenda Item #8: Reports by Staff and Committees

a. 2021 Audit Report by Gisele MacDonald of Felch & Company, LLC

Gisele MacDonald of Felch & Company, LLC reviewed the city's audit report from 2021.

b. July 2022 Financials – Finance Director

Carl Grant (Finance Director reviewed the July 2021 Financial report.

Motion made by Councilor Morrill, seconded by Councilor Willey to accept the July 2021 Financial Report as presented.

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

c. Election Memo for November 2022 – City Clerk

Motion made by Councilor Morrill, seconded by Deputy Mayor Boma to set the start time as 8:00 am and to appoint Danielle Brissette as Election warden, Cherie Garman, and Kristina Drinkall as Deputy Wardens.

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

d. Manager's Report

Manager Thompson reviewed the City Manager's report dated August 22, 2022.

Council Agenda Item #9: New Business, Ordinances and Resolutions

There were no items scheduled for discussion.

Council Agenda Item #10: Old Business

a. Broadband Discussion

Tim McAfee of Pioneer Broadband came in to explain their approach of being an open access dark fiber network and that they are going to use an outside in approach, the process of designing and producing a pole licensing application for over two hundred poles and that the project would be completed in 5-6 phases.

Members of the CUD board of Trustees explained why they would like the City's support and that they would just like to get the City's embrace for the project, and that they understand the hesitation of the council. They explained that the discussion has been ongoing for over two years and that they have looked over several scenarios and that this should be looked at as Economic Development for the City.

Council had a brief discussion regarding Broadband regarding their options and feelings of what has been offered and that they will continue the discussion once they learn more regarding grant funding for the project.

Council Agenda Item #11: Reports and Discussion by Mayor and Council Members

Councilor Morrill explained that the Planning Board will be asking for Council ideas for the Comprehensive plan and explained that it is a nice working document.

Mayor Smith explained that he was able to attend the Scout Hall where they congratulated Vaughn Keaton for 60 years of service. He also stated he is receiving several comments and great reviews about the Caribou Cares about Kids events that took place. He stated that the broadband discussion has been great with lots of good input regarding the topic.

Council Agenda Item #12: Next Regular Meetings: September 13 & 26

Council Agenda Item #13: Executive Session(s) (May be called to discuss matters identified under MRSA, Title 1, §405.6.D)

a. Update on union negotiations with NEPBA Local 605

Motion made by Councilor Morrill, seconded by Councilor Willey to enter Executive Session under MRSA, Title 1, §405.6.D to discuss union negotiations with NEPBA Local 605.

Councilor Theriault did not enter executive session and was excused from the remainder of the meeting.

Roll Call Vote: C. Boma – Yes, R.M. Goughan – Yes, D. Morrell – Yes, J. Morrill – Yes, L. Willey – Yes, J. Smith – Yes. (So voted)

Council exited executive session at 8:45pm

No action taken.

Motion made by Councilor Morrill, seconded by Councilor Willey to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 pm.

Vote was unanimous.

Danielle Brissette, Secretary