

Council Agenda Item #1: Roll Call

The Caribou City Council held a City Council Meeting on Monday, September 26, 2022, in Council Chambers with the following members present: Deputy Mayor Boma, Councilors Morrell, Goughan, Theriault and Willey. Councilor Morrill was present via Zoom. Mayor Smith was absent and excused.

Manager Thompson was present for the meeting.

Department managers Carl Grant (Finance Director), Dave Ouellette (Public Works Director), Gary Marquis (Superintendent of Parks and Recreation) and Kenneth Murchison (CEO/Zoning Administrator) were present for the meeting.

Council Agenda Item #2: Invocation

Deputy Mayor Boma read an invocation.

Council Agenda Item #3: Pledge of Allegiance

Deputy Mayor Boma led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Council Agenda Item #4: Public Forum

There were no comments made by the public.

Council Agenda Item #5: Minutes

There were no minutes submitted for approval.

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

There were no items scheduled for discussion.

Council Agenda Item #7: Public Hearings

a. Public hearing for malt liquor, wine & spirit sales for Country Host Inn, Inc. DBA Caribou Inn and Convention Center at 19 Main Street

Open Public Hearing: 6:03 p.m.

Scott LaFleur, president of Country Host Inn, Inc

Mr. LaFleur stated that they were happy to have purchased Caribou Inn today. He said that in terms of operation you will not see any changes in the near future, and they look forward to making improvements in time to the location.

Closed Public Hearing: 6:04 p.m.

Motion made by Councilor Willey, seconded by Councilor Morrell to approve a new liquor license application for Country Host inn, Inc. DBA Caribou Inn and Convention Center 19 Main Street.

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

b. Public hearing for Ordinance 08 – 2022 Series “An Ordinance Amending Chapter 17 General Assistance”

Public Hearing Opened: 6:05 p.m.

There were no comments made by the public.

Closed Public Hearing: 6:06 p.m.

Motion made by Councilor Morrell, seconded by Councilor Willey to approve Ordinance No. 8, 2022 Series, Amending Chapter 17 General Assistance.

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

Council Agenda Item #8: Reports by Staff and Committees

a. August 2022 Financial Reports

Carl Grant (Finance Director) presented the August 2022 Financial Report

Motion made by Councilor Willey, seconded by Councilor Theriault to accept the August 2022 financial report as presented.

Councilor Morrell asked about accounts for Cary Medical Center.

Mr. Grant explained that they handle their own books.

Councilor Morrill asked about a rec account and where the money comes from.

Gary Marquis (Superintendent of Parks and Recreation) explained that the funds come from Youth Council, Baseball and the Wellness Account.

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

b. Tax Acquired property out for bid – 28 Goldfrank Drive

Carl Grant (Finance Director) explained that there is interest from abutting landowners for Map 31 Lot 152 also known as 28 Goldfrank Drive. He explained that the property has not been placed out to bid but did have a structure on it that has been recently torn down by Public Works. The disposal fees were \$978.52 with back CUD Cost of \$1,975.63 and back taxes of \$874.26. He suggested a minimum bid amount of \$4,400.

Motion made by Councilor Morrill, seconded by Councilor Willey to put Map 31 Lot 152, 28 Goldfrank Drive out to bid for a minimum bid amount of \$4,400.

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

c. RFP for Audit Services per City Charter section 2.09

Carl Grant (Finance Director) explained that the City has advertised and RFP for the auditing services for 2022-2024 and only received results from Felch & Company, LLC with the following amounts.

2022 - \$28,500, 2023 - \$29,300, 2024 - \$30,200.

Motion made by Councilor Morrill, seconded by Councilor Theriault to accept the proposal for 2022, 2023 and 2024 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 – Absent. (So voted)

d. NBRC grant for Snowmobile Trail Groomer Update

Gary Marquis (Superintendent of Parks & Recreation) came to provide an update regarding the MBRC Grant for the groomer. He explained that he was not successful at receiving that grant. He also explained that he has written a grant to State Capital Equipment program and has been successful with that one in the amount of \$98,000.

As of right now Mountain Grooming Equipment LLC has offered a \$100,000 trade in on the 2015 New Holland Tractor. The tractor has close to 4,400 hours on it and will climb well over 5,000 next year.

Mr. Marquis is asking the Council if they would allow him to use funds from the G1-471-00 RC2 district. He would like the balance of \$34,207 and he is also waiting to hear back from the Caribou Snowmobile Club to see if they may be able to help as well. There are currently fundraisers in place to help to purchase the groomer such as a calendar sale.

Council had a brief discussion with Mr. Marquis regarding who owns the equipment, what kind of shape it is in and roughly how long it would take.

Mr. Marquis explained that the city owns the equipment, that it is in good shape but needs a new front end. The cost to repair the current equipment would be between \$5-8,000. They can get the new equipment within roughly 3 weeks.

Motion made by Councilor Theriault, seconded by Councilor Willey to approve the money to purchase the new groomer.

Roll Call Vote: C. Boma – Yes, R.M. Goughan – Yes, D. Morrell – Yes, J. Morrill – No, J. Theriault – Yes, L. Willey – Yes, J. Smith – Absent. (So voted)

e. Violation notices and blight news from Code Enforcement

Kenneth Murchison (CEO/Zoning Administrator) explained that when notices are sent out people are given a timeline to resolve the violations. Since 2018 the Code Enforcement office has opened 370 property folders which is 3,863 files. Not all the files opened were for notice of violations, some were for Land Use requests, property information, permitting and general information.

Mr. Murchison continued to explain that in 2022 Code has executed 97 actions and 63 of them were Notice of Violations, 26 were due to unsafe structures and failing equipment.

He explained that he is still working on some properties such as West Gate Villa whose ownership has changed hands multiple times and is currently owned by someone in Miami Beach, Florida. He continued with explaining that they have demoed 3 trailers at the Caribou Trailer Park and cleaned up the property at 37 Home Farm Road then assessed the fee back for the demolition of the building.

Council had a brief discussion regarding notices, delivery and if they had any substance behind them for the property owners to need to follow up, or even consequences.

Mr. Murchison explained that there are consequences in the notices, and it can even lead to time in court and legal action.

Councilor Morrill asked if there is a group that meet and discuss different things, like how buildings can be eliminated and how to clean up the community.

Mr. Murchison explained that discussions like that take place with the City Manager, and chiefs as necessary.

Councilor Morrill encouraged the group to meet regularly to discuss the matters.

f. Manager's Report

Manager Thompson reviewed the City Manager's report dated September 26, 2022.

Councilor Morrill asked if when Kurt Magnussen comes to the Fire Station regarding the renovations if they could be made aware so they could visit with him. He also wanted to apologize in regard to the Planning Board for the comments that he had made at the last City Council meeting due to the paperwork and the application process. He said that the board had their act together and that they have been working very hard to streamline the process for new businesses to come into town.

Councilor Morrell stated that he has spoken to Mr. Magnussen and that he would let him know around October 10th of when he plans to be at the Fire Station and that he plans to have a proposal ready by the end of October.

Councilor Morrill also stated that there was a great turnout at the Comprehensive plan meeting that was held at the rec.

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

a. Set a public hearing for liquor license (new application) for Pelletier Enterprises, LLC 60 Access Hwy

Deputy Mayor Boma explained that Evergreen Lanes featuring Rendezvous Restaurant is making plans to open their new restaurant soon and the Council needs to set a date for the public hearing. She continued to explain that the Chief of Police, Fire Chief and Code Enforcement Officer have all signed off on the application with no issues noted and have recommended the application be granted to Pelletier Enterprises LLC new establishment, Evergreen Lanes featuring Rendezvous Restaurant.

Motion made by Councilor Morrell, seconded by Councilor Theriault to set a public hearing for October 11, 2022, regular City Council meeting for the initial liquor license for Pelletier Enterprises LLC new establishment "Evergreen Lanes featuring Rendezvous Restaurant at 60 Access Highway.

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

Council Agenda Item #10: Old Business

a. Further Broadband discussion

Jan Murchison, member of the CUD Board of Trustees (Caribou Utilities District) came in to explain the process and the information that has been provided to the Council.

Ms. Murchison stated that the documents being used are living documents that are updated any time new information is received. She said that the goals for the Caribou Utilities District open network business plan is to give the Caribou citizens a choice of internet service providers where the providers all have to compete on a neutral platform. This platform would also keep most of the network revenues and labor resources within local control and establish an economic development tool for Caribou.

Ms. Murchison also explained that the city has donated funds to help with the design services as well as a parcel of land on Sincock Street that is worth approximately \$179,000 to help with the broadband project. On March 31st Governor Mills also signed the charter amendment for the CUD so that they can work towards getting funding as well.

They will have several funding sources such as community stakeholders, grants, borrowing and wholesale fees. The borrowed funds will be repaid through wholesale fees. The district is working with Pioneer Broadband to provide a construction bond where both parties share the risk in the event that the project economics proved to be more challenging than the conservative approach. She stated that they are asking for encouragement and political support.

The system would be built from the outside in through several phases. Essentially the first four out of five phases would be to address the rural parts of the community where there is a higher likelihood of demand and there would be a subsequent higher take rate doing that way to reduce risk. They are hoping to be able to start phase one by next fall.

Ms. Murchison explained that the estimated cost \$1,333,900 and that they are hoping that approximately one-third of that would come from applied and awarded grants, they are estimating half may come from local grants and they anticipate having to borrow at least twenty percent at potentially 6.5% for ten years. The monthly expenses to operate would be from \$15-19,000.

She stated that the broadband project will create a level playing field across the city where all residents, businesses and agencies will have access to high-speed internet at competitive prices.

Councilor Morrill thanked Ms. Murchison for the presentation. He explained that the major grant funding avenues, being the county and state have not solidified their guidelines of how the grant funding is going to be proposed. He is suggesting that until we have a clear definition of the grant funding, we should put the discussion aside until there is clarification.

Councilor Morrell stated that he had received an email regarding grants and asked Manager Thompson about the grants.

Manager Thompson explained that the emails that were received earlier in the week were through the Maine Reconnect program which require studies before hand regarding wetlands, and animal habitats.

Councilor Morrill stated that we need to know what is true and fact before proceeding. It will make it easier to make a decision once we have the facts.

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

Councilor Willey stated that she was able to attend a meeting about daycares and that there is a daycare crisis in the area. She stated that there is a lack of childcare in the area mainly due to state regulations.

Councilor Morrell stated that he wanted it on the record that as of 9/26/2022, he has still not received the information from the hospital that he has requested.

Councilor Morrill stated that he also attended the daycare meeting and that it is a true crisis in the area.

Council Agenda Item #12: Next Regular Meeting: October 11 & 24, November 14 & 28, December 12

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: ADL-CIO (Public Works) & Teamsters (Police Sergeants)

Motion made by Councilor Willey, seconded by Councilor Theriault to enter executive session at 7:30 p.m. to discuss union negotiations under MRSA, Title 1, § 405.6.D.

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

Council exited Executive Session at 9:00 p.m.

No action taken.

Council Agenda Item #14: Adjournment

Motion made by Councilor Willey, seconded by Councilor Theriault to adjourn at 9:00 p.m.

Vote was unanimous.

Danielle Brissette, Secretary