

Council Agenda Item #1: Roll Call

The Caribou City Council held a City Council meeting, Monday, March 13, 2023, in the Council Chambers with the following members present: Mayor Smith, Deputy Mayor Boma, Councilors Bagley, Morrill, Theriault and Willey. Councilor Goughan was present via Zoom.

Manager Thompson was present for the meeting.

Department Managers Carl Grant (Finance Director) Peter Baldwin (Library Director, Scott Susi (Fire Chief), Michael Gahagan (Police Chief), Gary Marquis (Superintendent of Parks and Recreation), Kenneth Murchison (CEO/Zoning Administrator) Lisa Plourde (Housing Director), and Dave Ouellette (Public Works Director) were present at the meeting.

Melissa Lizotte of the Aroostook Republican covered the meeting, and it was broadcasted via Spectrum and YouTube.

Council Agenda Item #2: Invocation/Inspirational Thought

Reverend Ron Rosser offered an invocation.

Council Agenda Item #3: Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Smith led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Council Agenda Item #4: Public Input

There were no comments made by the public.

Council Agenda Item #5: Minutes

a. Regular City Council meeting – February 13, 2023

Motion made by Councilor Willey, seconded by Councilor Morrill to accept the minutes from the February 13, 2023 meeting as presented.

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

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

a. 2023 Brain Injury Awareness Day Proclamation

Mayor Smith read the proclamation that proclaiming March 2023 as Brain Injury Awareness Month in Caribou.

b. Certificates of Recognition for organizing the 2023 Caribou Snowbowl

Mayor Smith presented Troy Haney & Jim Gamage with certificates for organizing the Snowbowl.

Jim Gamage and Troy Haney explained that it was a fun winter activity in the City of Caribou and it brought lots of business to town. He extended his gratitude to Soderberg's Construction,

St. Peters and many others including Manager Thompson, Dave Ouellette, Gary Marquis, Chief Gahagan, and Chief Susi who helped to make the event a success.

c. Certificates of Recognition for Maine State Champion athletes

- i. MPA Girls State Wrestling – Jocelyn Parlin and Grace Jean
- ii. MPA Nordic Skiing, Individual Overall – Kayley Bell
- iii. MPA Fall 2022 E-Sports Rocket League Champions “Gilson’s Goons”
- iv. MPA Class B Boys Alpine Ski Team

Mayor Smith presented certificates to both the athletes and the coaches in recognition of their accomplishments.

Athletic Director – Evan Graves

Individual State Champion for Nordic Skiing – Kayley Bell Head

Coach – Lydia Streinz

Assistant Coach – George Ferland

Individual State Champion for Girls Wrestling – Jocelyn Parlin

Individual State Champion for Girls Wrestling – Grace Jean

Head Coach – Casey Ryan

Fall 2022 E-Sports Rocket League Champions “Gilson’s Goons”

Head Coach – Kyle Gilson

Alex Belanger, Brady Jalbert, Noah Anderson, Justin Walton, and Ben Leavitt

Class B Boys Alpine Ski Team Head Coach – Neal Sleeper

Assistant Coach – Travis Prashaw

Elliott Sleeper, Edison Sleeper, Calvin Hersey, Jaden Picard, Jude Shea, and Tait Margeson

The coaches extended their gratitude to the community and the City for the support of the athletes.

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

a. Public Hearing – Ordinance No.1, 2023 Series “An Ordinance to Adopt Chapter 22”

Mayor Smith explained that local businessman Troy Haney brought up the idea of creating a citizen committee to advance the Economic Development efforts within the City of Caribou. He explained that it is based on the same idea of the Caribou Riverfront Renaissance Committee and would be used as another tool in the Economic Development toolbox.

Open Public Hearing: 6:31 p.m.

There were no comments made by the public.

Close Public Hearing: 6:32 p.m.

Motion made by Councilor Bagley, seconded by Councilor Willey to accept Ordinance 1, 2023 Series, "An Ordinance to Adopt Chapter 22" with the amendments.

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

b. Public Hearing – 2023 Municipal Expense Budget

Open Public Hearing: 6:35 p.m.

There were no comments made by the public.

Close Public Hearing: 6:36 p.m.

Council Agenda Item #8: Reports by Staff and Committees

a. Tax Acquired Property purchase – Finance Director

Carl Grant (Finance Director) explained that he has received an offer from Tracy Babin for tax acquired property, Map 16, Lot 8, 34 Plante Road. This offer is from the previous owner, and did not make the January 31, 2023, deadline. Payment has been received. The outstanding balance on the account is \$1,360.14.

Motion made by Councilor Morrill, seconded by Mayor Smith to accept the offer Map 16 Lot 8 34 Plante Road.

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

b. Maine DOT Municipal Partnership Agreement for paving on Route 228

Dave Ouellette (Public Works Director) explained that this is for a future project repairing Route 228 and that even if the agreement is entered into you are still able to back out if needed. He explained that there is a cost share and that the public works department can use their time and work as in kind towards the share.

Motion made by Deputy Mayor Boma, seconded by Councilor Theriault to authorize City Manager Penny Thompson to execute the agreement with the Maine DOT for the calendar Year 2024 Municipal Partnership Agreement for a section of Route 228 in Caribou.

Councilor Morrill asked where the money comes from for the project, and if it would come out of the 2024 capital.

Manager Thompson answered that yes it would come from the 2024 capital budget.

Dave Ouellette explained that money is put aside yearly to help fund these projects.

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

c. City Manager’s Report

Manager Thompson reviewed the City Manager’s Report dated March 13, 2023

Councilor Morrill asked if there was money available for landbanks and if it could be accessed.

Kenneth Murchison (CEO/Zoning Administrator) explained that the state’s landbank committee is still being formed and that at this time the City can receive and convey land.

d. Committee Reports

i. Broadband Committee

Councilor Bagley stated that the Broadband committee met on the 7th of March along with Gary Aiken of the Caribou Utilities District Board.

He explained that they are currently working with Spectrum to receive a final offer that may be different from the offer that was previously heard due to grants for the project. In talking with Mr. Aiken they found out that the application for the grant was denied and that the CUD would not proceed unless grant money is provided.

Councilor Bagley explained that he has also requested a copy of the Engineering study by March 31st from the Business Investment Group.

ii. Airport Committee

Councilor Bagley explained that the Airport Committee met on March 3rd in the City manager’s office. He stated that they discussed different aspects of what is taking place at the airport and what the needs are, such as new snow removal equipment with a cost of roughly \$500,000. They are also assuming a 10% cost share (with the FAA/DoT covering 90%). The committee agreed to submit a recommendation to the Capital Committee for \$50, 000 in 2024 to cover the expense.

They are also suggesting that they change the Public Works Director stipend from \$100/week to \$150/week for all the work and help that he does at the airport.

The committee also discussed ideas for redevelopment of the trailer park which is located on city owned airport property. The committee agreed that the proposal to establish a community garden in a small portion of the trailer park area was approved in November 2022. They do not believe that it should raise an objection from the FAA, as no buildings are planned to be built except for maybe a small storage shed or gazebo. They also discussed the idea of building short-term rental cabins in the trailer park to help serve ATV and Snowmobile owners. The committee did note several challenges related to the idea and stated that it could be an uphill battle to obtain approval through the FAA as it is for non-aviation purposes. In conclusion they believe that it would not be the best fit for the use of the land.

In the master plan they have planned the apron project. They also believe that the master plan is still good for another 5 years.

Dave Ouellette (Public Works Director) thanked the committee for inviting him to the meetings. He explained that in a previous discussion he found out that the new tank cannot go in the same spot. He also stated that he does suggest getting jet fuel and leaving the tank in the ground because it is good until 2029.

Chief Susi added that Angel Flight will assist in buying a tank and filling it with fuel as long as the City continues to fill the tank after. He said that he would forward the contact information to Councilor Bagley.

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

a. Discussion and possible action on Chapter 15: Nylander Museum

Manager Thompson explained before the acceptance for the 2023 Municipal Budget members of the Council asked about discussing reestablishing a volunteer working board for the Nylander Museum. She stated that she used the previous ordinance that was in place prior to the repeal in December 2021 and also Ordinance 22, 2021 series which was offered as an alternative to disbanding the Nylander Museum Board of Trustees.

Councilor Willey expressed concern regarding putting the board under direct supervision of the Library Director.

Councilor Morrill stated that he believes that he agrees with getting the Nylander going again and that it should be able to stand on its own and be its own entity.

The Council had a brief discussion and is interested in finding members for a working board to help to run the Nylander Museum.

Councilor Morrill introduced Ordinance No 2, 2023 Series, an ordinance amending Chapter 15: Nylander Museum.

There will be a public hearing during the first meeting of April.

b. Discussion and possible action on 2023 Municipal Expense budget

Councilor Bagley stated that he is concerned regarding the Riverfront Appropriation for the master plan and the heating fuel and electric numbers for the Recreation center.

Councilor Morrill stated that he is concerned that over the years the reserve funds have been depleted and not replaced. He would like to see the reserve accounts be funded. He stated that the reserve accounts need to be reestablished for the future for when something happens.

Councilor Goughan explained that as far as the reserve accounts go there has always been around \$700,000 away and that it was last year's council that only put away \$400,000. He stated that this council is now in charge and if they want to put that money back or they could do what was done last year, which was roughly \$400,000 which is underfunded.

Councilor Boma stated that there is only so much you can do and that the departments still need to be able to function. She explained that she does not see where they can concern themselves with things that they cannot control.

Councilor Willey explained that she agrees with Courtney and John and that they need to remember that some of the numbers are due to the adjustments that were made in salaries and in employee retirement. She said that those are things that needed to be done and had been left hanging, but that they did what they had to do to get back where people needed to live.

Councilor Theriault stated that she agrees with some of the previous comments and that there are things that the council cannot control and there are things that need to be done to keep the infrastructure up, she explained that it needs to look good and needs to function. She stated that two or three years ago the Council voted to reduce the mil rate by a full mil to give money back that they did not have to give back. When something is done like that the cut had to happen somewhere, and it was not pretty. They are still working at trying to keep it flat but they don't believe they should cut just for the sake of cutting when it is all needed to run the city. She said she does not believe that it is wasted.

Councilor Goughan explained that yes, a mil was given back to the taxpayers, but everything was fully funded that year.

Mayor Smith stated that he is comfortable and that he thinks that they may be able to keep the mil rate flat and stable. He suggested that the City Manager go back with the department heads to see if there are any changes that can be made.

Council had a brief discussion and concluded that they would like to have one way communication via email that all of the council could see each other's thoughts without conducting business regarding the budget.

Council Agenda Item #10: Old Business

There were no items scheduled for discussion.

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

There was no further discussion.

Council Agenda Item #12: Next Regular Meetings: Joint meeting with Planning Board March 14, regular Meeting March 27

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

Council did not enter executive session.

Council Agenda Item #14: Adjournment

Motion made by Deputy Mayor Boma, seconded by Councilor Theriault to adjourn the meeting at 7:34 p.m.

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

Danielle Brissette, Secretary