



**City Manager's Report
April 22, 2024**

Economic Projects

River Front - Powerplants	EPA CERCLA action planned to start in May.
Broadband Initiative	An email from the Maine Connectivity Authority that states that they are close to a contract with Charter for the communities that were covered in the ReachMe grant award from April 2023.
Ogren Dump Solar Project	No new updates.
Events and Marketing	The next event is the Spring Runoff on Saturday May 5. You can contact the Recreation department for more details. The City Wide Yard Sale is May 17 to 19. Also, may folks have asked about the annual brush removal program. It will be May 6 - May 9. There will only be one pass through each neighborhood. Rural residents should call for pick-up to 493-4211.
Landbank	This was discussed at the last meeting. Waiting to see what happens on the state level.
Chapter 13 Rewrite	The Planning Board has asked staff to work up a time line for getting changes to a Public Hearing.
Federal American Rescue Plan Act	The two applications to the Aroostook County ARPA matching grant were approved.
Blight Cleanup	No new updates
Birdseye Cleanup	No new updates.
Caribou Development Committee	Met on April 17. Dates being scheduled for some follow-up events.
River Front - Master Plan	No new updates
Façade Improvement Program	On tonight's agenda
Aldrich ATV/Snowmobile Storage	No new updates.
Caribou Economic Growth Council	No new updates.
Business Outreach	Met with several business owners during the façade improvement grant application process.

Other Administrative Projects

Tax Acquired Property Policy	No new updates.
Nylander	No new updates.
Fire Structural Work	No new updates.
Fire Station Renovations	No new updates.
Police Station	S W Cole has submitted their geotechnical report for the police station site.
River Road	No new updates.
Investment Policy	No new updates.
Trailer Park Closure	No new updates.
Cable Franchise Renewal	No new updates.
Airport	The bids are in for the apron project. Soderberg Construction of Caribou was the low bidder.
Personnel Policy	No new updates.
New LED Street lights	No new updates.
Comp Plan Update	The Planning Board has asked staff to work up a time line for getting a draft of the 2024-2034 Comprehensive Plan.
LD 2003 Implementation	Planning Board received a document for their review from NMDC.
15 Prospect Street	No new updates.
Water Street Fire	No new updates.
Age-Friendly Efforts	No new updates.
Personnel Changes	No new updates.
DOT Village Partnership	No new updates.
Aroostook Waste Solutions	Meeting held on April 19.
Cary Medical Center	The 100th anniversary of Jefferson Cary's vision for a Caribou community hospital will be celebrated in 2024.
Other Updates	Thank you to everyone for your work to get through another winter. Bring on the Spring!
Administrative Approvals	No new updates.

Looking Ahead to Setting the 2024 Tax Rate

The total amount to be raised from property taxes includes:

Municipal Appropriations

*Amount needed to fund all city departments and is reduced by the revenues raised by the city which includes excise tax and state funds like Revenue Sharing and the exemption reimbursements like homestead, business equipment, etc.

*The City Council approves the expense and revenue budgets after a public hearing. This was set in March per city charter. The City Council may not increase the annual expense budget after

School Funding

*Amount to operate the RSU#39, Stockholm 4.39% and Caribou 95.61%. This amount is reduced by the State Aid to Education.

*The School Board sets the school budget and it goes first to a District Budget meeting where the warrant articles for each cost center are approved. Then the budget is sent to a validation vote.

*2024-2025 Budget dates: Wednesday May 22 for the District Budget Meeting & Tuesday June 11 for the Budget Validation vote.

*The assessors for the City must raise the amount billed to the City by the RSU.

City portion of County Tax

*The Aroostook County budget is apportioned to all areas of Aroostook by the equalized state valuation. It includes amounts to operate county operations which is a distinct and separate budget from the county jail budget. Caribou is third, behind the Unorganized Townships & the City of Presque Isle for County taxes assessed.

*The County Commissioners and the County Finance Committee work to prepare and approve these budgets. This year, the County is transitioning to a fiscal year & will send out for 18 months of County Tax.

*The Public Hearing on the 12-month budget will be on Tuesday May 14. Comments from the public can be submitted until 3 pm that day.

*The assessors for the City must raise the amount billed to the City by the County.

To determine the amount to be raised, the total amount to be raised from property taxes (combine the amounts above) by the taxable valuation in Caribou (both real estate and business personal property).

Using the most recent 2023 tax year as an example: The total taxable valuation in Caribou was \$470,220,059. The amount of tax for commitment was: \$9,169,291. The tax rate was .0195 or a “mil rate” of 19.5. If you are wondering, a “mil” is 1/1000 of valuation or \$470,220.059, so a “mil rate” of 19.5 means the City raised 19.5 “mils” ($\$470,220.059 \times 19.5 = \$9,169,291$).



GRANT PROJECT UPDATES

APRIL 2024



CERCLA

\$ TBD

EPA EMERGENCY ACTION ON STEAM PLANT

- Over \$2 million has been approved (no match required).
- EPA has boarded up the windows at the steam plant.
- Working on plan to keep boat launch open during demolition.
- Hoping to begin work in May 2024



EPA BROWNFIELDS FY2023

DIESEL PLANT & OTHER

\$900,000

- QEP selected: County Environmental Engineering, Inc.
- Cooperative Agreement has been received from the US EPA.
- Online reporting through ACRES portal done for last quarter.
- "Notice to Proceed" received.
- Public hearing on 1/30.
- Current tasks: Inventory of hazardous substances & community engagement.

LEARN MORE: <https://www.cariboumaine.org/grants/>



MAINE CONNECTIVITY AUTHORITY

The City of Caribou is seeking nearly \$2 million for a Connectivity Hub grant through the Maine Connectivity Authority on 4/12. This no-match grant would help close the digital divide by making modifications to the Caribou Public Library. Grants will be announced May 20.



NORTHERN BORDER REGIONAL COMMISSION (NBRC)

RIVERFRONT PLAN & PROJECTS \$472,550

- Story on WAGM, Tuesday 9/26.
- Requested partial notice to proceed for NEPA review 2/2/2024.
- NEPA review ongoing.
- Phase 1 ESA complete, Phase 2 ESA has been ordered.

ARPA NEU FUNDS:

2021 - BROADBAND STUDY

2022 - USED AS MATCH FOR COUNTY ARPA PROJECT

2023 - USED AS MATCH FOR COUNTY ARPA PROJECT

2024 - AORRIVED FOR PENDING COUNTY ARPA

ARPA - AROOSTOOK COUNTY MATCHING FUNDS

FY2022 - IMPROVEMENTS TO FIRE STATION & AMBULANCE EQUIPMENT

\$150,000

FY2023 - FIRE DEPARTMENT TURN-OUT GEAR, POLICE BODY WORN CAMERAS & RADIOS

\$100,349

FY2024 - APPLICATION SUBMITTED 4/1 FOR TWO PROJECTS: MATCH FOR POLICE/FIRE EQUIPMENT & SEWER PROJECT

CONGRESSIONALLY DIRECTED SPENDING REQUESTS

SENATOR COLLINS:

FY23 - POLICE STATION \$2.5 MILLION

No new updates from HUD despite repeated requests.

LEARN MORE: <https://www.cariboumaine.org/police-station-project/>

FY23 - CARIBOU POND & PARK RECLAMATION PROJECT \$4.459 MILLION

No new updates from HUD despite repeated requests.

FY24 - IMPROVEMENTS TO FIRE STATION \$1.359 MILLION

This appropriation passed with the federal budget.

SENATOR KING:

FY24 - ENERGY IMPROVEMENTS AT LIBRARY

This appropriation passed with the federal budget.



DOT VPI

\$50,000

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION VILLAGE PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE

- Kick-off meeting 3/1 with TYLin, Rasor & DOT.
- This is a 50/50 partnership with MaineDOT to rethink how people access areas in Caribou.

Did you know that a successful grant application starts with well-constructed planning documents? The City of Caribou is working on their 2024-2034 Comprehensive Plan which will be the foundation for grant applications going forward.

Care. Envision. Do.
CARIBOU
2034

JOIN THE CONVERSATION: [CARIBOUMAINE.ORG/CARIBOU2034](https://www.cariboumaine.org/caribou2034)

CARE for our community, ENVISION the future, then help Caribou DO what it takes to make it happen!