

Council Agenda Item #1: Roll Call

The Caribou City Council held a regular City Council Meeting on Monday, March 11, 2024, with the following members present; Mayor Boma, Deputy Mayor Theriault, Councilors Bagley, Kelley, Lovewell, and Smith. Councilor Morrill was present via Zoom.

Manager Thompson was present for the meeting.

Department Managers Gary Marquis (Superintendent of Parks & Recreation) and Peter Baldwin 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

Councilor Smith read an Invocation.

Council Agenda Item #3: Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Boma led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Council Agenda Item #4: Declaration of any Conflict of Interest

No declarations were made.

Council Agenda Item #5: Public Forum

There were no comments made by the public.

Council Agenda Item #6: Minutes

There were no minutes submitted for approval.

Council Agenda Item #7: Bid Openings, Awards, and Appointments

There were none scheduled for discussion.

Council Agenda Item #8: Public Hearings and Possible Action Items

There were no items scheduled for discussion.

Council Agenda Item #9: Reports by Staff and Committees

a. City Manager's Report

Manager Thompson reviewed the City Manager's Report dated March 11, 2024.

Council Agenda Item #10: New Business, Ordinances and Resolutions

a. Discussion of payment options for special 6-month County of Aroostook Budget

Manager Thompson explained that the County of Aroostook has transitioned to a July to June fiscal year from the calendar year. All municipalities in Aroostook County will receive two tax

bills. The first will represent the local portion of their approved budget for January 1, 2024 to June 30, 2024. The second bill will be received before setting the 2024 municipal tax rate will cover July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025. County Tax bills are due annually on September 1.

The 12-month tax bill for the period of July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025 will be due in full on September 1, 2024.

The 6-month tax bill for the period of January 1, 2024 to June 30, 2024 is \$415,845 is also due on September 1, 2024 but the County is offering payment options. The City has the option to pay this bill in installments of one, two or three years, but must communicate the choice to avoid an 8.5% interest rate on the amount unpaid on November 1, 2024.

Councilor Morrill would like to know what is being paid for with the money being paid to the County.

Motion made by Councilor Smith, seconded by Deputy Mayor Theriault to accept the three-year option for the six-month tax bill interest free for three years.

Roll Call Vote: D. Bagley – Yes, J. Kelley – Yes, T. Lovewell – Yes, J. Morrill – Yes, J. Smith – Yes, J. Theriault – Yes, C. Boma – Yes. (So voted)

b. Discussion of 2024 Municipal Budget

Manager Thompson explained the budget process has been divided into three processes: Expense Budget, Capital Expense Budget, and Income Budget.

On or before the third Monday in March the City Council will hold a public hearing and vote on the City's final detailed expense budget for the ensuing year. Manager Thompson explained that at this point we have had presentations from departments about the budget. She also explained that with the budget process it is better to pass them all at the same time so that they can be loaded into the TRIO software.

Council had a brief discussion regarding the topic being on the agenda and stated that it was to be used as a time of discussion to give suggestions to the City Manager for the departments to consider.

Councilor Bagley expressed his concerns regarding miscellaneous expenses, elections as well as retirement and other lines. They discussed that the budgeted figures for retirement would be as if all employees were to buy into their retirement.

Councilor Morrill stated that overall, he believes that the City is being run pretty good and there are some factors that are beyond our control and that the department heads are doing a good job.

Deputy Mayor Theriault asked about the additional amount for the salary line. This is a position for an assistant manager.

Councilor Lovewell asked about the budget amounts for Car repairs and what the miscellaneous expenses line was used for.

Manager Thompson explained why some of the budgets were not used for training and travel due to different restrictions and responsibilities whether it be a meeting or other obligation.

Council had a brief discussion about emailing the items that they have concerns about emailing them to the group and the manager to have them looked at again by the departments.

Councilor Lovewell asked about the amounts in the subscription line, and Manager Thompson explained the items that were due for renewal and what the subscriptions do for the city such as the text my gov subscription.

Councilor Bagley asked about the 80,000 that is budgeted for blight removal and why less was spent. Manager Thompson explained that due to the new process of tax acquiring and the sales, cleaning up the blight that slowed down the process some.

Manager Thompson explained the difference between Enterprise accounts and the general funding accounts. She stated that the General Fund accounts are money raised through taxation, where the Enterprise accounts are funded by the means, for example the snowmobile enterprise account is funded by the state.

Councilor Bagley asked about the budgeted figures for the Lyons building and what is included.

Manager Thompson explained some of the projects that have been lined up and regarding the new plans for the Lyons building and the construction that will be going on there to make the facilities as safe as possible for the use that they will be intended for.

The council asked questions to get clarification regarding the budget and different aspects, including library staff budgets, large purchases of new equipment at the fire station, vehicle allowance for the police department, cell phones, hot spots, subscriptions and many other items.

The council also discussed the change in the timelines for the budget season, explaining that the budget is now discussed with the current sitting council for that year rather than outgoing council who may not be coming on again in the new year. This also gives the new councilors that are coming in the opportunity to be part of the process, and the process is still three months as it was previously, just pushed farther to be discussed with the sitting council for that budget year.

Council Agenda Item #11: Old Business

There were none scheduled for discussion.

Council Agenda Item #12: Reports and discussion by Mayor and Council Members

Councilor Morrill spoke regarding the closing of the Presque Isle Rehab and Nursing Facility; he urged the council to pay attention to our local facilities as they take care of so many people and employ several as well.

Council Agenda Item #13: Next Regular Meetings: March 18 & 25

Council Agenda Item #14: Executive Session(s) (May be called to discuss matters identified under MRSA, Title 1 § 405.6)

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Council did not enter into executive session.

Council Agenda Item #15: Adjournment

Motion made by Deputy Mayor Theriault seconded by Councilor Morrill to adjourn the meeting at 7:48pm.

Roll Call Vote: D. Bagley – Yes, J. Kelley – Yes, T. Lovewell – Yes, J. Morrill – Yes, J. Smith – Yes, J. Theriault – Yes, C. Boma – Yes. (So voted)

Danielle Brissette, Secretary