

Council Agenda Item #1: Roll Call

The Caribou City Council held a City Council meeting on Monday, August 26, 2024, with the following members present: Mayor Boma, Deputy Mayor Theriault, Councilors Kelley, and Lovewell. Councilors Bagley, Morrill, and Smith were absent.

Manager Thompson was present for 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 Lovewell read the 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

There were none mentioned.

Council Agenda Item #5: Public Forum

Bruce Hagelstein, Caribou Resident

Mr. Hagelstein came in to explain his concern regarding the clean up at 15 Prospect Street and wanting to know what the game plan is going forward. He also expressed concern regarding the property located at 91 Collins Street not being cleaned out and that there are rodents in the basement.

Council Agenda Item #6: Minutes

a. January 2, 2024, City Council Organizational Meeting

Motion made by Deputy Mayor Theriault, seconded by Councilor Lovewell to accept the minutes as presented.

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

b. January 8, 2024, Regular City Council Meeting

Motion made by Deputy Mayor Theriault, seconded by Councilor Lovewell to accept the minutes as presented.

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

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

a. Proclamation recognizing Cary Medical Center 100-year anniversary

Mayor Boma read the proclamation:

100th Anniversary Proclamation



Whereas... Cary Memorial Hospital was the first hospital built in Caribou and opened in 1924 thanks to the generosity of its founder, Dr. Jefferson B Cary and

Whereas... In 1978 Cary Memorial Hospital became Cary Medical Center which continues to live by the intentions of its founder to care for all those in need and

Whereas... Cary Medical Center and the City of Caribou have been trusted partners for the benefit of all area citizens for 100 years and

Whereas... has become the largest employer in the City of Caribou and has been named one of the 100 'Great Community Hospitals' in America and is an award winning rural hospital Accredited by the Joint Commission and

Whereas... Cary Medical Center is celebrating its 100th Anniversary in the year 2024 and

Whereas... The City of Caribou wishes to recognize and pay tribute to all those who have served the hospital over the past 100 years

Therefore... I, Courtney Boma, Mayor of the City of Caribou, in the great state of Maine, do hereby deem it my honor and pleasure to proclaim the year 2024 as the year of Cary Medical Center. On behalf of the City I offer my congratulations and best wishes as you celebrate this historical milestone

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the official seal of the City of Caribou to be affixed.

Courtney Boma, Mayor

Motion made by Councilor Lovewell, seconded by Deputy Mayor Theriault to approve the 100th anniversary proclamation provided by Cary Medical Center.

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

b. Caribou Fire and Ambulance Department – EMS Phoenix Award Recognitions

Chief Lajoie explained that the Phoenix Award is a nationally recognized award that celebrates the valiant efforts of first responders who successfully resuscitate individuals experiencing

cardiac arrest. Because of the extraordinary efforts of these first responders, these individuals are able to make a full recovery with no neurological deficits and lead a normal life.

During the summer of 2023, three outstanding individuals from our department responded to an out of hospital cardiac arrest. This patient was operating a vehicle on a public way and became unresponsive. The vehicle was able to be stopped by the patient's wife who was a passenger in the vehicle. She was then able to call 911 and our crew was dispatched to the scene where they were able to perform lifesaving CPR. Our three award recipients: Firefighter / Paramedic Michael DiVito, Firefighter / Paramedic Kenneth O'Bar, and Firefighter / Paramedic Ryan Hall. Presented to each individual is a certificate and lapel pin from Maine EMS recognizing each of them for their valiant effort.

Chief Lajoie thanked all our Firefighters and EMS personnel for their selfless service and commitment to our community. Your bravery and skills truly make a difference in the lives of our residents.

c. Acceptance of an election grant award to Caribou City Clerk's Department

Mayor Boma explained that the Clerk's Office applied for a grant on Tuesday, August 6, 2024, through the Center for Tech and Civic Life.

The grant is to help with temporary/seasonal support positions for the election, storage containers, rental of additional tabulation machine, new laptops, purchase of materials needed for election safety and security.

On Friday, August 9, 2024, the city clerk's office received notification that they had been chosen to receive \$20,000 in grant funds to be used exclusively for the public purpose of planning and operationalizing reliable and secure election administration in Caribou Maine in 2024.

Motion made by Deputy Mayor Theriault, seconded by Councilor Lovewell to accept and allow City Clerk Danielle Brisette to sign for the 2024 Rural and Nonmetro Election Infrastructure Grant from the Center for Tech and Civic Life in the amount of \$20,000.

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

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

a. Public Hearing – Application for ARPA County funds

Open Public Hearing: 6:18 p.m.

Manager Thompson explained that the public hearing is to discuss the development and submittal of a 2024 Economic Development Grant Program CDBG Grant. The purpose of the grant is to fully launch a new division for turf management / application at County Ag & Turf Supply, Inc. Public comments will be solicited at this hearing and will be submitted as part of the Application and Project Development Phases. County Ag & Turf Supply, Inc are working with NMDC on this application. As a review, with the State of Maine Department of Economic and Community Development Community Development Block Grant program, the City must apply for the funding on behalf of the business and must comply with all requirements of the program.

Bruce Hagelstein, Caribou Resident

Mr. Hagelstein asked what they were trying to do.

Manager Thompson explained that they were applying for the grant to help launch a part of their business for Turf Management.

Karen Gorman, Caribou Resident

Ms. Gorman asked how much the grant is for.

Manager Thompson stated that the amount is currently undetermined.

Councilor Lovewell asked if the City was only able to submit one application.

Manager Thompson confirmed that that was correct.

Closed Public Hearing: 6:21 p.m.

Motion made by Deputy Mayor Theriault, seconded by Councilor Kelley to work with County Ag & Turf Supply, inc. and NMDC to submit an application for a Community Development Block Grant under the 2024 Maine DECD Economic Development Program.

Roll Call Vote: J. Kelley – Yes, T. Lovewell – Yes, J. Theriault – Yes, C. Boma – Yes (So Voted)

Council Agenda Item #9: Reports by Staff and Committees

a. July Financial Report (Finance Director)

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

Motion made by Deputy Mayor Theriault, seconded by Councilor Kelley to accept the July Financial report as presented.

Roll Call Vote: J. Kelley – Yes, T. Lovewell – Yes, J. Theriault – Yes, C. Boma – Yes (So Voted)

b. Blighted property report (Code Enforcement Officer)

John Gibson (Code Enforcement Officer) reviewed a list of blighted properties and actions that have been taken, including details regarding the clean ups on Prospect and Collins Street.

Councilor Lovewell asked if the clean up of the property would include the garage on Prospect.

Mr. Gibson explained that it is another process and that they would be working to beginning the steps for that as well.

Mayor Boma explained that the garage was not part of the court rulings.

Mr. Gibson explained that Code enforcement can not just enter property and that he would work to get permission to look around at 91 Collins Street.

Chief Saucier and Mr. Gibson are going to work together to visit the Collins Street residence to verify if the property has been cleaned up.

Mr. Gibson also explained that after the bid deadline passed, there were two bids received for the cleanup on Prospect Street.

Larry's Construction: \$42,600. Garage to remain as is. Dump Fees not to exceed \$8,500.

Thibodeau Trucking and Excavation: \$15,000. City pays tipping fees and provides a police officer onsite. Lawn seeding and mulching to be done by the landowner.

Motion made by Deputy Mayor Theriault, seconded by Councilor Kelley to accept the bid from Thibodeau Trucking for the amount of \$15,000 plus the cost to have law enforcement stand by during working hours.

Roll Call Vote: J. Kelley – Yes, T. Lovewell – Yes, J. Theriault – Yes, C. Boma – Yes (So Voted)

c. City Manager's Report

Manager Thompson reviewed the City Manager's Report dated August 26, 2024

Karen Gorman provided an update regarding the work at the Power Plant. She explained that the EPA & DEP. She explained that they started removing the asbestos materials in early August and will continue and stop when the temperatures become below freezing. They are also making plans for the diesel plant for possibly this winter to begin tearing it down.

Ms. Gorman also provided an update on the Birdseye site which is prioritized as a development site. She explained that there were three areas of concern, they have been now labeled as nonhazardous and some of the debris piles are gone.

Council Agenda Item #10: Old Business

a. Police Station update by Ellen Angel of Artifex

Ellen Angel; Architect, and Shelly Lizotte; Civil Engineer for Artifex came to answer questions and discuss the current part of the planning process towards the build of the new Police Station.

Council had a discussion with Ms. Angel and Ms. Lizotte regarding the current standing of the project, what needs to happen next and answered any questions that may have been brought forward.

Council had a brief discussion regarding the process and what needs to be done.

Motion made by Deputy Mayor Theriault, seconded by Councilor Kelley to reinstate the safety building committee.

Councilor Lovewell explained that the Council wanted to have voices and that is why they had cancelled the committee.

Mayor Boma clarified that the committee does not make decisions on behalf of the Council, they meet and bring information back to the council.

Roll Call Vote: J. Kelley – Yes, T. Lovewell – Yes, J. Theriault – Yes, C. Boma – Yes (So Voted)

Mayor Boma stated that now that the committee has been reinstated any Councilors interested in being on that committee should reach out to her by sending an email.

Council Agenda Item #11: New Business, Ordinances and Resolutions

a. Approval of Business Licenses – John Fulton

Motion made by Councilor Lovewell, seconded by Deputy Mayor Theriault to approve the license for Mr. John Fulton as a Pawn Broker and dealer in secondhand goods.

Roll Call Vote: J. Kelley – Yes, T. Lovewell – Yes, J. Theriault – Yes, C. Boma – Yes (So Voted)

b. Election memo for the November 5, 2024 General & Municipal Elections

Motion made by Deputy Mayor Theriault, seconded by Councilor Kelley to set the start time as 8:00am and to appoint Danielle Brissette as Election Warden, Kristina Drinkall and Michele Wilcox as Deputy Wardens for the November 5, 2024 Elections.

Roll Call Vote: J. Kelley – Yes, T. Lovewell – Yes, J. Theriault – Yes, C. Boma – Yes (So Voted)

c. Grant submission discussion and City Council approval

i. DECD Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund

Manager Thompson explained that the Maine Department of Economic & Community Development (DECD) is soliciting applications through its Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund (BRLF) Program for cleanup loans and grants at Brownfields properties throughout Maine. Along with its technical partner, the Maine Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) Brownfields Program, the DECD BRLF Program will fund the cleanup of a number of Brownfields projects, preparing the sites for reuse. Applications are being accepted through Friday, September 20, 2024. A panel of staff from both agencies will review all applications, choosing those that best meet the criteria. They anticipate that the “winners” will be informed by Friday, October 18, 2024.

This year, there is no “match” for the funding. EPA does require that more than 50% of the total funds issued by DECD's BRLF Program will be in the form of a loan, so DECD will generally prioritize projects requesting at least 50% of the funding as a loan. The BRLF Program is able to provide attractive terms for loans. A municipality or a non-profit may request both grant and loan funds. An applicant may request up to \$500,000 per source (grant or loan). The BRLF Program may consider a higher request on a project-by-project basis.

Representatives from EPA and DEP visited the Brownfields sites in Caribou in August and have encouraged the City to apply for this funding. They have also suggested that we apply for another clean-up grant this fall. If that grant is awarded, those proceeds could pay off any “loan” portion that we are awarded. Typically, the award is for 50% grant and 50% loan. The “Birdseye Site” has been acquired by the City of Caribou through the automatic lien foreclosure process and has been identified by the City Council as an ideal location for the new Police Station and

future Business Center. We are in the process of gathering information, but it is Area of Concern 5 (remediation of PCB soils) at Birdseye that we would want to clean up with these funds. The estimate in 2017 was \$33,000. The City Council would still need to accept the grant funds and loan term if awarded.

Motion made by Deputy Mayor Theriault, seconded by Councilor Kelley to authorize staff to apply for a 2024 DECD Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund program loan and grant.

Councilor Lovewell asked if the program could help to remediate other things, like the burned-out building on Water Street.

Manager Thompson agreed that it is worth looking into.

Roll Call Vote: J. Kelley – Yes, T. Lovewell – Yes, J. Theriault – Yes, C. Boma – Yes (So Voted)

ii. EV – efficiency Maine Level 2 EV Chargers

Manager Thompson explained that Efficiency Maine has a program to install Level 2 Electric Vehicle Chargers in Regional Service Center communities like Caribou. This program would pay the lesser of \$10,000 / port or 80% of the cost to install with a minimum of four ports. Currently, Caribou does not have a location for a publicly accessible charger for EV vehicles. Users would pay for the electricity using a credit card on the panel display.

We were given two estimates from Eric McCue of Energy Management Consultants who worked on the Level 3 charger project in Van Buren.

Each quote is for 4 charging ports at the Wellness Center at 55 Bennett Drive. They obtained estimates from an electrical contractor. We would ask that it be put out to bid to allow our local contractors to submit a bid for the installation work as both local commercial electrical firms gave bids the last time that we investigated obtaining Efficiency Maine grant funds to install Level 2 EV chargers.

400 amp panel (quicker charge)	Grant amount \$40,000.00	City Match \$24,744.00
200 amp panel (slower charge)	Grant amount \$35,250.14	City Match \$8,812.53

Some of the remaining ARPA Funds, which must be committed by 12/31/2024 could be used for this project. The hope is that by getting on Maine’s EV charging map, more visitors would stop in Caribou and visit our businesses. The location will also make it convenient for those working on Bennett Drive or visiting the Wellness Center or Teague Park.

There was no action taken by the Council.

iii. NBRC – Pending “Final Notice To Proceed”, start process of purchase pf properties

Manager Thompson explained that in 2023, the City of Caribou applied for a Northern Border Regional Commission (NBRC) grant to begin the work envisioned by the Caribou Riverfront Redevelopment Committee. This grant application included two major components, the hiring of a consultant to develop a “Riverfront Master Plan” and the purchase of two available properties located at the end of Water Street so that the City will have an anchor on the Aroostook River.

The first step of the process was to compile the reports and information needed to submit for the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Environmental Assessment (EA) which included a Section 106 Consultation with the State's Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) to comply with the National Historic Preservation Act. These reports and related information have all been compiled and are ready to submit.

Since she anticipates that the "Final Notice to Proceed" may come from the NBRC prior to the September City Council meeting, she would like to receive authorization by the City Council to start the process to purchase the properties after the final notice to proceed has been received. This involves engaging in a contract with a commercial real estate appraiser. Those costs are not covered by the grant and the cost would be approximately \$3,000. Just a reminder that the costs to purchase the buildings (including legal costs), demo one building and restoring the others are covered in the grant.

These properties are in the Downtown TIF District and TIF funds can be used for riverfront projects. There has been funding set aside for technical assistance (E 11-01-281-07) for brownfields grant applications in anticipation of this expense. NOTE: Both properties meet the definition of a brownfield, and the Environmental Site Assessments were funded by Maine DEP with their 128A funding at no cost to the City.

Motion made by Councilor Lovewell, seconded by Deputy Mayor Theriault to authorize staff to take next steps with the NBRC grant after receiving the Final Notice to Proceed.

Roll Call Vote: J. Kelley – Yes, T. Lovewell – Yes, J. Theriault – Yes, C. Boma – Yes (So Voted)

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

Councilor Lovewell said that there are lots of fun things to start with Small Business Saturday.

Council Agenda Item #13: Next Regular Meeting: September 23, 2024

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

a. Executive Session for union negotiations pursuant to 1 MRSA §405.6.D (Fire Department Union)

Motion made by Councilor Lovewell, seconded by Councilor Kelley to enter executive session under 1 MRSA § 405.6D at 8:33pm

Roll Call Vote: J. Kelley – Yes, T. Lovewell – Yes, J. Theriault – Yes, C. Boma – Yes (So Voted)

Council exited session at 9:12pm

Motion by Deputy Mayor Theriault, second by Councilor Kelley to, "Obtain assistance on collective bargaining with the Fire/EMS Department by asking former Councilor Louella Willey if she would be willing to help. If not, reach out to MMA to explore options."

Council had a discussion that included direction to the City Manager to get additional information regarding costs and potential revenue to cover costs associated with the requests

submitted by the union. Since this was requested at the initial meeting but the information provided did not suffice, please submit to the union in writing.

Roll Call Vote: J. Kelley – Yes, T. Lovewell – Yes, J. Theriault – Yes, C. Boma – Yes (So Voted)

b. Executive Session for union negotiations pursuant to 1 MRSA §405.6.D (Police Department Union)

Motion by Deputy Mayor Theriault, second by Councilor Kelley to enter executive session for union negotiations pursuant to 1 MRSA §405.6.D (Police Department Union) at 9:14 pm.

Roll Call Vote: J. Kelley – Yes, T. Lovewell – Yes, J. Theriault – Yes, C. Boma – Yes (So Voted)

Council exited executive session at 9:23pm

Motion by Deputy Mayor Theriault, second by Councilor Lovewell to, “Authorize City Manager Penny Thompson to contact the Caribou Police Department Patrol and Sergeant unions to draft a Memorandum of Understanding between the unions and the City to expand the salary structure by seven dollars (\$7) per hour effective as soon as possible, target would be with the week beginning September 3, 2024 and authorize Manager Thompson to sign this MOU when complete. In recognition that the police unions have a contract through 12/31/2025, the cost to fund these increases would come from committing the needed funds from available ARPA funds.”

Roll Call Vote: J. Kelley – Yes, T. Lovewell – Yes, J. Theriault – Yes, C. Boma – Yes (So Voted)

c. Executive Session for a hardship or poverty abatement pursuant to 36 MRSA §841(2)€ at 9:34 pm.

Council exited executive session at 9:46 pm.

No motion was made on the Abatement Application 2024-01.

Discussion included directions to the City Manager to get additional information regarding verifying the information provided on the application and ask the applicant if other avenues (ACAP program, making payment arrangements) were also pursued prior to application. Also, the applicant is not currently in danger of losing the home due to a mortgage foreclosure action.

Council Agenda Item #15: Adjournment

Motion by Deputy Mayor Theriault, second by Councilor Kelley to adjourn the meeting at 9:47 pm.

Roll Call Vote: J. Kelley – Yes, T. Lovewell – Yes, J. Theriault – Yes, C. Boma – Yes (So Voted)

Danielle Brissette, Secretary