

Council Agenda Item #1: Roll Call

The Caribou City Council held a regular City Council Meeting on Monday, October 28, 2024 with the following members present; Mayor Boma, Deputy Mayor Theriault, Councilors Bagley, Kelley, Lovewell, and Smith. Councilor Morrill was absent.

Manager Thompson was present for the meeting.

Department managers Gary Marquis (Superintendent of Parks and Recreation), Carl Grant (Finance Director), and Brian Lajoie (Fire Chief) were present for the meeting.

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

Council Agenda Item #2: Invocation

Councilor Smith 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 no declarations made.

Council Agenda Item #5: Public Forum

Bruce Hagelstein, Caribou Resident

Mr. Hagelstein came in and wanting to know the status of a Code Enforcement Officer and also stated that because of the minutes being submitted from February the council should have more than one meeting per month instead of letting things drag out.

Council Agenda Item #6: Minutes

a. February 12, 2024 Regular City Council Meeting

Motion made to approve February 12, 2024 City Council Minutes as amended.

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

b. February 26, 2024 Regular City Council Meeting

Motion made by Councilor Smith, seconded by Deputy Mayor Theriault to accept the February 26, 2024 minutes as presented.

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

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

a. Façade Improvement Grant committee recommendations

Mayor Boma stated that in the 2024 approved municipal budget, \$40,000 was approved to continue the façade improvement grant in the Downtown TIF District and, after consultation with DECD, expand the program to include a façade improvement grant in the RC-2 TIF District. The Downtown TIF District spring grant period granted \$3,500 in awards, leaving a total of \$36,500 available. For the Spring 2024 RC-2 Façade Improvement Grant period, the City of Caribou received three worthy applications from businesses in our RC-2 Tax Increment Financing district. The amount awarded was \$22,500. There was \$14,000 available for the Fall Façade Improvement Grant application period.

There were two worthy applications received from the fall application period. A selection committee was convened, and the unanimous decision was made to recommend that the Caribou City Council award the amounts below to the applicants:

Fifty8 and Maine	81 Sweden Street	\$7,000	Major exterior remodel
Big Cheese Pizza	556 Main Street	\$7,000	Major exterior remodel

Motion made by Councilor Smith, seconded by Deputy Mayor Theriault to accept the results of the Façade Improvement Grant committee and award a Façade Improvement grant in the amount of \$7,000 to the Fifty8 and Maine, and \$7,000 to Big Cheese Pizza for projects described in the applications and subject to the terms set forth in the grant application.

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

b. Bids on mowing equipment – Recreation Department

Gary Marquis (Superintendent of Parks & Recreation) came in presenting to request the purchase of a new zero turn mower for the Caribou Parks and Recreation department. The request has been in the Capital Equipment program for this year, and they have held off on the purchase for two years as the mowers in the current fleet have been holding well until this year.

The commission voted to go out to bid for a new mower and has been supportive of what the staff has recommended.

Bids were received from:

Priority Tractor for an Exmark Lazer Z E-Series 60” deck with a 25.5 hp Kawasaki motor at \$11,298.00.

Luke’s Small Engine Shop bid for a Bad Boy Rebel 61” deck with a 30.5 hp Kawasaki motor with advance chute system at \$11,350.00.

Mr. Marquis explained that they would also be selling the current mower 2015 Exmark zero turn mower for \$2,500. The staff is recommending that the City Council allow the Caribou Parks & Recreation Department to purchase the Bad Bower mower from Luke’s Small Engine shop. The

funds would be coming from the G1-365-10 Lawn Mower reserve account which currently has \$13,595.44 to pay for the new mower.

Motion made by Deputy Mayor Theriault, seconded by Councilor Kelley to allow the Caribou Parks & Recreation Department to purchase the Bad Bow mower from Luke's Small Engine shop for \$11,500.

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

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

a. Public Hearing on the renewal of Registered Nonprofit Dispensary permit for Safe Alternatives

Open Public Hearing: 6:20 PM

There were no comments made by the public.

Close Public Hearing: 6:21 PM

Motion made by Councilor Smith, seconded by Deputy Mayor Theriault to renew the license for Safe Alternatives as a licensed non-profit dispensary.

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

b. Public Hearing on Ordinance #8, 2024 Series amending General Assistance Guidelines

Open Public Hearing: 6:22PM

Councilor Smith explained that they do not have a lot of control in this type of situation.

Councilor Bagley asked if it was enough money to aid people.

Danielle Brissette, General Assistance Administrator, explained that with program the clients are also referred to other programs for assistance.

Closed Public Hearing: 6:29PM

Motion made by Councilor Smith seconded by Councilor Lovewell to approve Ordinance No. 8, 2024 Series amending General Assistance Guidelines.

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

c. Public hearing on Draft FY25 Application to EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grant Program

Mayor Boma explained that The City of Caribou acquired the Merlin One, LLC parcel on the Aroostook River which is home to the former Steam and Diesel plants that were previously used to generate power in the region through the automatic lien foreclosure process. In 2022, the city successfully applied for a 2023 US EPA Clean-up grant for the Diesel Plant and the small

buildings at the power plant site. This summer, a US EPA CERCLA action started for an emergency removal action at the steam plant. This clean-up grant would be the next phase at the steam plant. We expect to receive the order of magnitude and approximate cost for the project. Therefore, we will be having another public hearing on October 31 at 3:00 pm here in the Caribou City Council chambers. The application deadline is November 14, 2024.

One of the best parts of this process has been the collaboration between these governmental agencies and private sector partners. The cost for the remediation of the site will cost millions of dollars and take several years. The City of Caribou is working with the DEP, EPA, University of Connecticut, and Sevee & Maher Engineers, Inc. (SME) to apply for an EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grant. Everyone involved can see how the revitalization of this area can be the catalyst for a riverfront renaissance.

Open Public Hearing: 6:32PM

There were no comments from the public.

Councilor Smith asked if the Council would need to hold another meeting for the public hearing on the 31st.

Manager Thompson explained that the public hearing on the 31st is because there were items that had not yet been received, and it would give the opportunity to ask questions once additional information about the order of magnitude and the cost of remediation had been received. There will also be a representative available from SME to answer questions at this time about the technical parts of the application that they have been hired to complete.

At this meeting, they will be discussing options, there has been a good start to the cleanup thus far because of EPA's CERCLA action. The EPA is currently hiring a contractor that will provide a plan for how this needs to be remediated and deconstructed. This ensures that residents in the area would be protected from any contamination. As the current emergency removal work is being completed, the contractor is doing what they call a rinsing process to make sure that there is nothing left that could become airborne. In the spring the City will be getting the full report on what will need to be done if we are fortunate enough to get the brownfields cleanup grant. Manager Thompson went on to say the EPA has staff that work in the CERCLA division, with emergency response action, and other staff work in the Brownfields and Land Revitalization division. Recently, there was a Zoom call where all parties were able to talk and agreed to provide a ballpark estimate for the purposes of the grant application.

Councilor Bagley stated that Manager Thompson is being modest because she has put in years of communication building relationships that are helping this project along.

Councilor Lovewell asked how dangerous the area is.

Manager Thompson explained that there is much asbestos present at the steam plant location. She explained that there are more than 2 miles of asbestos wrapped pipe in the steam plant.

There is also asbestos insulation that is very thick in the turbines. 30 tons of the material has been removed at this time and they are on their 6th roll off container. They are only cleaning up the transite items that are broken. Manager Thompson explained that the EPA is only working to clear up any immediate threat to the public. Manager Thompson extended her gratitude to the EPA for the work they are doing to help remediate the immediate threats and for the great partners that are willing to help us with this project.

Closed Public Hearing: 6:40PM

Motion made by Councilor Smith, seconded by Deputy Mayor Theriault to allow the City Manager to apply for an EPA TY2025 Brownfields Cleanup Grant to request funding for the remedial activities at the steam plant located at 142 Lower Lyndon Street.

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

Council Agenda Item #9: Reports by Staff and Committees

a. Report from the Public Safety Building Committee

Mayor Boma explained that the Public Safety Building Committee has recently met, and that herself, Deputy Mayor, and Councilor Kelley were present for the meeting along with Chief Saucier and Manager Thompson.

She explained that they discussed changing some items, moving rooms and bump outs. They currently have a hand drawn sketch, and it would be \$2,800 for the new concept design. They had the holding cells put by dispatch, moved the sally port and showers. They also made several rooms smaller and removed several restrooms.

Council had a brief discussion regarding if it changed the square footage of the building and why there was an extra fee of \$2,800 because of the items being moved and changing the concept.

Motion made by Councilor Lovewell, seconded by Councilor Kelley to approve the \$2,8—and the four-week schedule to provide a new rendering.

Councilor Bagley raised concerns that the new building is too big for Caribou, he stated that it is 11,000 square feet which would be more suitable for larger municipalities like Waterville, Gorham, or Falmouth. He believes that the size should be reduced.

Roll Call Vote: D. Bagley – No, J. Kelley – Yes, T. Lovewell – Yes, J. Smith – Yes, J. Theriault – Yes, C. Boma – Yes (So voted)

B. September Financial Report (Finance Director)

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

Motion made by Councilor Smith, seconded by Deputy Mayor Theriault to accept the September Financial Report as presented.

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

c. City Manager's Report

Manager Thompson reviewed the City Manager's report dated October 28, 2024.

Motion made by Councilor Smith, seconded by Deputy Mayor Theriault to authorize the Caribou City Manager, Penny Thompson to execute the loan commitment letter from Maine DECD Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund for \$24,000 at an interest rate of 1.5% for a term of 5 years to leverage the \$24,000 in grant funds from the same program.

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

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

a. Request from the Caribou Fire & Ambulance Department to purchase ambulance

Brian Lajoie (Fire Chief) came to discuss the upcoming need to replace an ambulance from the fleet. Unit 22 is a 2017 Freightliner Super Chief model with approximately 145,000 miles. The unit does not fit the current needs of the station anymore and was built primarily for long-distance transfers. The unit is too big for local calls as it is large and difficult to get into some of the narrow driveways we have in the area.

The department does not go out for bid for ambulances and Autotronics of Madawaska has always been the dealer and provides top notch service for the fleet. In speaking with Autotronics a replacement ambulance for Unit 22. They currently have a new 2024 Demers on a Ford F-550 Diesel with a 4x4 chassis that was allocated for another department that was unable to proceed with the sale. The quote for a new unit is \$391,000. Autotronics will honor the original pricing of the unit which would save the city \$51,000, trading in the current unit would offer \$38,000, a \$2,500 repeat customer discount and a Ford discount of \$800. This would make the total credits for the unit in the amount of \$92,300.

The new unit would be equipped with a Stryker Power-Load System which helps to prevent injuries to providers and reduces heavy lifting.

The total cost of the new unit would be \$328,700.

Council had a brief discussion regarding the pros and cons of a new box ambulance versus the van style ambulance. They told him that they appreciate him taking his initiative and doing the research. They would like to try to build up the reserves, even if that means a van style being considered for now and possibly going back to doing transfers to generate some revenue.

Council Agenda Item #12: November 25, 2024

Council Agenda Item #13: 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 Deputy Mayor Theriault, seconded by Councilor Kelley to enter into executive session at 7:58 PM for Fire Department union negotiations pursuant to 1 MRSA §405.6.D.

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

Council exited executive session at 9:09 PM

No action taken.

Council Agenda Item #14: Adjournment

Motion made by Deputy Mayor Theriault, seconded by Councilor Kelley to adjourn the meeting at 9:10 PM

Roll Call Vote: D. Bagley – Yes, J. Kelley – Yes, T. Lovewell – Yes, J. Smith – No, J. Theriault – Yes, C. Boma – Yes (So voted)

Danielle Brissette, Secretary