

Council Agenda Item #1: Roll Call

The Caribou City Council held a regular City Council Meeting on Monday, January 12, 2026, at 6:00PM in Council Chambers with the following members present; Mayor Boma, Deputy Mayor Smith, Councilors Kelley, Knight Phair, Lovewell, and Watson. Councilor Bagley was present via Zoom.

Penny Thompson, City Manager, was present for the meeting.

Department managers Lisa Plourde (Housing Director), Corey Saucier (Police Chief), Gary Marquis (Superintendent of Parks and Recreation), Brian Lajoie (Fire Chief), Chris Perkins (Director of Public Works), and Carl Grant (Finance Director) were present at the meeting.

The meeting was broadcast via Spectrum and YouTube.

Council Agenda Item #2: Invocation/Inspirational Thought

Deputy Mayor 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

There were no declarations made.

Council Agenda Item #5: Public Forum

There were no comments made by the public.

Council Agenda Item #6: Acceptance of Minutes

a. Reconsideration of the minutes of August 25, 2025

b. Minutes of December 15, 2025

Motion made by Deputy Mayor Smith to move the slate and approve the minutes as presented.

Roll Call Vote: D. Bagley – Yes, J. Kelley – Yes, L. Knight Phair – Yes, T. Lovewell – Yes, J. Smith – Yes, P. Watson – Yes, C. Boma – Yes (So voted)

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

a.. Caribou Housing Authority appointments, clarified to be 5-year Terms

Motion made by Councilor Lovewell, seconded by Councilor Watson to appoint James Belanger and Jennifer Murray to the Caribou Housing Authority Board of Commissioners, each for a term of 5 years, expiring on December 31, 2030.

Roll Call Vote: D. Bagley – Yes, J. Kelley – Yes, L. Knight Phair – Yes, T. Lovewell – Yes, J. Smith – Yes, P. Watson – Yes, C. Boma – Yes (So voted)

Motion made by Deputy Mayor Smith, seconded by Councilor Lovewell to approve the 2026 appointments to committee and liaison roles.

Roll Call Vote: D. Bagley – Yes, J. Kelley – Yes, L. Knight Phair – Yes, T. Lovewell – Yes, J. Smith – Yes, P. Watson – Yes, C. Boma – Yes (So voted)

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

There were no items scheduled for discussion under this topic.

Council Agenda Item #9: Reports by Staff and Committees

a. Capital Budget presentation by Jim Gardner

Jim Gardner, Project Navigator, is a retired town manager. He started assisting the City of Caribou with projects like the Comprehensive Plan and other related projects in 2025.

Mr. Gardiner provided an overview of why it is important to have a capital improvement plan and how it helps to plan for items like roofs, machines, vehicles and planned improvement or maintenance schedules for facilities.

Mr. Gardiner explained that having a Capital Investment plan helps to identify and summarize anticipated capital investment needs and to establish funding priorities.

Mr. Gardiner explained that the mil rate is made up of three major items, school, county and municipal. He stated that you cannot push off municipal needs to help offset the difference from the other entities. Mr. Gardiner stressed the importance of funding municipal needs, and how a Capital Improvement Plan would help to spread it out overtime for a smaller impact on the taxpayers over time.

b. City Manager's Report

Manager Thompson reviewed the City Manager's Report dated January 12, 2026.

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

a. Establish meeting calendar for 2026

Motion made by Councilor Watson, seconded by Councilor Knight Phair to approve the proposed 2026 meeting calendar as presented.

Councilor Bagley stated that he would still like to see two meetings per month and that the Council could possibly add one to both April and November.

Roll Call Vote: D. Bagley – Yes, J. Kelley – Yes, L. Knight Phair – Yes, T. Lovewell – Yes, J. Smith – Yes, P. Watson – Yes, C. Boma – Yes (So voted)

b. Discussion on adopting a resolution to adopt a Code of Conduct for the 2026 City Council

Councilor Lovewell stated that the previous code of conduct is a good guideline for the Council to start with.

Councilor Bagley explained that he believes that there are some vague items that should be clarified such as under #5 where it says, “will cooperate”.

Councilor Kelley stated that she would like to see something in the code of conduct regarding public posting on social media as a member of the Council.

Councilor Lovewell stated that posting on a personal account is one thing, but posting on social media as a councilor or public official is another.

Councilor Bagley stated that he agrees that it should include something but should not impede their freedom of speech.

Council was instructed to send suggested edits to the City Manager for preparation of the Code of Conduct.

c. Discussion on adopting a resolution stating the elected officials' position on MaineDOT Aroostook River Bridge Project

Councilor Knight Phair asked if we know the results from the online survey.

Manager Thompson explained that we have not heard anything regarding the results of the survey yet. She has recently attended a meeting with surrounding communities regarding the project and they are trying to chart a path forward. She stated that she is requesting feedback from MeDOT from the online survey to try to gather a consensus of the peoples comments. She was made aware that there were a lot of comments received through the survey and that the City has a link on the website for any information that they receive regarding the bridge project is found there for the public to help with transparency and to get the information out.

Councilor Knight Phair explained that the people deserve transparency through this.

Councilor Watson stated that he had heard that the reason for the repair rather than a replacement is because of how the funds were allocated at a state level. He was told that there is money for repairs, but not for new builds.

Councilor Knight Phair stated that they may also be trying to maintain this bridge because of its historical significance.

Councilor Bagley explained that he does not think they did a good job at exhausting all of the options and that there has got to be other ways to get this done.

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

Councilor Bagley stated that the last Planning Board meeting had to be cancelled due to not having a quorum. They have scheduled the next meeting for February 12th.

Councilor Lovewell is looking forward to the upcoming year and the projects coming up.

Deputy Mayor Smith stated that he is going to work on scheduling a capital budget meeting in the near future.

Councilor Knight Phair stated that she is excited to get started.

Councilor Kelley stated that she is eager to get projects started.

Councilor Watson agreed and stated that he is ready to get started with upcoming projects.

Mayor Boma stated that she is going to work to schedule a Public Safety Building meeting in the near future.

Council Agenda Item #13: Next Regular Meeting is January 26, 2026

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 Watson to enter into executive session at 7:07PM for union negotiations pursuant to 1 MRSA §405.6.D Fire Department Union.

Roll Call Vote: D. Bagley – Yes, J. Kelley – Yes, L. Knight Phair – Yes, T. Lovewell – Yes, J. Smith – Yes, P. Watson – Yes, C. Boma– Yes (So voted)

Council members present for Executive session: Mayor Boma, Deputy Mayor Smith, Councilors Kelley, Knight Phair, Lovewell, and Watson. Councilor Bagley was present via Zoom.

Staff present (in person): Fire Chief Lajoie, Finance Director Carl Grant, City Manager Penny Thompson.

Attorney present via Zoom: Ann Freeman from Bernstein-Shur

Council exited executive session at 8:23PM.

Guidance was given, no action taken.

Fire Chief Lajoie left the meeting.

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

Motion made by Deputy Mayor Smith, seconded by Councilor Watson to go into executive session at 8:25PM for union negotiations pursuant to 1 MRSA §405.6.D, Police Department Union.

Roll Call Vote: D. Bagley – Yes, J. Kelley – Yes, L. Knight Phair – Yes, T. Lovewell – Yes, J. Smith – Yes, P. Watson – Yes, C. Boma – Yes (So voted)

Councilor Kelley left the meeting.

Elected Officials Present (in person): Councilor Lovewell, Deputy Mayor Smith, Mayor Courtney Boma, Councilor Knight Phair, and Councilor Watson

Elected Officials Present via Teams: Councilor Bagley

Staff present (in person): Finance Director Grant, Manager Thompson

Staff present (via Teams): Patrolman Kevin St. Peter, Patrolman John Stewart

Others present via Teams: Deb Batista and Philip Matthews representing the New England Police Benevolent Association, Inc.

Council exited Executive Session at 9:18PM

Guidance was given on Patrol contract that the modifications were acceptable, and a contract can be brought to the next City Council meeting for ratification.

Guidance was given on the Sergeant contract.

Guidance was given on staff request to advertise a hiring bonus for blue pin officers with 5+ years of experience.

Council Agenda Item #15: Adjournment

Motion made by Deputy Mayor Smith, seconded by Councilor Watson to adjourn the meeting at 9:20PM

Roll Call Vote: D. Bagley – Yes, J. Kelley – Absent, L. Knight Phair – Yes, T. Lovewell – Yes, J. Smith – Yes, P. Watson – Yes, C. Boma – Yes (So voted)

Danielle Brissette, Secretary