Council Agenda Item #1: Roll Call

The Caribou City Council held a regular City Council Meeting on Monday, May 11, 2026, in the Council Chambers with the following members present: Councilors Knight Phair, Lovewell, and Watson were present for the meeting. Councilor Kelley was present via Zoom. Mayor Boma, Deputy Mayor Smith, and Councilor Bagley were absent from the meeting. At the start of the meeting there was a consensus between the councilors present that Councilor Watson would lead the meeting.

Department Managers Lisa Plourde (Housing Director), Brian Lajoie (Fire Chief), Tim St. Peter (Code Enforcement), Eric Sanderson (Economic & Community Development Specialist) and Corey Saucier (Police Chief), were present for the meeting.

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

The meeting was broadcast via Spectrum and YouTube.

Council Agenda Item #2: Invocation/Inspirational Thought

Councilor Lovewell read an invocation.

Council Agenda Item #3: Pledge of Allegiance

Councilor Watson 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

Councilor Watson read a letter from business owners at 118 Bennett Drive:

"The Business Tenants of 118 Bennett Drive

5/7/2026
To: The Caribou City Council
Re: The pending order for the building to be vacated on 5/14/26.
We, the tenants of 118 Bennett Drive, are asking for reconsideration of the pending order for us to vacate the building on 5/14/26. Our understanding is that the sprinkler system in the former Sherwin Williams unit is not functioning. It is also our understanding that the businesses currently occupying the building have functioning sprinkler systems. We feel that in the event of a fire originating in the former Sherwin Williams unit which is at very end of the building, there would still be ample time for us to evacuate. Most of the tenants remaining in the building can evacuate within five seconds. Also, there are concrete walls separating the older section of the building and the newer section of the building which is occupied by Russell Clowes Insurance Agency and Norseman Barbering Company. Finally, the current tenants only occupy the building

during daytime and evening hours. There are no overnight occupants who sleep in the building. We appreciate your consideration and thank you for your time."

Tim St. Peter read a memo he prepared into the meeting:

"Madam Mayor and Honorable Council Members,

On April 14th, I received a complaint stating that the sprinkler system of 118 Bennett Drive had been turned off due to a head breaking, causing a water leak. Further conversation with the complainant found that the system had frozen causing the breakage and that these items were noted in an inspection report from March.

I contacted the Eastern Fire and requested a copy of the inspection report. Upon review of the report, multiple deficiencies were noted by the inspector. The report states that a third of the building is unprotected due to a sectional valve being turned off. Also noted in the report is that the system was tagged with an emergency bulletin (red tag).

On April 22nd, I mailed the first notice of violation with a deadline of April 30th. I notified the tenants of the building that I had sent a notice to the owner, advised them of the process and what may happen if the building was not brough into compliance. No contact from the owner was received. I inquired with Eastern Fire to see if repairs had been scheduled. As of May 1st, no repairs had been scheduled. A second notice was sent out on May 1st, with a deadline of May 11th. Again, I notified the tenants of building. This time in writing with a notice that if compliance was not reached the building would need to be vacated until repairs are made.

NFPA Code requires the building to be completely protected. (2016 NFPA 4.1 & 8.1.1) The International Property Maintenance Code, which is adopted locally, requires the owner of a building to maintain sprinkler systems in accordance with NFPA 25. (2015 IPMC 704.1.1) While the sprinkler system in the tenants' spaces is, to my knowledge, working, the system needs to be working completely to effectively protect the building. Without the full system operation, a fire would be too large for the sprinkler system to effective but the time it reached a protected space. "

Mr. St. Peter explained that there is a way for the City to make the repairs to the property and then assess the amount to the property taxes if that route is needed to be taken.

Manager Thompson stated that the Code officer is working to get a quote for repair.

Council had a brief discussion regarding needing the repairs completed in a timely manner, and how the City is willing to work with the business owners.

Jaimi Irving, Owner of Norseman Barbering, Co.

Ms. Irving spoke with concern regarding what the landlord may and may not do. She explained that some businesses are leaving the location. She explained that it is a rollercoaster with the landlord, and that she has been told that the building is condemnable and that it can't be insured.

Council Agenda Item #6: Minutes

a. Minutes from the March 9, 2026, City Council Workshop

Motion made by Councilor Knight Phair, seconded by Councilor Lovewell to accept the minutes from March 9, 2026, as presented.

Roll Call Vote: J. Kelley – Yes, L. Knight Phair – Yes, T. Lovewell – Yes, P. Watson – Yes (So Voted)

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

a. Public Works Bids for the 2026 Season – PW Director Chris Perkins

Chris Perkins, Public Works Director presented the Council with the bid results for the 2026 season, as well as suggestions for bid acceptance.

Motion made by Councilor Knight Phair, seconded by Councilor Lovewell to accept the bid suggestions from page 5 of the Council Packet.

- Paint Striping: Fineline Pavement Striping
- Culverts: E.J. Prescott
- Winter Sand: JBBC
- Paving: Soderberg Construction
- Shim & Patch: Soderberg Construction
- Crack Sealing (Caribou Municipal Airport): 180 Sealcoating

Roll Call Vote: J. Kelley – Yes, L. Knight Phair – Yes, T. Lovewell – Yes, P. Watson – Yes (So Voted)

b. Appointment of Election Workers for 2026 to 2028 – City Clerk Danielle Brissette

Motion made by Councilor Lovewell, seconded by Councilor Knight Phair to approve the list of Election clerks as presented.

The appointment would be from May 1, 2026 to April 30, 2028.

2026-2028 Election Clerks:

Patty Adams
Barbara Aiken
Joan Albert
Janice Beaulieu
Sheri Blackstone
Rhonda Bossie
Beth Collamore
Karen Conroy
Julie Cook
Patty Corriveau
Darylen Cote
Ashley Cyr
Carole Doody
Bill Francis
Cherie Garman
Dale Gordon
Diane Gove
Gail Hagelstein
Carla Hanson
Hannah Holmes
Meagan (Corriveau) Irving
Kay Judkins
Dave Keaton
Jacqueline Lambert

Anissa Levesque
Elizabeth Long
Idella Marquis
Linda McLaughlin
Betty McNeal
Jennifer Olson
Katherine Panaro
Dawn Peterson
Chad Saunders
Janet Schofield
Steven Stubbs
Deborah Sirois
Nancy Solman
Karen Thibodeau
Nancy Todd

Roll Call Vote: J. Kelley – Yes, L. Knight Phair – Yes, T. Lovewell – Yes, P. Watson – Yes (So Voted)

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

a. Public Hearing for Economic Development CDBG Grant for BEE VR Theme Park

Open Public Hearing 6:29 PM

Eric Sanderson, Economic & Community Development Specialist, explained that the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, administered by the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and by the Department of Economic & Community Development (DECD) in Maine, supports projects that benefit low and moderate income persons and jobs and addresses urgent community needs. Through the allocation with DECD, the City of Caribou is allowed one Community Development Block Grant Program award each year for each sub-category of project type. For the 2025 award year funding under the Economic Development CDBG program, the City has worked with Travis Bernaiche, of BEE VR Theme Park on Sweden Street to submit an application that will support creation of a low to moderate income job in Caribou.

During the Fall of 2025, City staff worked with Mr. Bernaiche and our partners at Northern Maine Development Commission (NMDC) to submit a preliminary application of our intent to apply to DECD for a CDBG Economic Development Program grant. In January of 2026, the City received notification from DECD that upon review of the application, we were invited to formally apply for the Economic Development Program Grant in the amount of $30,000 which would support one full-time equivalent job for low to moderate income individuals. Under the CDBG rules, the City must hold two public hearings and provide municipal legislative body approval for the grant. The first hearing, where the City Council voted to apply for and receive the CDBG funds, was held on February 23rd. This serves as the second hearing, after confirmation of the award from DECD, which the City Council must formally accept.

There were no comments made by the public.

Closed Public Hearing: 6:31 PM

Motion made by Councilor Lovewell, seconded by Councilor Knight Phair to accept the Community Development Block Grant Economic Development Program grant for BEE VR Theme Park, located at 284 Sweden Street.

Roll Call Vote: T. Lovewell – Yes, L. Knight Phair – Yes, Kelley – Yes, Watson – Yes (So Voted)

b. Public Hearing on Ordinance 01, 2026 Series, Amend Chapter 13 Section 13-204 Land Use Table

Open Public Hearing: 6:34 PM

There were no comments made by the public.

Closed Public Hearing: 6:35 PM

Motion made by Councilor Lovewell, seconded by Councilor Knight Phair to approve Ordinance 1, 2026 Series Amending Chapter 13 Section 13-204 Land Use Table.

Roll Call Vote: T. Lovewell – Yes, L. Knight Phair – Yes, Kelley – Yes, Watson – Yes (So Voted)

c. Public Hearing on Ordinance 02, 2026 Series, Amend Chapter 13 Section 13-700.39 General Requirements for Land Uses, Registered Medical Cannabis Dispensaries

Open Public Hearing: 6:35 PM

There were no comments made by the public.

Closed Public Hearing: 6:35 PM

Motion made by Councilor Lovewell, seconded by Councilor Knight Phair to approve Ordinance 02, 2026 Series, Amending Chapter 13 Section 13 700.39 General Requirements for Land Uses, Registered Medical Cannabis Dispensaries.

Roll Call Vote: T. Lovewell – Yes, L. Knight Phair – Yes, Kelley – Yes, Watson – Yes (So Voted)

d. Public Hearing on Ordinance 03, 2026 Series, Amending Chapter 13 Section 13-700.41 Prohibiting Adult Use Cannabis

Open Public Hearing 6:36 PM

There were no comments made by the public.

Closed Public Hearing: 6:37 PM

Motion made by Councilor Lovewell, seconded by Councilor Knight Phair to approve Ordinance 03, 2026 Series, Amending Chapter 13 Section 13 700.41 Prohibiting Adult Use Cannabis.

Roll Call Vote: T. Lovewell – Yes, L. Knight Phair – Yes, Kelley – Yes, Watson – Yes (So Voted)

e. Public Hearing on Ordinance 04, 2026 Series, Amending Chapter 7 Section 11 Registered Medical Cannabis Dispensaries

Open Public Hearing: 6:38 PM

There were no comments made by the public.

Closed Public Hearing: 6:39 PM

Motion made by Councilor Locewell, seconded by Councilor Knight Phair to approve Ordinance 04, 2026 Series, Amending Chapter 7 Section 11 Registered Medical Cannabis Dispensaries.

Roll Call Vote: T. Lovewell – Yes, L. Knight Phair – Yes, Kelley – Yes, Watson – Yes (So Voted)

Council Agenda Item #9: Reports by Staff and Committees

a. February 2026 Financial Reports – Finance / HR Director Carl Grant

Carl Grant, Finance Director reviewed the February 2026 Financial reports for the City.

Motion made by Councilor Knight Phair, seconded by Councilor Lovewell to accept the February financial report as presented.

Roll Call Vote: T. Lovewell – Yes, L. Knight Phair – Yes, Kelley – Yes, Watson – Yes (So Voted)

b. March 2026 Financial Reports – Finance / HR Director Carl Grant

Carl Grant, Finance Director reviewed the March 2026 Financial reports for the City.

Motion made by Councilor Knight Phair, seconded by Councilor Lovewell to accept the March financial report as presented.

Roll Call Vote: T. Lovewell – Yes, L. Knight Phair – Yes, Kelley – Yes, Watson – Yes (So Voted)

c. Retirement Contribution Memo – Finance / HR Director Carl Grant

Carl Grant, Finance Director and HR Director explained that he is proposing a change to the personnel handbook. He explained that this is working towards the goals that came forward last year with the study for wages and employee benefits. The changes proposed would bring the non-union employees closer to what unionized employees are receiving for retirement.

Mr. Grant asked the Council to introduce the changes to the personnel handbook as an ordinance so that a public hearing could be held at a later date.

Councilor Lovewell introduced the changes.

d. Dangerous Buildings Report – Code Enforcement Officer Tim. St. Peter

Tim St. Peter, Code Enforcement Officer explained that the City is working with several different properties including 374 W. Presque Isle Rd, 8 Spring Street, and 96 Main Street.

Mr. St. Peter explained that he would be working to schedule hearings for future meetings on the properties.

e. City Manager's Report

Manager Thompson reviewed the City Manager's Report dated May 11, 2026.

Council Agenda Item #10: Unfinished Business

a. Fleet Vehicle Proposal by Police Department & Enterprise – Police Chief Corey Saucier

Police Chief, Corey Saucier provided the city Council with a copy of the proposed lease agreement and highlighted the changes that were made since the last meeting.

Council noticed that there are still some areas that would need to be updated to remove the sales tax as the City is tax exempt. They have also requested an insurance quote for insuring a fleet of leased vehicles.

Councilor Watson stated that it would should to be brought back to a full council for further consideration.

b. Fire Department Ladder Truck acquisition options – Fire Chief Brian Lajoie

Rick Emmonds of Allegiance Fire & Rescue and Angie Deming of Republic First National joined via Zoom to discuss Lease and Purchase agreements and options. They explained that since the COVID pandemic the price of the apparatus has gone up by 45-50%. There are different options available for terms of loans or leases.

Council asked if they went the route with the companies would they be able to lock in a price, and what would happen for changes and requirements in the future such as emission changes.

Mr. Emmonds explained that you could lock in the rates for a 36-40 month term, and that if changes to emissions happens in the future as planned that price is included in the quote.

Motion made by Councilor Lovewell, seconded by Councilor Knight Phair to table the discussion until a future meeting with the full council present.

Roll Call Vote: T. Lovewell – Yes, L. Knight Phair – Yes, Kelley – Yes, Watson – Yes (So Voted)

c. 2026 Municipal Budget

Motion made by Councilor Knight Phair, seconded by Councilor Lovewell to table the discussion regarding the 2026 Municipal Budget until the next meeting.

Roll Call Vote: T. Lovewell – Yes, L. Knight Phair – Yes, Kelley – Yes, Watson – Yes (So Voted)

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

a. CDBG Public Service Program Grant – Economic & Community Development Specialist Eric Sanderson

Eric Sanderson, Economic & Community Development Specialist for the City of Caribou explained that the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, administered by the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and by the Department of Economic & Community Development (DECD) in Maine, supports projects that benefit low- and moderate-income persons and jobs and addresses urgent community needs. Through the allocation with DECD, the City of Caribou is allowed one Community Development Block Grant Program award each year per CDBG program sub-area. For the 2025 award year funding for the Public Service program area, the City has worked with the Children's Museum of Aroostook County (CMAC) to submit Letter of Intent (LOI) for an application that will create a hands-on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) program at the Museum. The program, proposed as "Caribou STEM Start", aligns with CDBG objectives and would request $50,000 to hire a teacher, invest in learning equipment, and create a foundational educational program in Caribou. The program would also serve as a reliable after-school care option throughout the academic year, with access to affordable child-care a huge issue in Aroostook County.

Mr. Sanderson stated that as of right now, City staff has worked with CMAC staff and our partners at Northern Maine Development Commission (NMDC) to submit a preliminary LOI of our intent to apply to DECD for a CDBG Public Service Program grant. Under the CDBG rules, the City must hold a public hearing and provide municipal legislative body approval to formally apply the grant if invited to apply by DECD. Due to this being a later application in the CDBG program cycle, the LOI deadline of April 24th, and applications are due by June 5th, 2026. This leaves just over a month to receive legislative body approval to apply for the grant if invited to apply.

Mr. Sanderson is asking for a special meeting of the City Council to consent to formal application for the grant. As of writing this memo, the City has not heard back from DECD on an invitation to apply, thus, a hearing could not be scheduled for the May City Council meeting. The June 5th application deadline falls before the regularly-scheduled June council meeting on June 15th. If the City wishes to apply, a hearing would need to be scheduled before Friday, June 5th. The first Monday in June is 1st.

Motion made by Councilor Lovewell, seconded by Councilor Knight Phair to schedule a Special City Council Meeting for June 1st to hold a public hearing for a Community Development Block Grant Public Service Program grant for the Children's Museum of Aroostook County, located at 52 Sweden Street.

Roll Call Vote: T. Lovewell – Yes, L. Knight Phair – Yes, Kelley – Yes, Watson – Yes (So Voted)

b. Motions for June 9, 2026, State Primary and RSU #39 Budget Validation Referendum Election

Motion made by Councilor Lovewell, seconded by Councilor Knight Phair to set the opening time as 8:00 a.m., and to appoint Danielle Brissette as Election Warden, Kristina Drinkall and Amber Madore as Deputy Wardens for the June 9, 2026 Election.

Roll Call Vote: T. Lovewell – Yes, L. Knight Phair – Yes, Kelley – Yes, Watson – Yes (So Voted)

c. Countersign the RSU #39 Budget Validation Referendum notice

Motion made by Councilor Lovewell, seconded by Councilor Knight Phair to countersign the RSU#39 Budget Validation Referendum Notice.

Roll Call Vote: T. Lovewell – Yes, L. Knight Phair – Yes, Kelley – Yes, Watson – Yes (So Voted)

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

Councilor Knight Phair gave a shout out to Gary for all of his work in the community.

Councilor Lovewell commended the Riverfront Redevelopment Committee for all of their work, and stated that they are doing a great job.

Councilor Watson thanked everyone for their support as he chaired the meeting, and stated that there are lots of great things happening with the riverfront. He also stated that there will be a memorial day parade that goes from the Court house to the Veteran's Park. He would also like to see some information brought forward regarding emergency management from the City side of things.

Council Agenda Item #13: Next meeting: Special City Council Meeting June 1, 2026, Regular City Council Meeting June 15, 2026

Council Agenda Item #14: Executive Session(s) (May be called to discuss matters identified under MRSA, Title 1, §4056)

a. Executive Session for economic development pursuant to 1 MRSA. Title 1 §405.6.C (Power Plant Sale)

Motion made by Councilor Lovewell, seconded by Councilor Knight Phair to enter into executive session to discuss economic development pursuant to 1 MRSA. Title 1 §405.6.C regarding the Power Plant Sale.

Roll Call Vote: T. Lovewell – Yes, L. Knight Phair – Yes, Kelley – Yes, Watson – Yes (So Voted)

Council exited executive session at 8:54PM

No action taken.

Council Agenda Item #15: Adjournment

Motion made by Councilor Knight Phair, seconded by Councilor Lovewell to adjourn the meeting at 8:58PM.

Roll Call Vote: T. Lovewell – Yes, L. Knight Phair – Yes, Kelley – Yes, Watson – Yes (So Voted)

Danielle Brissette, Secretary