

Town Council Meeting
February 15, 2022

Open Town Council Meeting: Councilor Chair Mark Ketch opened the Town Council meeting; all members were present except for Councilor Delaware who was excused. Also present was Town Manager, Melissa Doane.

Review of Minutes: Councilor Ketch made a motion to accept the 2/1/2022 Town Council minutes as presented, seconded by Councilor Clemons, vote 4/0.

Citizens Request: None

Managers' Report: Melissa stated that she had received notice from the Town of Alton that they are interested in joining the Town of Bradley and assisting with the costs associated with the school choice subject. As they have a smaller population and only one representative on the RSU board, they would be willing to pay 1/3 of the cost.

The office remodel is almost complete, the new computer is going to be installed next week and the glass has been ordered for the window. Melissa did provide information that the cost has come in slightly higher than expected. The original estimate was for \$20,350 and the new estimate is \$22,308. This increase includes a closet being added to the Town Council room for additional storage and supplies that she had not anticipated.

Maine Forest and Logging Museum is doing their annual sponsorship campaign. In the budget discussions the Town Council approved a donation of \$150.00. The minimum sponsorship for this year is \$200.00. Melissa can use funds from the recreational account if Town Council is in agreement with the appropriation. Councilor Lugdon made a motion to approve the appropriation, seconded by Councilor Clemons, vote 4/0.

Melissa has learned that the legislature made two changes to the fees that can be charged for public records under the Maine's Freedom of Access Act. These changes were effective October of 2021. It is therefore necessary to make modifications to the Policy Governing Access to Public Records and the Town of Bradley fee schedule. These changes include increase chargeable staff time from \$15 to \$25 per hour for search and compiling of records, however the first 2 hours are free, formerly the first hour was free. Also, a change was made to limit the charge for standard copies to be .10 per copy. Councilor Wade suggested some corrections and word changes. Councilor Lugdon also suggested adding the research fee to the Town of Bradley Fee Schedule. Melissa will make the requested changes and bring back to Town Council.

New Business: Councilor Lugdon would like to invite the City of Old Town to a meeting to discuss the increase in the ambulance fee. He has reviewed the budget information they provided and has come concerns. Councilor Ketch stated that it would be helpful to know the number of calls and the ambulance response to each municipality.

Unfinished Business: Melissa presented changes to the budget which included the large increase in the expected school choice tuition. She had originally budgeted \$40,000 however after speaking the Barbara at the superintendent's office she has increased that to \$65,000. This conversation started when the tuition bill for 2021-2022 was received. This bill is \$20,250.56 over the budgeted amount. Melissa further explained that this will decrease any amount that would be placed in undesignated fund balance at the end of the fiscal year due to gained revenue. Melissa further stated that her conversation with Barbara provided her with the knowledge that \$237,666 is directly taken out of the RSU budget to pay for these tuition students. Councilor Ketch referenced the budget memo which highlighted that it is a possibility to use the Bradley's surplus in the RSU, that has a balance of \$61,000, when computing the tax rate to offset the increase in tuition costs. He also added that the Superintendent had provided information last year that this fund would likely increase due to the increased in state funding that was received by the RSU after the budget had been established.

Councilor Ketch noted that there was an increase in revenues in the amount of \$60,000, Melissa explained that includes an increase in excise collection of \$30,000 and an increase in municipal revenue sharing. She also added that if the governor's supplementary budget is approved the revenue projection could increase more.

Councilor Lugdon stated that he had noticed a decrease in the checking and investment interest. Melissa stated that they are getting less than 1% on the general fund checking, adding that is the norm in the current market. In addition, municipal investments are highly secured and do not receive a high rate of return. Melissa identified that in the current budget they have only received \$1147 interest on the general fund checking and \$9000 was budgeted, in the previous year the amount received was \$3681 with \$7000 budgeted. In regards to investments the amount received in interest is \$2851 in which \$5500 was budgeted, in the previous year the amount received was \$4412.39 and \$5500 was budgeted.

Councilor Lugdon also questioned if there had ever been any change to the cemetery superintendent. Melissa stated that the line item had stayed the same since the bylaws were created in 2007 or 2008.

Municipal Warrants: Councilor Ketch made a motion to accept the municipal warrants as presented, seconded by Councilor Clemons, vote 4/0.

Next Meeting: The next meeting was set for March 1, 2022

Adjourn: Councilor Wade made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilor Clemons, vote 4/0.

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