

Town Council Meeting

July 19, 2022

Open Town Council Meeting: Councilor's Wade, Clemons, Delaware and Lugdon were present as well as Town Manager Melissa Doane. Councilor Ketch was not present due to illness. He did try to join via zoom but the council members could not hear him. Councilor Duane Lugdon was nominated to represent chair for the night. Vote 4/0

Review of Minutes: Councilor Wade made a motion to accept the Town Council minutes for 07/19/2022, seconded by Councilor Clemons, vote 4/0.

Citizens Request: None

Managers' Report: Melissa provided to Town Council a memo outlining the non-profit requests for fiscal year 2022-2023. These included Old Town Museum at \$100, Maine Forest and Logging Museum at \$200, Penquis at \$7,446, Maine Public Radio at \$100, the Lifelight Foundation at \$746 and Welcome to Housing Home Good Bank Inc. with a non-specific request. The budget provided for \$1000 to be donated to non-profits, therefore Town Manager Melissa Doane requested guidance on the distribution. Manager Doane added that in fiscal year 2021-2022 \$100 was donated to the Old Town Museum, \$750 to Lifelight and \$150 to Maine Forest and Logging Museum. Councilor Lugdon suggested to replicate the values of last year to this year second by Councilor Clemons. Manager Doane made a suggested to have \$700 go to Lifelight, \$100 to Old Town Museum and \$200 to Maine Forest and Logging Museum to help with the increased cost of advertising. Councilor Delaware made motion to amend the new amounts. Vote 4/0

The Maine Municipal Association Executive Committee voting ballot is ready, those included are Diane Hines Town Manager of Ludlow and Reed plantation for Vice President, members are Ivan McPike, Mayor of Town of Hampden, Phillip Crowell, City Manager of Auburn, and Anthony Ward Town Manager of Casco. Town Council had authorized Town Manager Doane to cast the vote. Councilor Wade made motion to approve the vote, second by Councilor Wade. Vote 4/0

Manager Doane met with the Department of Marine Resources on June 8th, also included were Maine Forest and Logging Museum and David Huntress the engineer. The plans were reviewed

for the Blackman Stream project, which includes upgrades to the spillway at Maine Forest and Logging Museum, creation of a weir system and removal of an old roll dam. Discussions focused on getting a water level of 125.8, permitting, fisheries and construction timeline. Maine Department of Environment Protection was at the site on June 12 and provided information on permitting. It will be necessary for Maine Forest and Logging to create and submit with the permit a long-term maintenance plan. With submission of this permit, it usually is approved within 30 days and a fee up to \$300, there is hope that construction would start in late August, early September. Manager Doane would like authorization to use funds appropriated to the Blackman Stream Dam Commission in the fiscal year of 2022-2023 budget to pay for the permit funding. She is not sure if those funds will be reimbursed by DMR, however she will ask. Manager Doane has forwarded the contract from DMR to the municipal attorney before entering into the agreement, he is away until July 21. Manager Doane has set up a meeting for tomorrow 07/20/2022 around 10:30 with the Town of Clifton, Town of Eddington, Chemo Pond Lake Association, Maine Forest and Logging Museum, DEP and Department of Marine Resources. She is hopeful to do another meeting after that update to contract with Thornton Construction. Councilor Clemons set motion to use the funds, Councilor Wade second the motion. Vote 4/0

The unpaid real estate taxes were transferred and filed to lien on July 12, 2022. There are 25 real estate accounts outstanding which is not a uncommon amount of liens to be filed each year.

ND Paper is having an open house/ tour on August 11, 2022 at 2:00p. Manager Doane will be at Sugarloaf for the annual MTCMA conference, if a Town Council member would like to represent the Town of Bradley, she asks that they would let her know.

April has committed to 7 trainings between now and the end of the year for the Town Clerk position. Manager Doane applied for and received funding through the Harold Alford Center for the Advancement of Maine's Workforce. This funding will pay up to \$900 of these trainings. The only cost the Town would have for an expense is mileage reimbursement once the grant is received. Councilor Delaware did ask if April had attended any classes yet in which Manager Doane did response that April did go to one class in Augusta last week and she seemed to have enjoyed it.

Manager Doane stated that she did receive additional information from the State DOT that the only guarantee they can offer is to cap the local share at \$108,600 for the sidewalk project. The sidewalk would be in the Village, from Bullen Street to Cram Street. With the \$30,000 voter approved funding that would leave \$78,600 remaining. Councilor Lugdon would like in writing that the amount is capped at \$108,600. The uncommitted ARPA funds are \$77,729.57. Councilor Wade suggest to move on with the project a Councilor Lugdon motioned to approve the construction given that the funding level is capped and that we use the ARPA funding to cover the additional cost, second the motion was Councilor Delaware. Vote 4/0

Manager Doane requested and received an update from Greg Im the attorney for Dummond Woodsum regarding the option to phase out school choice. This information was provided to the Town Council, it is in his option that amending the RSU Reorganization plan will not provide this. At this time, it is suggested that if the Town of Bradley would like to phase out school choice, then it would need to go through the legislature for a change. Councilor Wade asked if it would be best for RSU 34 to take it up that far verses municipality to do so. Manager Doane stated that it not so much about school choice, but for the reimbursement of the funds. The Town of Bradley does not get to vote on the budget for schools as they are not part of the community in which RSU34 is located. Manager Doane feels that talking with the School Board Committee and seeing what they say might be a good start. Councilor Delaware believes she is the one that will be attending the next School Board meeting and if possible, Manager Doane is going to try to go to the meeting as well.

New Business: Eric Gifford from Bradley Fire Department informed the Council that the Town of Bradley had been last evaluated in 1995, he has been in contact with ISO on the ratings, there have been new hydrants, new station, new waterlines, and better firefighting training. He met with them last Monday and the ISO is in review. Once he has heard back from them, he will let everyone know what was said.

Melissa provided to Town Council with several options regarding setting the municipal tax rate. These options included using no RSU surplus setting the rate at \$15.60 per thousand, using \$20,000 RSU surplus setting the rate at \$15.50 per thousand, using \$30,000 setting the rate at \$15.40 per thousand, using \$40,000 setting the rate at \$15.30 per thousand and using \$50,000 setting the rate at \$15.20 per thousand. Melissa stated that the mill rate for 21-22 was \$15.20 per thousand and the RSU fund balance is \$134,913. The RSU would like the Town to use the fund balance as it has been on the books since 2009 and the last use was in 2015, however, Melissa cautioned that using a high amount as revenue this year and none next year will raise the mill rate, she suggested a gradual use. Councilor Wade made a motion to set the tax rate at 15.60 per thousand and not use any fund balance, there was no second so the motion failed. Councilor Wade made a motion to set the tax rate at 15.50 and use \$20,000 of the fund balance, seconded by Councilor Clemons, vote 4/0

Motion to set the rate of interest for delinquent taxes for the 2022-2023 Tax Commitment at a rate of 4%. Councilor Wade asked Manager Doane if 4% was the maximum that they could use and yes that is the maximum. Councilor Delaware set motion to accept the rate of interest, second by Councilor Clemons. Vote 4/0

Motion to set the interest rate payable on approved abatements for the 2022-2023 Tax Commitment at a rate of 1%. This would allow anyone that receives an abatement and has paid the tax will receive 1% interest back in addition to the abatement. Councilor Delaware set motion to accept the interest rate, second by Councilor Wade. Vote 4/0

Motion to set interest rate payable on prepayments of 2023-2024 taxes collected at 0%. Motion set by Councilor Delaware, second by Councilor Clemons. Vote 4/0

Motion to set the due dates for the 2022-2023 Tax Commitment as September 30, 2022 and February 24, 2023. Councilor Wade set the motion, second by Councilor Wade. Vote 4/0

Unfinished Business: Councilor Wade was asking about the LD290 form, forms are being made up by Maine Revenue Service, they will be available around September 1, 2022. It would not go into effect until the 2023-2024 tax year. Some stipulations would be that the home owner has to have had the homestead exemption for the last 10 years and be at the age of 65 years or older. Councilor Wade asked if there was a way the Town could know how many homeowners this would affect, at this time Manager Doane did let him know that there is no true way to know. Manager Doane did state that Trio, the Town's software system would be updated to reflect the new policy once it goes into effect and will make it easier for the Town to have a better understanding of which residents it would affect as well as make it easier imputing the information into the system.

Municipal Warrants: Motion to accept the municipal warrants as presented. Councilor Lugdon set the motion, second by Councilor Wade. Vote 4/0

Next Meeting: Tuesday August 2, 2022

Motion to adjourn: Councilor Delaware, seconded by Councilor Wade, vote 5/0.