

Fort Fairfield Town Council Monthly Meeting  
Council Chambers  
Wednesday, October 16, 2019  
6:00 P.M.

I. Roll Call

Staff: Andrea Powers, Billie Jo Sharpe, Tony Levesque, Darren Hanson, Vince Baldwin, Chief Newell, Kevin Senal, Ryan Eagles, Jessie Cormier.

Councilors: All Councilors are present.

Citizens: 9 including media.

II. Prayer

Tony Levesque offered the prayer.

III. Pledge to the Flag

IV. Public Comment Period

There were no public comments.

V. \*Weather Ready Nation Ambassador of Excellence Award, Priscilla Farrar, Presenter

Patrick Maloit presented a “Weather Ready Nation Ambassador of Excellence award to Chief Newell on behalf of Fort Fairfield Public Safety.

VI. Correspondence and Reports

A. Letter from MSAD 20 Superintendent, Timothy L. Doak

Ms. Powers shared a letter from Superintendent, Timothy L. Doak thanking the Town of Fort Fairfield Highway Department for a “wonderful job in completing the much needed upgrade to Fort Fairfield Middle High School sidewalks and the landing at the main entrance area.

B. Licenses and Permits

As of October 16, 2019 we have received a copy of an application for malt, vinous and spirituous license renewal for the Knights of Columbus #1753.

C. Financial Report

We have received September revenue sharing in the amount of \$34,150.12.

YTD collections are \$97,207.92.

Total excise tax collected for 1<sup>st</sup> quarter was \$228,729.58 (36.60% of budget); State revenue sharing \$97,207.92 (22.41% of budget) Real Estate & Personal Property taxes collected during the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter were \$169,383.98.

We filed 117 liens on 9/09/2019 (224 - 30 day notices were sent out) for a total of \$99,418.93.

As of September 30, we have collected \$11,557.39 from thirteen owners.

Loan Balances as of 9/30/2019:

Jones Fuel - \$2,330.63  
Langley #5275 - \$19,016.63  
Langley #5277 - \$6,899.37  
Pelletier - \$838.91

#### D. AWS Report – Mr. Rogeski

Board last met on September 27, 2019. The market in recyclables has pretty much crashed. We are actually spending a \$1.50 out for every dollar worth of recyclables we take in. As we go into next year's budget planning, we are probably going to be about \$75,000 behind budget this year because of the recyclable prices being lower than anticipated. There are going to be some changes as to how things are recycled and we want to let the public know that we are looking at some different alternatives to recycling.

New scales are in place and working.

AWS got a letter or warning from the DEP regarding leachate run-off. This trails back to April when we had all the snow melting and Caribou couldn't take our leachate anymore. AWS will be looking at FF Utilities District in the future to help take some of the overflow. AWS did not receive any fines for this.

AWS has been researching future Solar projects at the landfill

Discussion:

Mr. Butler – if there are going to be changes to the way things are going to be recycled then you need to get it out to the public so we don't have issues like we did during the merger.

Mr. Rogeski – the State mandates that we hit the 50% recycling mark. We have never hit that mark. We are at 38% right now, highest in the State. The real bulk of our issues right now are cardboard. We compact it, bale it and its costing more to do that than what we are getting to ship it out. As a Board we will be discussing at the

next meeting if we continue to “eat” that because that’s what the State is telling us we have to do or do we seek help from the Governor’s office on how they want to curb that so we don’t continue to eat the expense from that.

Mr. Kilcollins – Can’t they issue permits to burn the excessive revenue off the cardboard?

Mr. Rogeski – Recycling doesn’t fall under burning.

Mr. Kilcollins – Were there changes regarding textures like glossy vs cardboard?

Mr. Rogeski – We have only been able to recycle good clean corrugated cardboard.

Mr. Kilcollins – The rest of it goes in the dump?

Mr. Rogeski – Yes. There is no issue putting it there, there is plenty of room, the issue is that the State mandates us to meet a certain goal and having a buyer for it.

## VII. Old Business

### A. Public Hearing: Ordinance 19-04 – General Assistance

Mr. Kilcollins made a motion to adopt ORD 19-04 – 2019/2020 General Assistance Maximums.

Mr. Butler seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative.

### B. Public Hearing: Ordinance 19-06 – Conveyance of Municipal Land

Mr. Kilcollins made a motion to adopt Ordinance 19-06 – Conveyance of Municipal Land.

Mr. Butler seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative.

### C. Public Hearing: Ordinance 19-07 – Animal Ordinance

Mr. Kilcollins made a motion to adopt Ordinance 19-07 – Animal Ordinance.

Mr. Smith made a motion to table Ordinance 19-07 – Animal Ordinance until the next Town Council Meeting.

Mr. Butler seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative.

### D. Full-time Fire/EMS Service

Ms. Powers read the following memo to Town Council:

As a Council that has listened to their community and evaluated the present emergency medical care needs, we have focused in on patient transportation issues. What Chief Baldwin and I have researched and discussed and shown you during the workshop last week is that rapid, on-scene medical intervention produces the best patient outcomes. A Fire Based Service is best positioned to deliver this critical care, as well as rapid patient transport. Fire-based EMS provides a comprehensive approach to emergency care, with trained personnel capable of handling any complication. A better chance for patient survival is the true measure of quality for any pre-hospital emergency medical system.

A full-time Fire Based/EMS service is known for its rapid mobilization. Firefighters are the nation's first responders and fire-based EMS gets to the scene faster. The teamwork, efficient job performance, and continuous patient contact by a full-time Fire Based/EMS affects patient care in a way that cannot be qualified by dollars.

Time, it waits for no one. It's precious and when lives are on the line, every second counts. The Town of Fort Fairfield's Fire Based/EMS Service will consist of highly qualified public servants, trained to handle crises affecting both people and property. The dedication and training of these professionals and their commitment to quality of care are just two of the many reasons why fire-based Emergency Medical Service is the clear choice for the Town of Fort Fairfield.

Full-time Fire-Based/EMS is a system that works in the field, not only on paper. What we would be gaining in the areas of response time, personnel capabilities and system efficiency far exceeds the cost discussed. I have every confidence in Chief Baldwin and his ability to make this a successful full-time Fire Based/EMS service.

Ms. Powers also read a letter of support from the City Manager and the Fire Chief from Presque Isle.

Recommendation: Town Council approves a full-time Fire Based/EMS Service Department in the Town of Fort Fairfield.

Mr. Butler made a motion to approve a full-time Fire Based/EMS Service Department in the Town of Fort Fairfield.

Mr. Smith seconded.

Discussion:

Mr. Butler – When we found out we had no contract with the other service, some things were brought up at a prior Council meeting such as a citizen traveling from Bridgewater beat the ambulance to the call. There was a report of the ambulance crew not leaving for a tone-out until after they finished their dinner or cleaning their equipment and another report of it taking the Ambulance thirty minutes to get to the

border from here. “I find all three of these inexcusable.” “There is no need of it when we have a service right here downtown.”

Mr. Butler also commented that some of the responses from the Fire Department during the day time. “I was alarmed to find out that we have had a couple tone outs that nobody showed up or that the fire chief had to go down and call people. I have nothing bad to say about the Volunteer Fire department except for the fact that they have other jobs and they are working in other jobs outside of Town, they are not available to respond.” “One man cannot go out in Fire truck by himself, we all know that.” “If my house caught fire right now, I am going to have to wait for mutual aid to come from Presque Isle or Caribou before someone gets to my house.” “I think that is inexcusable.”

We have to look at the fact that we had a full-time fire department at one time and when we went to volunteer fire department we had more businesses in town where people worked in town and the business owners let their people go handle fires. The situation has changed 120 percent. Now we have people that work out of town that would love to a fire, but they can’t because of their jobs. We need to look at getting somebody here full-time to answer these calls especially during the day time.

I have had comments from people that their main concern is that when they call for an ambulance; they don’t want to wait a half hour –forty five minutes. They want an ambulance there now within reasonable time. I think we are moving ahead and it’s not a question of can Fort Fairfield afford the service, it’s can Fort Fairfield afford not to have this service?

Mr. Kilcollins – In my business, I get to talk to a lot of people. I feel that we are here for a reason, we were voted in by the people. I have a personal opinion of the matter and will set it aside and only speak of the input that I have from our taxpayers and people in our Community. The amount of input of positive versus negative was overwhelming. Despite the expense we have a lot of learning curves. This isn’t going to up and run 110 percent immediately. There is going to be some adjusting to get this to operate right.

The Fire Department staff is only what it has to work with. We have people that are a head of the department that are well trained, knowledgeable and professional at what they do, but one man can’t answer all the calls.

We have a whole community that is concerned about the Ambulance. It’s a majority rule that this is what everyone wants. I feel that our community possibly doesn’t give it enough credit because of what other communities have to work with versus what we have to work with on manpower and look what we accomplish in our community. It is unheard of in some communities. When this plan was drawn up, I feel that is very professionally done and that the Town Manager wouldn’t move forward with things if she didn’t feel it was appropriate. I trust her call in this quite highly and the staff that she has to work with. “I feel good about it.”

Mrs. Libby – commented that a lot of people are very concerned as to what this will do tax wise. I completely understand that. People are not is that this is going to generate revenue. In a five year time frame, it should pay for itself. There should not be that I can foresee a big need to increase the taxes.

This is very progressive thinking this is something that maybe comes across as very scary for our small town that isn't used to a lot of change. It is a big deal but it's something that is going to benefit us and hopefully bring businesses in town. It's something that can open a lot of doors for us right now. People need to open their minds and look at all the aspects of this versus this is going to just raise my taxes.

Mr. Smith – This is what I did for a living for forty years, so I understand this is needed and what Mitch was talking about with the volunteers not being available anymore.....”This is a nationwide trend.” When I worked in Laconia they had 30 volunteers. It went to zero and they had to put additional staff on. The people that I have talked to want an ambulance service here. It's unfortunate that we lost the ambulance service. That service was going away anyway. It was getting worse. That's why they talked about the 20 minute, 30 minute and 40 minute response times. “That's unacceptable.” When a person has a heart attack, and they're out, they have 4-6 minutes. We can have that here again; I am not worried about the expense. You are going to get revenues back. “Are you going to break even?” “I don't think so.” “Bill collecting is tough.” “It's going to be hard.” It's a service that we need and from what I have heard, it's what the people want. I haven't heard any negativity. The only concern that I have and I appreciate the letter from the Town Manager of Presque Isle but when the Chief from Caribou was here, we need to take care of our citizens. Mutual aid is a good thing, but we don't want to send our ambulance away and not have the coverage. That all has to be worked out and I know the Chief and Town Manager will work all that out. There are a lot of logistics here. There is a lot that needs to be done before this is going to start.

Mr. Babin – People that I have talked to have not had any negative comments. I have had some good educated questions that I was able to answer accordingly and not go on speculation. I do want to thank the Town Manager for the work that she has put in but also in trying to make this work financially and allowing the cuts in the budget to be able to release funds so that we can work on something positive for the community. This is a move toward the start. It's not going to be perfect, but it's going to move forward

Vote: All Affirmative.

Ms. Powers asked Council what they would like to do regarding the RFP's that have been received.

Mr. Butler made a motion to table RFP's until next meeting.

Mr. Kilcollins seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative.

## VIII. New Business

### A. Fort Fairfield Snowmobile Club Trail Grant

The Town of Fort Fairfield has provided a channel for snowmobile trail maintenance funds from the State to the Fort Fairfield Snowmobile Club since 1999.

There is very little staff time required to assist the Fort Fairfield Snowmobile Club in their grant application. The Club prepares and manages all the paperwork. The State distributes the grant funds to the municipality and the municipality appropriates the grant funds to the Club in accordance with M.R.S.A. Title 12, Chapter 220, Subchapter 8, Section 1893.3.

Recommendation: Town Council approves the Fort Fairfield Snowmobile Club's application for the Municipal/County Grant-In-Aid Program for Snowmobile Fund and authorizes the Town Manager to sign the application for financial assistance.

Mr. Butler made a motion to approve the Fort Fairfield Snowmobile Club's application for the Municipal/County Grant-In-Aid Program for Snowmobile Fund and authorizes the Town Manager to sign the application for financial assistance.

Mr. Kilcollins seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative.

#### B. Walker Capital, LLC Solar Project

Ms. Powers stated that in her research of potential solar farm possibilities for the Town of Fort Fairfield she was approached by Shane McDougall of Aviest Engineering to conduct a site survey within the Town.

They have drafted a letter of intent for the Town of an outline of proposed terms of a potential lease agreement with the Town. They are requesting the Town signs the LOI as a general understanding of the contemplated transaction and that it is not a binding contract until the transaction of the solar array is a mutually acceptable lease by both parties.

Recommendation: That Council allows the Town Manager to sign the letter of intent with Walker Capital, LLC for the possible solar array in the Town of Fort Fairfield.

Mr. Kilcollins made a motion to allow the Town Manager to sign the letter of intent with Walker Capital, LLC for the possible solar array in the Town of Fort Fairfield.

Mr. Butler seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative.

#### IX. General Election

The Maine Referendum and Local Election this year is scheduled for November 5, 2019. I am anticipating average turn-out as this is a State referendum election along with local School Board and Town Council seats.

As in the past we need to have the Council vote on:

- Opening (8:00AM) and closing (8:00PM) of the polls, which is set by the State as stated in Title 21-A §626.
- Designation of Counting location per Title 21-A §622-A.
- Designation of Voting Poll Location.
- The election warden, Billie Jo Sharpe.
- The warrant for payment for the election clerks.
- The election clerks and counters.

Recommendation: That Town Council approves as presented.

Mr. Butler made a motion to approve the Election documents as presented.

Mr. Kilcollins seconded.

Discussion: None

Vote: All Affirmative.

X. Minutes of the September 18, 2019 Regular Council Meeting

Mr. Kilcollins made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 18, 2019 regular Council Meeting.

Mr. Butler seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative.

XI. Warrants: #6; \$383,822.18 #7; \$21,850.00 #8; \$1,289.96 #9 \$241,928.80

Mr. Butler made a motion to approve Warrants #6, #7, #8, and #9 as written.

Mr. Kilcollins seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative.

XII. Other

A. Town Office Closure

MRS Title 21-A: Elections §661. REGISTRAR states that the registrar shall hold office hours as long as the polls are open on any election day for the following purposes.

1. Error in incoming voting list.
2. Change of name or address
3. Registration and enrollment.

Neither the Clerk nor Deputy Clerk can leave the polls; therefore, we will need to close the Town Office on November 5, 2019 from 12:00pm to 1:00pm to cover the lunch hour on that day for the main office.

Ms. Powers stated that Mrs. Leighton has offered to forego her lunch on this day and work through. Ms. Powers asked Council to use their own discretion regarding the office closure on November 5, 2019.

The annual Thanksgiving dinner for Town staff and the Utilities District staff at 11:30 on Thursday, November 14. As has been done in the past, the Town office, all departments and the library will be closed from 11:00am – 1:00pm so all town employees can enjoy the dinner together.

Recommendation: Town Council approves the closing of the Town Office on November 5, 2019 from 12:00pm to 1:00pm and November 14, 2019 from 11:00am to 1:00pm.

Mr. Butler made a motion to approve the closing of the Town Office on November 5, 2019 from 12:00pm to 1:00pm and November 14, 2019 from 11:00am to 1:00pm.

Mr. Kilcollins seconded.

Discussion: Mr. Babin thanked Mrs. Leighton for offering to work through lunch on November 5, 2019 and not close the office but stated that Council has voted to close the office from 12:00 pm to 1:00 pm.

Vote: All Affirmative.

### XIII. Manager's Report

The Manager's report is given to Councilors for informational purposes only.

### XIV. Executive Session

#### **M.R.S.A. §405 Personnel Matter**

Mr. Butler made a motion to go into Executive Session regarding M.R.S.A. §405 Personnel Matter.

Mr. Kilcollins seconded.

Vote: All Affirmative.

Council entered into Executive Session at 6:38 pm.

Mr. Kilcollins made a motion to come out of Executive Session.

Mr. Butler seconded.

Vote: All Affirmative.

Council came out of Executive Session at 6:45 pm.

Action taken: Mr. Butler made a motion to approve as discussed, salary for Mr. Hanson.

Mr. Kilcollins seconded.

Vote: All Affirmative.

**M.R.S.A. §405 (6) (C) Economic Development**

Mr. Kilcollins recused himself from this Executive session and left the building.

Mr. Butler made a motion to go into Executive Session regarding M.R.S.A. §405 (6) (C) Economic Development.

Mrs. Libby seconded.

Vote: All Affirmative with the exception of Mr. Kilcollins who had recused himself.

Council entered into Executive Session at 6:47 pm.

Mr. Butler made a motion to come out of Executive Session.

Mrs. Libby seconded.

Vote: All Affirmative with the exception of Mr. Kilcollins who had recused himself.

Council came out of Executive Session at 7:07 pm.

Action taken: Mr. Butler made a motion to approve the proposed recommendations made by the Planning Board dated October 7, 2019.

Mr. Smith seconded.

Vote: All Affirmative with the exception of Mr. Kilcollins who recused himself prior to Council going into Executive session and left the building.

XV. Adjournment

Mr. Butler made a motion to adjourn.

Mrs. Libby seconded.

Vote: All Affirmative with the exception of Mr. Kilcollins who recused himself prior to the later Executive Session and left the building.

Council adjourned at 7:07 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Billie Jo Sharpe  
Council Secretary