

Fort Fairfield Town Council Meeting Minutes
Council Chambers
Wednesday, November 16, 2016
6:00 P.M.

Councilors: David McCrea, Jason Barnes, John Herold, Robert Kilcollins and Scott Smith
Staff: Tim Goff, Darren Hanson, Rebecca Hersey, Ella Leighton, Tony Levesque,
Shawn Newell, James Risner and Thomas Towle
Citizens: 12 including media

- I. Roll Call – Chair David McCrea asked that the record reflect all councilors present.
- II. Prayer – Tony Levesque offered the prayer
- III. Pledge to the Flag - All in attendance pledged their allegiance to the Flag.
- IV. Public Comment-

Mr. David McCrea stated that the Town employee's Thanksgiving dinner was yesterday at the Town Garage, it was well attended and a great meal. But the thing he wanted to point out was that Mr. Risner made a presentation to Mr. Tom Towle for having been employed continuously and has done a great job for the last 35 years. That is pretty momentous, so congratulations Tom.

V. Correspondence and Reports

- A. Home Modification for Seniors Pilot Program - Fort Fairfield Housing Authority - Mr. Wayne Troicke – Several months ago we found out that Maine Housing was offering a Home Modification for Seniors Pilot Program. They asked for 5000 authorities from the State of Maine to volunteer and implement this program in their areas. The Housing Authority of Fort Fairfield volunteered and last week they were informed that they were selected as one of the five to participate. This brings in about \$50,000 worth of grant money and it is designed around the fact that it is very expensive to build elderly housing but maybe we can allow people to age in place in their own homes.

Ms. Veronica Plourde – Our goal is to enter the homes of senior citizens or disabled home owners and hopefully make minor modifications that will improve their safety in their homes. Those that will be able to participate are those over 60, must live in their home or a home owned by a family member and live within 25 miles of Fort Fairfield. Different categories are safety checks such as smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors. The initial assessment will be with Ms. Plourde and a maintenance worker, they will sit with the homeowner and find out what they would like to have modified. After that initial assessment they will schedule a day where maintenance will go in and do the work, they will make sure that the homeowner is satisfied with the work done. Six months later a follow up assessment will be made to see how these modifications have improved their quality of life. The Fort Fairfield Housing Authority can be contacted with any questions.

- B. Licenses / Permits- Ms. Hersey – There were no license or permits issued during the period of October 20, 2016 through November 16, 2016.

- C. Financial Report – Mr. James Risner – The Town’s Real Estate and Personal Property tax collections for October were \$298,529.61 compared to \$228,561.01 for October 2015. Excise collections were \$248,013.19 which is 45.09% of the budgeted amount. State revenue sharing as of October was \$73,680.93, which is 34.45% of the budgeted amount. Our expenses as of October 31st are at 34.55% of the budgeted amount. Cash flow is fair with a balance of \$122,299.59 in checking and no funds in savings after completion of Warrant #9. We have not used any funds from the Tax Anticipation Note (TAN).

Mr. Risner also attended the public hearing on the County’s 2017 budget. The finance committee and commissioners past a budget that has a 3.6% increase over last year. The increase for municipalities has not been determined as it is tied to the Town’s valuation. Mr. Risner and the Treasurer are already factoring in the 3.6% as we start building the 17/18 budget. We have also been notified that the health insurance premiums are increasing 11.25% effective January 1, 2017. Also, the ballot question regarding the minimum wage, there should be minimal impact this year. There is a little bit more in FY17/18 as the minimum wage goes from \$7.50 to \$9.00 as of 1/1/17 and \$10.00 as of 1/1/18. We will continue to monitor this year’s budget and will factor not only \$9.00 an hour in the first half of the FY 17/18 budget, but the \$10.00 an hour will be in the second half. Then the FY 18/19 and 19/20 budgets each have a \$1.00 raise for each of those years.

- D. Tri-community Landfill Report –Mr. Stev Rogeski- The last meeting was held on October 28th. They have a wetland recovery project that is partially State funded, the lowest bid was from Soderberg Construction so they will be working with Mr. Draper on this project. We have had a lot of rain this year, we are very grateful that the communities supported us when we put in the drainage pipe, because this year there is no way that we could have trucked all of it. They did review the draft budget and it is in the black. They have a great crew and they work hard to keep costs down.

VI. Old Business –

- A. Morse Road Speed Limit – Mr. James Risner – Received an update from Mr. DeMerchant on November 8th. He is recommending that the speed be posted at 25 MPH. This recommendation will be forwarded to the State Traffic Engineer, Commissioner and the State Police for their review and approval, which will probably occur sometime in the latter part of December. He will notify me once he has received the decision on the recommendation.
- B. Tax Acquired Property – 109 Riverside Avenue – The bids for 109 Riverside were opened at 12:01 p.m., November 9th at the Town Office. There was only one bid received and it was for \$1,000.00. The land is assessed at \$5,500, with no buildings. The Town’s investment to date is \$9,595.50 with:
- | | |
|---------------------|------------|
| Demolition - | \$3,100.00 |
| Clean Basement - | \$5,342.50 |
| Taxes, Fees, etc. - | \$1,153.00 |

Property was tax acquired for the 2013 taxes in March 2016, taxes, fees, etc. due at that time was \$1,147.59. For the last 8 months or so we have been trying various ways to sell it and have been unsuccessful. The Town Council authorized offering the

property to the adjacent property owners in AS IS WHERE IS condition with no guarantees expressed or implied and invite each abutting property owner to submit a bid.

Motion: Mr. John Herold moved to accepts the bid of \$1,000 and sign the quitclaim deed and real estate transfer tax declaration for 109 Riverside Avenue.

Second: Mr. Jason Barnes

Vote – All affirmative

VII. New Business

- A. Vacancy on Planning Board – Mr. James Risner - Mr. Scott Smith resigned from the Planning Board after he took office as a Town Councilor and his term expires June 30, 2020. Mr. Richard Shepherd has applied to fill the vacant seat. This position has been advertised and no other applications have been received

Motion: Mr. John Herold moved to approve Mr. Richard E. Shepherd to fill the vacant seat for the remaining term to expire June 30, 2020 on the Town of Fort Fairfield Planning Board.

Second: Mr. Robert Kilcollins

Vote – All affirmative

- B. Designation as Acting Town Manager - Mr. James Risner – In accordance with § C-20 of the Town Charter, the Town Manager can designate a qualified person, subject to Council approval, an acting Town Manager. Mr. Risner would like to designate Mr. Richard (Tony) Levesque, Jr. as Acting Town Manager from January 19, 2017 through February 8, 2017.

Motion: Mr. Jason Barnes moved to approve the designation of Mr. Levesque as Acting Town Manger from January 19, 2017 through February 8, 2017.

Second: Mr. John Herold

Vote – All affirmative

VIII. Minutes: October 19, 2016 Town Council Meeting

Motion: Mr. Robert Kilcollins moved to approve Minutes of October 19, 2016 as presented.

Second: Mr. Jason Barnes

Vote – All affirmative

IX Warrants: #8 - \$250,485.29 and #9 - \$280,604.99

Motion: Mr. Jason Barnes moved to accept warrants #8 & #9 as presented.

Second: Mr. Robert Kilcollins

Vote – All affirmative

X Other – None

XI Manager’s Report- Mr. James Risner submitted this to the Council for information purposes only.

Mr. James Risner highlighted the section on his Managers report pertaining to the elections. He stated that Election Day was a very long and busy day for Ms. Hersey and Ms. Sharpe. Polls opened at 8:00 am and both ladies were here well before 8:00 am and they didn't get out until just before midnight. We had 1704 voters come in, which was the largest turn out that we can remember and Ms. Sharpe had approximately 140 new voters that day. Mr. Risner thanked Ms. Hersey, Ms. Sharpe, the staff who chipped in and the citizens who volunteered to help. It was a very busy day, it was successful due in large part to staff and volunteers.

XII Executive Session –

Motion: Mr. Robert Kilcollins moved to go into Executive Session at 6:22 PM to discuss:

A. MRSA 405 (6) (A) – Personnel

Second: Mr. Jason Barnes

Vote – All affirmative

Motion: Mr. John Herold moved to come out of executive session at 7:32 PM

Second: Mr. Jason Barnes

Vote – All affirmative

XIII. Adjournment –

Motion: Mr. Jason Barnes moved to adjourn at 7:33 PM.

Second: Mr. John Herold

Vote – All affirmative

Respectfully submitted,

Council Secretary
Rebecca J. Hersey