

Fort Fairfield Town Council Monthly Meeting
Council Chambers
Wednesday, February 19, 2020
6:00 P.M.

I. Roll Call

Councilors: All Councilors present

Staff: Andrea Powers, Billie Jo Sharpe, Tony Levesque, Darren Hanson, Chief Baldwin, Jennifer Gaenzle, Ella Leighton, Kevin Senal, Chief Newell, Deputy Chief Browning

Citizens: 5 including Media.

II. Prayer

III. Pledge to the Flag

IV. Public Comment Period

Tammy Deschesne, Fort Fairfield commended the Public Works Department for doing a great job keeping up with snow removal.

V. Correspondence and Reports

A. Licenses/Permits

We received one Malt liquor, Wine and Spirits license renewal for The VFW Paul Lockhart Post #6187.

We have also received an application for renewal of Malt, Vinous, and Spirituous license for the Fort Fairfield Lions Club and an additional one-day catering permit for the Lions Club for an off-premises catering permit to bartend during the March 14, 2020 Fort Fairfield Snowmobile Club's Super Draw held in the Community Center.

B. Financial Report

We received \$117,567.00 from AWS on 1/17/2020 for second payment resulting from the merge; we received \$10,000.00 from AWS on 1/21/2020 for the Pilot program.

We received January Revenue Sharing in the amount of \$32,859.22 on 1/22/2020. Revenue sharing is now at 53.75% of our budgeted amount versus 58.31%.

Checking account balance as of 01/31/2020 is \$1,531,350.89; Machias Savings balance \$5,000.00; CDARS balance \$813,860; ICS balance \$67,733.

As of January 31, 2020, total excise tax collected to date is \$372,671.67 (59.63% vs 58.31% budgeted); State revenue sharing is \$233,159.81 (53.75% of budget); in January we collected \$1,030,824.76 in Real Estate & Personal Property bringing our total collected to \$1,761,598.69.

Of the 136 Liens filed for 2017 taxes, we have sent out 28 forty-five-day Notices of Foreclosure.

We collected balances in full on 15 accounts during the month of January.

Loan balances as of 01/31/2020

Jones Fuel - \$2,130.63
Langley #5275 - \$19,016.63
Langley #5277 - \$6,899.37
Pelletier - \$588.91

We have received \$29,242.15 from Charter Communications for the Cable Franchise. This is \$5,342.15 over our budgeted amount.

C. AWS Report

Mr. Rogeski was not available for an AWS report.

VI. Old Business

A. Update on EMS/FIRE Service

Update:

- Chief Baldwin and Deputy Chief Browning have begun the administrative and base needs for the establishment of the Fort Fairfield Fire Rescue Department
- Round one of interviews have begun for the Firefighter/EMT positions, the second round of interviews are established for the 20th of February
- We have continued to work with Autotronics on the two ambulances and anticipate an early April arrival of the vehicles
- Working on Engineering of Station Modifications for Career Firefighters/EMT's
- We are currently working on our contracts (medical supplies, pharmacy, and linen) with Cary Medical and Dr. Collamore is our Medical Director of our EMS service

We will continue to update Council on our progress.

B. Mission Broadband

Mark VanLoan of Mission Broadband is here to present to Council on the surveys on broadband in the community, businesses and farmers.

Determine Need

Vision and Goals

- Community Surveys
- Information and data gathering (Outside Plant, Assets, Structures, Existing Fiber)
- Determine Financial Feasibility of a Municipal Network or Partnership

- Determine options for funding network
- RFP Process interwoven with above steps when necessary
- If project is feasible and funding is available start project

Community Survey

- MBI worked with Andrea and her Department Heads to develop questions for paper and online surveys. Paper Surveys will be available at several locations (Town Office, Library) and a link will be posted on the Town web site and on Social Media. This link can also be emailed.
- Community Survey will run for three weeks starting 2/24
- MBI on sight week of 3/9 to do face to face survey's with businesses
- MBI will then compile and summarize data

Next Steps

- MBI back on site on 3/18 to provide overview of survey results
- MBI will work with Town to finalize broadband requirements document - timeline TBD
- MBI will be authorized to work with carrier of choice on behalf of town to develop contract for moving forward - - timeline TBD

VII. New Business

A. Appointment to the Library Board of Trustees

Greg Murchison recently submitted a letter of resignation to the Library Board of Trustees.

An advertisement was placed in the Fort Fairfield Journal and we received one application from John Krause.

Recommendation: Council appoints Mr. Krause to the Library Board of Trustees to fill the vacancy by Greg Murchison term ending June 30, 2020.

Mr. Kilcollins made a motion to appoint Mr. Krause to the Library Board of Trustees to fill the vacancy by Greg Murchison term ending June 30, 2020.

Mr. Smith seconded

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative.

B. March 3, 2020 Presidential Primary and Special Referendum Election

The Presidential Primary and Special Referendum Election is schedule for March 3, 2020.

It is impossible to estimate voter turn-out, but since the Election Clerks will need to pay very close attention to the ballots given to voters, Ms. Sharpe will need to have two Election Clerks at the incoming voter table all day. Ms. Sharpe is planning on scheduling

a total of five Clerks; two Clerks to work 8am to 2 pm and the other two Clerks to work 2 pm – 8 pm and a ballot box Clerk to work all day.

Election Clerks will be compensated at \$12.00 per hour per (minimum wage).

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

- A) Opening (8:00AM) and closing (8:00PM) of the polls, which is set by the State as stated in Title 21-A §626.
- B) Voting location per Title 21-A §622-A.
- C) The election warden, Billie Jo Sharpe.
- D) Approval of Election Clerks of the Town Clerk's choosing.
- E) The warrant for payment for the election clerks.

Recommendation: That Town Council approves A – E as presented.

Mr. Butler made a motion to approve A – E as presented.

Mr. Kilcollins seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative.

C. **Building Infrastructure Management Solutions (BIMS)*

After several discussions with Reboot IT and Inlution Integrated Technology Solutions on a camera system for the Town of Fort Fairfield it was discovered that we needed a more encompassing strategic plan for the community to bring longevity to this community wide safety project.

The Department Heads and Ms. Powers were fortunate to meet with Mr. Don Bresnahan, Senior VP of BIMS, yesterday, along with Reboot IT and Inlution to discuss what they can bring to this project and how partnering with them is an investment in the growth and sustainability of the future of our community.

Discussed were the various needs of each Department and how each separate project could be integrated into one project that would benefit all departments. The one item we were missing was a solution to how we would bring this project together through engineering, strategic planning and financing.

That is where Mr. Bresnahan was able to discuss what the group of investors from BIMS can do. He will be meeting with the investors early March and would need permission from Council to allow the Town Manager to move forward with the non-recourse for the Town of Fort Fairfield investment partnership.

Mr. Bresnahan, Senior VP of BIMS gave a presentation to Council.

Recommendation: That the Town Council authorizes the Town Manager to act on the Town's behalf in requesting a non-recourse investment by Building Infrastructure Management Solutions (BIMS).

Mr. Kilcollins made a motion that Town Council authorizes the Town Manager to act on the Town's behalf in requesting a non-recourse investment by Building Infrastructure Management Solutions (BIMS).

Mr. Smith seconded.

Discussion:

Mr. Smith asked Ms. Powers what this was going to cost the Town.

Mr. Bresnahan responded: "This is truly our investment." "This is on us." If you don't move forward with anything, then it doesn't cost you anything." "This is a risk and reward program and we are taking the risk and hopefully the reward is you will continue to do business with our area companies, we are in fact based in Presque Isle." "The solutions we present will be guaranteed maximum price solutions utilizing local contractors and Maine based companies."

Ms. Powers: "They also offer Municipal financing."

Mr. Bresnahan: "We will go to the financial markets for you and find out what is the best option."

Vote: All Affirmative

VIII. Minutes of the January 15, 2020 Regular Council Meeting

Mr. Kilcollins made a motion to approve the January 15, 2020 Regular Town Council Meeting minutes.

Mr. Smith seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative.

IX. Warrants: #18: \$369,938.53 #19: \$357,045.7 #20: \$535,285.57

Warrant #18 in the amount of \$369,938.53 was completed on 01/27/2020.

Warrant #19 in the amount of \$357,045.74 was completed on 02/05/2020.

Warrant #20 in the amount of \$535,285.57 was completed on 02/19/2020. Checking account balance as of 02/19/2020 is \$1,198,449.86; Machias Savings balance \$5,000.00 and a combined balance of CDARS and ICS of \$881,593.00.

We now owe a balance of \$350,000.00 on our TAN loan.

Mr. Kilcollins made a motion to approve Warrants #18, #19, and #20 as written.

Mr. Smith seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative.

X. Other

A. Tax Acquired Property – Ms. Powers

Per a discussion with the Tax Collector, Ms. Ella Leighton, the Town has not been able to sell the Tax Acquired Property located at 32 Forest Avenue. Several people have looked at the property since it was put out for bid with a minimum bid of \$10,500, but because of the condition of the home, no one wants to buy it. The property does not have a full basement and the basement has water in it and the interior is in poor condition.

Considering the condition of the building, we are asking the Council for permission to put this property out for bid at a lesser amount of \$5,500.00. Our other option would be to have the building demolished and put the lot out to bid. Should Council decide to do this we would be incurring expenses on a property that is not on our Tax Roll.

The property located at 51 Brunswick Avenue is in danger of going into foreclosure on March 07, 2020. The total amount due for the 2017 taxes is \$2,226.32. This is the property that has been deemed unlivable at this time by the Health Officer. The current property owner is making amends to remedy this situation.

With permission from the Council, the Town Manager would file a Waiver of Foreclosure for the 2017 taxes, leaving the property in the owner's name and not having it go tax acquired for one more year. If the decision is made to file a waiver, it will have to be recorded before March 07, 2020.

Recommendation: That the Town Council authorizes the Town Manager to put the Tax Acquired Property located at 32 Forest Avenue out to bid again at minimum bid of \$5,500.00 and that Town Council authorizes the Town Manager to file a Waiver of Foreclosure for one year on the property located at 51 Brunswick Avenue.

Mr. Butler made a motion to authorize the Town Manager to put the Tax Acquired Property located at 32 Forest Avenue out to bid again at minimum bid of \$5,500.00 and that Town Council authorizes the Town Manager to file a Waiver of Foreclosure for one year on the property located at 51 Brunswick Avenue.

Mr. Smith seconded.

Discussion:

Mr. Smith asked what the tax amount due is on the 32 Forest Avenue property.

Mrs. Leighton, Tax Collector responded \$5102.35 which includes interest and the cost of the ad that was put in the paper.

Mr. Smith: "That's why you're asking for \$5500.00?"

Mrs. Leighton: “Yes”

Vote: All Affirmative.

XI. Manager’s Report

XII. Adjournment

Mr. Butler made a motion to adjourn.

Mr. Smith seconded

Vote: All Affirmative.

Council adjourned at 6:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Billie Jo Sharpe,
Council Secretary

**added after Agenda posted.*