



TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES NOVEMBER 16, 2010

Michael Bowie, Chair District 2 2012
Gina Mason, Vice Chair District 1 2010
Fern Larochelle, Jr., At Large 2010
Roger Cote, At large 2011
Mark Lunt, District 1 2012
Dale Crafts, District 2 2010
Lori Pomelow, At Large 2012

CALL TO ORDER & PLEDGE TO THE FLAG. The Chairman, Michael Bowie, called the meeting to order and led the pledge of allegiance to the flag at 6:30 PM.

ROLL CALL. Members present were Councilors Bowie, Mason, Crafts, Larochelle, Cote, Pomelow and Lunt. Councilors Crafts and Larochelle were excused. Also present were Stephen Eldridge, Town Manager; Don Fellows, Budget Advisory Board; Miriam Morgan-Alexander, Board of Appeals; Roger Bickford, incoming Councilor; Michelle Swatsworth-Turmelle, Ethics Panel; Ryan Leighton, Town Engineer; Jessica Maloy, Finance Director; Katharyn Brunelle, Sewer Billing Clerk; Scott Benson, Economic & Community Development Director; and approximately 30 citizens in the audience.

PUBLIC HEARING

VICTUALER'S LICENSE FOR CHUMMY'S MID-TOWN DINER

The Chairman opened the public hearing. There were no comments. The Chairman closed the public hearing.

VICTUALER'S LICENSE FOR CANTON PEARL

The Chairman opened the public hearing. There were no comments. The Chairman closed the public hearing.

SPECIAL ENTERTAINMENT PERMIT - COOMBS MOUNTFORT POST 158

The Chairman opened the public hearing. There were no comments. The Chairman closed the public hearing.

CONSENT AGENDA

VOTE (2010-187) Councilor Cote, seconded by Councilor Pomelow moved to approve a Victualer's License for Chummy's Mid-Town Diner, Victualer's License for the Canton Pearl, and a Special Entertainment Permit & Liquor License for the Coombs Mountfort American Legion Post 158.

Order passed - Vote 5-0.

COUNCIL ORDERS, RESOLUTIONS, & ORDINANCES**SEWER FORECLOSURES**

Mr. Leighton said good evening, I would like to introduce Katy Brunelle who was hired to replace Ora Madden, long time Sewer Billing Clerk who recently retired. She has been getting up to speed and really thrown into the fire with the lien process. Councilor Bowie said thank you, welcome Katy.

Mrs. Brunelle said I have prepared a list for each of you showing sewer accounts with liens maturing on December 16, 2010. These liens were filed with the Androscoggin Registry of Deeds on June 16, 2009. The lien process is actually an 18 month process beginning when these are filed with the Registry. Previous to filing the liens, in April 2009 approximately 300 courtesy letters were sent to the customers notifying them that their accounts were subject to the upcoming lien process. On May 16, 2009 the 30 day notices were sent certified and return receipt to the customers notifying them that a lien would be placed against their properties if the outstanding amounts weren't paid. On June 16 148 liens were then filed. We don't do anything else from that time until October 13, 2010 when we sent courtesy letters reminding customers of the upcoming foreclosure date for December. On November 4 the notice of impending foreclosure letters were mailed to the customers and to the mortgage companies.

Mrs. Brunelle said I have received several payments since the foreclosure notices were sent out. I am now down to 43 accounts. Several of those I am either in contact with the customer directly and setting up payment arrangements or with the mortgage companies. There are a few that I'm waiting for payments on to this date. I'm asking the Council to allow me to continue to work with the companies and the customers in efforts to get the balance paid after the foreclosure date, if possible, with the exclusion of 39 Village Street, due to ongoing issues with that.

Councilor Bowie said you want us to exclude 39 Village Street. Mrs. Brunelle said there have been some issues with this property. Councilor Bowie said this is fairly routine. We do this every year. What we are authorizing tonight is to continue with the collection process and if need be to process foreclosures on their appropriate due date.

VOTE (2010-188) Councilor Mason, seconded by Councilor Pomelow moved to authorize the Sewer Billing Clerk to continue the collection process with customers and mortgage companies to get balances paid with the exclusion of 39 Village Street.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Debbie Barry said regarding the authorization to continue with the collection process. Does that delay the foreclosure process? Councilor Bowie said no, what is intended here, is that between now and the actual foreclosure date, to work with people to collect as much as we can to prevent them from going to foreclosure and being able to release their liens. Otherwise, when it hits this date, if we haven't been able to work with them, it will go into the foreclosure process.

Order passed - Vote 5-0.

OTHER BUSINESS**A. INTRODUCTION OF ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR**

Mr. Eldridge said I would like to introduce our new Economic & Community Development Director Scott Benson. He comes to us with a long history of working with economic development with the

City of Augusta. He's currently working as a consultant with the Peabody Consultant Group. He is very excited to be on board and can't wait to get at it. His first day will be December 6. We'll put his feet to the fire. Mr. Benson said I look forward to it. Councilor Bowie said welcome, we're glad to have you.

Larry Fillmore said I would like to welcome Scott aboard and hope that he does good things for the town. However, I would like to see the Council give him a round of support by having a third party independent audit done of the Economic Development Department to eliminate all of the rumors and allegations and everything else that's floating around the town about the Economic Development Department. I think he deserves that and I think the Council should give him the town's support in making sure that they work with him to make sure that he gets a fair shake on everything that's happened in the past, so he's well aware of it and he has a fresh slate to start out with. I think that's our responsibility to support him and his actions. I think by doing a third party audit it will get him started in the right direction.

Councilor Cote said I would question the outstanding \$32,500 that I have heard lately is now closed and that does tie into the Economic Development office. I agree with Mr. Fillmore that it wouldn't be a bad idea. Mr. Eldridge said just to follow up on that Roger, we had been in touch with the District Attorney. We had a very difficult time setting up a meeting with him, myself, and Chief Brooks, and our attorney. He's on vacation next week so we couldn't do next week. We also made a request to sit down with the Attorney General's office which has been more open to sit down with us to give us a reason why they chose not to prosecute. Councilor Cote said when would these meetings be taking place? Mr. Eldridge said I don't have dates yet. Councilor Cote said will Council be invited to attend if they want to. Mr. Eldridge said I will talk to our attorney about that. Councilor Cote said I would like to attend those meetings.

Dot Fitzgerald said I also feel that an audit should be done. A forensic audit, not just for that department but for the entire town. \$32,500, charges were made against that individual, serious charges that damaged reputations and just about put him into bankruptcy, prevented him from getting jobs. He is entitled to have his name cleared. Either charges brought or have his name cleared. One or the other. This gentleman is entitled to that. Comments?

Councilor Bowie said I have no comment on that. This is in, has gone through the courts. It is not a topic that is on our agenda tonight. I don't really want to talk about it anymore. We've had numerous discussions. If Council would like to discuss this further then I would recommend that Council ask for it to be put on a later agenda to be discussed, but we are not here to talk about that item tonight. Mrs. Fitzgerald said well I am asking for it to go on the agenda. And I am making a request that something be done to either charge this person or clear his name. His reputation and his name have been damaged by these allegations and he is entitled to closure on this.

Councilor Mason said he hasn't been charged with anything, Dot. Part of what his job is to clear money that went through that office during his job, obviously that money couldn't be found, but nobody has charged him with anything. To go on legally that is what we are trying to do. We're trying to find out why the charges were so called dropped and nothing was pursued. Nobody is accusing him of anything or convicting him of anything I guess is the proper word. Mrs. Fitzgerald said he may not have been formally charged but his name was dragged through the mud in the newspapers, on television, and this gentleman is entitled to something to either clear his name or charge him. I am requesting that this Town Council and this Town Manager do this.

Councilor Bowie said I'm not making any comment on this at this time. Mrs. Fitzgerald said you are just going to put it in the trash can. Councilor Bowie said as I just told everybody, if Council wants to discuss this at a later date, it's not on our agenda tonight, it's not planned for our agenda tonight, Council can request that this be put on our agenda and we can have a full blown discussion that is within legal limits for something that is still pending or not pending. Mrs. Fitzgerald said it hasn't been on the agenda for a couple of years and I don't expect to see it on the agenda.

Mrs. Fitzgerald said the new Economic Development Director, I would really like to hear from him, have him come up and give a presentation on his background and where he's from. I think the town of Lisbon is entitled to that if he would agree and you Councilors would agree.

Mr. Fillmore said I think I can help you resolve this for the evening. This week I started investigating because I personally am tired of hearing about this. I went to a very reliable source who gave me the following information. The town did an investigation. They turned it over to the District Attorney. The District Attorney took it to the Grand Jury. He was indicted by the Grand Jury. Before he went to trial the District Attorney turned it over to the State Attorney General. The State Attorney General reviewed it and sent it back to the District Attorney for his action because it is in his jurisdiction. Now, because Mr. Eldridge said it was a closed case at the last meeting was why I started looking into it. It is an open investigation. We can't talk about it or do anything until such time as the legal aspects are done. Bringing it up every meeting is not going to help us. What we need to do is ensure that there is enough follow up from the town with the District Attorney to get it resolved. I'm not taking sides either way. Mrs. Fitzgerald said I'm not either. I'd just like to see his name cleared. Mr. Fillmore said I can't help you with clearing his name. We can't go any further with this because it is still pending.

Councilor Cote said I was just going to put it for further review, but if Mr. Fillmore has brought to light that we are going to wait until the District Attorney reviews it, then we'll wait for that. I'll follow up with the District Attorney.

Councilor Bowie said enough on this topic Dot. It's not even on the agenda. I've already entertained more discussion than I want to entertain on this.

B. TOWN CLERK DEPARTMENT PRESENTATION

Mrs. Lycette said thank you for inviting me tonight to give you an update on what's going on in the Election and Town Clerk Department. I have about a 10 minute report. This has been another busy year with attending and transcribing Town Council minutes, issuing dog licenses, hunting and fishing licenses, marriage licenses, business licenses, recording and selling birth, marriage, and death certificates, updating our Codes book of ordinances with newly adopted legislation, and administering elections.

Mrs. Lycette said let's begin with the election of our annual officers on November 2009. 4,029 voters elected our annual officers and also approved the Lisbon Trail System bond referendum and the Water bond referendum questions. Following a small inauguration ceremony for the newly elected officials the Council adopted changes for the Council working rules document. The Council approved holding a special town meeting and bond referendum election on April 6, 2010 for a \$350,000 general obligation bond to renovate the Lisbon High School. 874 ballots were cast with voters approving that project. On May 25, 2010 the Council approved the \$13.9 million School budget with the voters' approval on June 8, 2010. That was held along with the State primary election. At that election voters also approved continuing the budget validation referendum process for an additional three years. The Council passed revisions to the Board of Assessment review ordinance, adopted a new internal control policy, plus amendments to the subdivision ordinance, and site plan ordinance. The Council adopted a new policy for disposition of town owned real estate as well.

Mrs. Lycette said Lisbon continues to use Accuvote tabulating machines, although it is expected the State will mandate a uniform statewide system soon. Residents can vote early by absentee ballot. A voter can call the Town Clerk's office anytime 90 days before an election to have their ballot mailed to them. The State of Maine's new electronic absentee ballot request system designed for voters to order their absentee ballots online went well this year. Lisbon received about 75 absentee requests this way and those absentee ballots were mailed. A new link is available from the Town Clerk's

webpage or you may access it from the State's election webpage. Now that a voter no longer needs to provide a reason to vote absentee it has become very popular with over a quarter of our registered voters voting this way. We have 6,800 voters currently registered, which is 12% higher than a decade ago. Absentees are over 300% higher than they were a decade ago. My office received approximately 1,600 absentee requests in November 2008 which equates to 3,200 state and local ballots to process. My office received approximately 900 absentee requests in November 2009 which equates to 1,800 state and local ballots to process. My office received again 900 absentee requests this past November 2010, with over 1,800 state and local ballots to process. This year I decided to set up additional voting booths and opened up an absentee polling place at the Town Office to alleviate the lines we had experienced last year on the Monday prior to Election Day. This accommodated the larger number of voters that voted absentee that day. Picking up absentee ballots to take home or bringing them back that day. This kept two people busy all day. There are many different scenarios for absentee ballots, but basically my staff checks the Central Voter Registration system in the computer to see if they are registered voters, logs the absentee ballot out under the voter's name in the computer system, prints out the voter's label to put on the absentee envelope, then places the correct ballots into the envelope. The voter proceeds to the voting booth to vote and then puts the ballot into the envelope. My staff makes sure that the voter has sealed and signed the envelope and then places them in alphabetical order according to voting ward and district. If they don't vote in the Town Office, then when voters bring back absentee ballots my staff pulls the absentee application request, matches it up with the envelope, and enters the information into the Central Voter Registration system under the voter's file, and then places the envelope in alphabetical order according to voting ward and district. Absentee envelopes throughout the 90 day process are proofed daily. We keep these absentee envelopes in the vault until Election Day.

Mrs. Lycette said I also noticed that approximately 4,000 voters have turned out for the past three elections. We are seeing a new trend here in Lisbon, one that I think is very good with lots of voter participation in November annually. To me it feels like every election is a presidential election. Prior to the Council form of government we elected our annual officers with only 300-600 voters and only handled the State ballots in November. It used to be that 5,000 voted in a presidential election, 3,000 in a gubernatorial election, and 1,500 in a referendum election. Today it appears that perhaps 4,000 voters will be turning out in November every year maybe. We couldn't do these elections without our election clerks, wardens, and deputy registrars. My hat goes off to all of them. I thank God for each one of them. Some of our election clerks have been working for us for longer than I have. Their experience and dedication truly shows me just how much they care about Lisbon.

Mrs. Lycette said on a different note, last year we collected \$3,200 in fishing and hunting fees, keeping \$2,200 in town revenue. We licensed 1,099 dogs last year. This year we added an online dog registration link so Lisbon residents can license their pets online now. It hasn't taken off as quickly as I had expected, but I anticipate that it will grow over time. Dog licenses expire December 31 yearly. After January 31 there is a \$25 late fee per dog. Our local shelter continues to be located on Upland Road, but this is a private shelter so our Animal Control Officer Jeff Cooper has to retrieve the dogs. You can reach Mr. Cooper at the Police Department.

Mrs. Lycette said we file and index vital records. The new Trio software program contains electronic information so that we can generate certified copies from that now. We recorded 137 births, 79 deaths, and 59 marriages last year. Vital record fees unexpectedly went from \$10 to \$15 for the first copy and from \$5 to \$6 for additional copies. Marriage licenses went from \$30 to \$40. Burial permits went from \$5 to \$20. Since July 12, 2010 we have collected and mailed \$450 in new vital record fees to the State and we have kept \$675 in new vital record fees, so that is brand new revenue for us which is very nice.

Mrs. Lycette said I just wanted to show you that today we received 309 petitions. I'm not sure you know what that looks like so I thought I would bring them to show you. Usually they don't come in the same day. These names need to be verified against the voting list and each name will be looked at to determine if they are registered voters and valid. We have petitions for an Act Regulating Slot

Machine Facilities and the others are an Act To Amend The Laws Governing The Deadline And Conditions For Municipal Approval Of A Second Racino To Allow A Tribal Racino In Washington County.

Councilor Mason said looks pretty thorough to me. I can tell you we dealt with several Town Clerks throughout the campaign season and I'm not just saying it because she's ours, but Twila is the best to deal with.

C. FINANCE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mrs. Maloy said revenues are on track for collections, vehicle excise tax is approximately 33% collected at \$802,000. Last year at this time we had only collected \$552,000. Watercraft excise is 22% collected compared to 17% last year. Things are looking pretty good for excise tax.

Mrs. Maloy said we are 24% collected on State Revenue Sharing. We'll continue to track this against what was projected. We are on track currently, but as you know that can change. Recycling revenue continues to look promising. We are 44% collected at \$55,000. This is primarily due to solid waste permits. We are 89% collected on our recreation revenue. This is primarily due to increased participation in the trekker and playground camps as well as the fall sports programs. The library is 34% collected on their projected revenues, which is right in line with where they should be this time of year. Beaver Park is 51% collected in its cabin rental and park fees. All in all we are about 50% collected on our total tax commitment for the year and that's taking into consideration any and all abatements that have been granted.

Mrs. Maloy said looking at the expense side there are no real areas of concern. We've made all of our principle debt payments in October amounting to \$415,000. Come May we will pay the remaining \$66,000 in interest. Other than that everything is looking to be right on track where we should be for this time of year.

Mr. Fillmore said I want to know how come if we went over budget last year and how much we were over. Did we spend too much? Where did we stand on last year's budget? Councilor Bowie said we under spent last year's budget. Mrs. Maloy said I don't have the exact numbers here. Councilor Bowie said I thought we returned about \$300,000 to surplus.

D. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Eldridge said we already discussed the Dan Feeney case. Just something that came in the mail so that the public knows; I got a package from the Maine Resource Recovery Association which deals with solid waste. I opened it up and there was a plaque recognizing Wayne Ricker as the manager of the year, which was funny, because I hadn't heard about it. I looked at the date and the letter that came with it and all of the apologies. It actually was something he received in 2006 and he never got recognition, because he happened not to be at the meeting. The letter still recognizes him as one of the outstanding managers in solid waste. He has a very good reputation and he does a very good job for us. Congratulations to Wayne again.

Mr. Eldridge said another item that's been asked off and on since I've been here is the condition of the Lisbon Durham Bridge. When you drive over that it looks like it's falling apart. People are a little scared they are going to go swimming in the Androscoggin. I talked to some people at the Department Of Transportation and they got back to me that the bridge was inspected on September 29, 2010. The substructure and superstructure are in satisfactory conditions. They do not plan on doing any major repairs to this. They expect the bridge will be replaced completely in the next four to six years. They assured us that it is safe so that was encouraging.

Mr. Eldridge said Mr. Van Tuinen sent me a letter giving me his schedule, telling me what his plans are, which he discussed at the last meeting. He's on target for coming before the Council at the

December 7 meeting to go through the tax commitment. He should be prepared to commit taxes at that time. He's also putting together a proposal for after that. In his letter to me he outlined some things that he recommends that we continue to do. He is putting together a proposal of what it would cost to retain him for this position. We do have funding in our Assessing budget to cover those costs.

E. DRAFT MUNICIPAL BUDGET SCHEDULE 2011-2012

Mr. Eldridge said you have the opportunity to look at the proposed draft on the upcoming municipal budget process. One of the recommendations made this year by our Finance Director to fine tune and move the process along is to take out the part where department heads come make their presentations. That has generally been done after I give my first look at the budget. Instead of doing that when we get to their part of the budget they will have to be in attendance so you have the opportunity to ask them questions. The department heads and I will sit down and thrash out what they think their needs are, what their recommendations are, and my thoughts. Come the first week in January Council will give us direction on what they would like to see us do in the budget process. Then the department heads and I will get together and if we haven't already accomplished what you are looking for we will do so. This is in line with what the school budget is. I have a meeting with Rick Green on Monday to go through this with him again and make sure we are all in sync. Mr. Eldridge said on December 7 you will have an opportunity to approve this schedule and move forward with the budget process.

Councilor Bowie said one thing I might suggest is that we try to weave into our schedule the best way to determine and identify our tax commitment prior to the end of the final budget. I think things have to go out in April and things have to be replied by May. Mr. Eldridge said we are going to have to be very aggressive to get the business community to get back to us within a 30 day period that will give us enough time to do that. Councilor Bowie said we should explain to them, too, that it might help better define what the final tax number will be for them as well.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Larry Fillmore said we got sidetracked on my recommendation for an audit. I didn't see a vote by the Council. Are we going to take any action on that tonight or are we just going to let that go by the wayside. Mr. Eldridge said I'm not sure what you are looking for in an audit. Our audit is done every year by our auditing firm. Next meeting there will be a presentation to the Council for the annual audit. Anything else that they have managed within the Economic Development Department, if its Federal funds they come in every year and do their own audit. I'm not sure why we would commit dollars to do another audit. We can certainly sit down for anyone that has concerns with the Audit Committee or Jessica or me and go through the audit, which identifies the funding that is used in that department and answer any questions. Mr. Fillmore said I'm just trying to give the new director our support here because there are a number of rumors out there that inappropriate funds were used for different things. It's all rumor control and allegations. I'm trying to eliminate him getting stuck with all of this and let him do his job like we want him to do. I'm just saying an internal audit may not find as much as an external third party audit who is directed into his area of expertise. I'd like to eliminate all of these, because we are three years now playing around with all of this. I don't like that. I think we have better business to attend to. We have more problems in town that need our attention now; not keep fighting battles for three or four years and all these rumors. I've got a solution for the rumors and I'll get to that, okay, but I didn't hear a vote on an audit.

Councilor Bowie said the audit that we have done is an external audit. I know the Audit Committee this year did ask to have some specific attention to all the revolving control funds, which are managed by the Economic Development Department. Mr. Fillmore said okay, if you are going to let that go by, at the last meeting we had a lot of citizens concerned about the tax issue and the

mortgage companies. At that time I thought we were going to send out a letter. I came in today to check on what was going on. I found a four line letter sent by the Town Manager. The meeting we had was on November 3. The letter is dated November 9. You know where those letters are? They were sitting at 2:30 pm this afternoon in the tax collection office. That's two weeks. We can't act on a four line letter in two weeks? I find that outrageous. We're looking for relief out here and if we can't get a little more priority for our residents to help them out, I don't know what good we are doing here. I really don't. Two weeks to send out a four line letter? You've got to be kidding me. I know we are all busy, but that should have been a priority. The same way I thought we were going to have taxation on this agenda until we have the issue resolved. If we don't have anything we say we don't have anything new to bring up, but we keep it on the agenda until the issues are resolved. We don't have that. It's not on the agenda. I find that outrageous that we just drop it off and leave it hanging. That's how come we get into so much trouble.

Mr. Fillmore said the next item is the website. I love the website. Okay, I sent a letter to each member of the Council. When I did, two of the addresses that were on there for the Council came back undeliverable. One of them was my fault. I didn't spell it right, I have to take the blame for that one. The other one never went anywhere. We are asking the town residents to communicate with us and you can't communicate very well if it's not working. I know we don't have an IT guy, but we've got to do a better job. Two of the Council members did not have phone numbers on there. One of the Council members that I talked to said hers doesn't work, okay. That's totally unacceptable. You want us to communicate. You want us to work with you. You want our comments. We've got to have a means to communicate with you. If you can't use your website it's not very effective, okay. We need to correct that. We're going to ask for the input from the residents of this town you have to give them a vehicle in which to communicate with you. You're not doing that. That's wrong, okay?

Mr. Fillmore said the next thing is all of these issues that we have with the town that are really old, I have a recommendation for you. I know some of it will have to be written by a lawyer to keep the town from being liable for anything they say. I think if you published information sheets, put them on the website, and put them out here for meetings that we can hopefully get information out to the residents so that they can be familiar with what's going on and be up to date on some of these items and stop some of the rumors that we've got floating around. Information sheets on the website. Now, I know we're going to get some opposition about the website because not everybody has a computer. Not everybody knows how to use a computer. Then again we have a library that has computers that residents who do not know how to utilize computers can go to. Another great idea is to put out a newsletter. Costly, I understand that. If you put out a newsletter once, okay, in there you outline the proper procedures for getting into the website, for utilizing the website. You've already got it in place so it doesn't cost that much more. You're not going to get any increase in cost, but you would have a great value. Put in the newsletter that anybody that doesn't have a computer can go to the libraries, they will have a standard operating procedure of how to get into it and they will have people available to help them get online so that they can keep up with what is going on in town. These little things are not going to cost the town very much money, maybe time until we get up to speed on that, yes, I'll grant you that, but the benefits of it certainly outweigh what minor cost we are going to have on it. We've asked everybody to communicate and give you people the input that you need. That's a two way street. We can eliminate 90% of the rumors by posting information onto the website. The last news item that is out there is dated in May of this year. I'm quite sure we've had some news out there since; at least Moxie day would have been a news item. There have been other items. We have the vehicle in which to communicate with the residents and for them to communicate with you and for you to communicate with us. The problem is we're not using what we have to our advantage. I think we need to take a serious look at utilizing the website, using information sheets. You could also have a question and answer on the website where people can send in questions when they hear a rumor or whatever. You could have questions written that could be given out to the department heads and the department heads answer it. You have a vehicle already in place. You've got to utilize it. We're getting too many rumors, too much bad mouthing. We've got to eliminate that. We've got people turning against each other and everything else in the

town because of misinformation or lack of information that could be easily resolved without a great deal of money being expended.

Mr. Eldridge said there is a quarterly newsletter on the website that has been going for the last two years. I would have to look at the website to look at it. Our past Economic Development Director was managing that. I don't think one is up for the last quarter, but we have been putting out a quarterly newsletter online. Mr. Fillmore said the problem with that is that until you get to the old people who don't have computers or don't know how to use computers, okay, you're not going to get the information to them. That's why I say if you mailed, and I know it costs money, I got that, alright, out to every resident in town, explaining how to get on the website and how to utilize it and for those who don't know how to utilize a computer to go to the library and they would help them out. That's the only way you are going to get everybody because if anybody doesn't have a computer, it doesn't do any good, because they don't have a computer to talk to, okay, so that's my point on that.

Councilor Lunt said I think we could include something with the tax bills that we send. We could send a newsletter or some direction to use the library and use the website that way. Mr. Eldridge said one of the things we are doing now is that, we had a department head meeting last week, and we are revamping the monthly department reports. We are going to do them in a different format. We are going to put it online. Every month there will be news from each department. Some of the department heads have not been really consistent in doing that, that's going to change, so look for that.

Don Fellows said Mr. Fillmore made several comments and I remember seeing a newsletter in Durham this summer. It comes monthly, it isn't very long. I don't know what it costs the town of Durham, but it gets a lot of people's attention. Whether that's useful for a six month term until everybody gets used to the website, we could certainly measure that. It might be useful to do that just to get people going. You could tell by the attendance whether it is actually working or not. I read the Economic Development letter and all of the goings on, on the website, but to be honest with you, it just goes on and on and on and it's difficult to read on the computer. As much as I use the computer, I like to read things in writing sometimes. It might be a useful idea.

Mr. Fellows said the other reason I got up here is that currently I'm the Chairman of the Budget Advisory Board. It will have a new makeup next year with at least two new members and one reelected one. I spoke with the Town Manager today, but I wanted to make sure that those new members get the same kind of introduction into the town as we had last year. I would also like for us to continue to be inclusive for the board members as you did in the past years and we've learned our lessons on that one. I particularly like the 7:00 pm time, I can't stand 6:30 pm. 7:00 pm was really nice.

Michelle Swatsworth-Turmelle said I just need to ask again; at least one Councilor has brought it up. I've asked before, you were going to look into it and that was the reason that the meeting time was changed since the Charter did state 7:00 pm. I'm just curious to where we are with that. I never got an answer. You were going to check with the attorney, that was three meetings ago.

Councilor Bowie said actually the Charter was amended and it was revised to say that the Town Council shall meet. Mrs. Swatsworth-Turmelle said the one online doesn't say that. Mrs. Lycette said yes it does. That amendment has already been updated and it is online. Councilor Mason said Section 2.06. Councilor Bowie said right, Proceedings of the Council: Meetings: The Council shall meet regularly at least once per month at such time and places as the Council may prescribe. Special meetings may be held on the call of the Chair or four or more members of the Town Council by causing notification to be given and or left at the usual dwelling place of each Councilor. Mrs. Swatsworth-Turmelle said there is another section that speaks definitively as to the first and third Tuesday of the month. Mrs. Lycette said that's the Council's working rules document. Mrs. Swatsworth-Turmelle said there's another section. There were two parts to the Charter that actually

spoke to the meeting. There were two separate areas and one was very clear about the time, the place, the occurrence. Mr. Eldridge said the attorney did look at that; we did talk to him about it. Mrs. Swatsworth-Turmelle said I've been to several meetings and I've heard a couple of Councilors comment about the timeframe. Councilor Bowie said Twila, would you check that, please.

Mrs. Swatsworth-Turmelle said there is another area that you assured me would come up for discussion. This is now the fourth meeting since I asked about that. That was about discussions that came out during that Friday and following Tuesday Town Council meetings with regard to the taxes. It was brought forth by many citizens that they wanted input in regards to their municipal budget. I asked about it. You assured me it would be discussed and put on the agenda. This is the fourth meeting since that was brought up. Councilor Bowie said I'm not following you. Mrs. Swatsworth-Turmelle said having the citizen's vote on the municipal budget, it's not anything new.

Councilor Bowie said that was done after not this past budget season, but the budget season before. That was done in a workshop to discuss additional referendums, or amendments to the Charter. There were several amendments that were discussed with the Town Attorney who sat in a workshop. That was one of the items that we discussed. At that point in time, the majority of the Council brought forward no additional amendments. That was handled at the workshop.

Mrs. Swatsworth-Turmelle said no, I asked four meetings ago. At the time there was a lot of sensitivity brought forth. Councilor Bowie said I understand what you are saying. I'm saying that the Council had already addressed that request previously. We have not taken it up again. Nobody in the Council has asked me during that time period to bring anything up again for additional referendum changes.

Mrs. Swatsworth-Turmelle said I didn't ask you to change it. What I asked is to have discussion about it since the public vocalized the issue to you in wanting to have that. I asked about having a public hearing, some form of discussion about it. You assured me it would happen. If it had been discussed a year ago prior to this, but you actually stated to me that we would have a future discussion because it was brought forth by so many people. I think people deserve to have a response to their questions. You guys say you want us to come. A lot of people came and spoke about it, there was no resolution so what we were asking was that we at least have an open discussion about it. You had told me we would. I'm not asking for the Council. I think the people have a right to have a discussion about it. If there are a lot of people that that's what they want to do, isn't it fair to hear them and take their consideration under advisement to look at revisiting it again, for the public to have their input, not for you guys per se; the public knows they can come in and discuss it. Councilor Bowie said I guess I missed that. I apologize. Mrs. Swatsworth-Turmelle said I'm just looking for the public to have an avenue to come in and discuss it. Councilor Bowie said if that is something Council wants to do. Councilor Lunt said it might make sense to hold a special meeting just on that so it is not biting into our regular business; some week that we don't have a meeting, hold a public hearing, and if people want to show up and talk about it they can.

Councilor Pomelow said I don't remember exactly when it was, but I know that this issue was spoken about in front of the Town Attorney who said that night that in order to change the way we vote on the municipal budget that we would have to go through Charter changes. I don't remember exactly what we said about when we were going to revisit that idea, but we would try to get through some of the other things, so if we do move forward in bringing that topic up again I would recommend that we have Roger here with us to tell us where those changes would need to be made. I am assuming he would have to look at specific sections and he could advise us of that so that we could have meaningful discussions and folks could ask the questions that they have, put their suggestions out there so that we can start formulating the language, because there will need to be Charter changes from my understanding of it.

Mr. Eldridge said one of the things Roger has mentioned is that, during the December 21 orientation, part of that meeting is going to include a workshop for the Councilors and anybody else

who would like to attend; it's a public meeting. He had planned to bring back to the Council the question of Charter changes. If that is something the Council wants to move forward with, there is quite a list of stuff that still hadn't been addressed that he didn't get back to because of the budget process, but he did say, we had been talking about the orientation process, and that's going to come up in discussion at that time.

Mrs. Swatsworth-Turmelle said right, I guess where my issue is, I've been asking about it for a year. Last spring I brought it up. You guys, at one point, the discussion was that you were going to wait and see how the voters came out and what their vote was in regards to continuing to vote every year on the school budget. And the meeting before that was to occur, it was, you said you know what, as citizens you have the right to go out and change the Charter, go take a petition out if you want to have it changed. What I asked for four meetings ago was not to have an amendment done. Nothing of that sort, but for you guys to have an open discussion to hear what the public is asking for what they would like so that you would know what direction to go. You didn't think there would be enough people to come out and vote on it for the school budget, but if you didn't think there would be enough public input to make it a valid vote, having a public discussion would give you that input. That's what I was asking for, is having that public discussion. Not to move forward with an amendment change, nothing like that. I obviously would love to see that, but I think you need to hear from the public. That hasn't happened, other than some heated comments during a time that was a very sensitive subject that was coming out. I think now that some things have calmed down, it's obviously not resolved; I still think it would be fair for the public to come out and have an open dialogue about what they would like, even if it's suggestions, things like that, because if you are going to force the hand of the public, they ought to know what they are going to need to do. I'm just saying an open dialogue, an open discussion, Town Councilors and the public, that's it. I'm not asking for an amendment to the Charter at this point. I thought it was pretty fair in asking for you guys to have some open dialogue with the public rather than during a heated meeting.

Dot Fitzgerald said I was very pleased to see the turnout last night at the meeting concerning the Route 196 corridor, the Maine Department of Transportation meeting. The place here was full. I was going to say standing room only, but some people were standing. Don't be fooled Town Manager and residents of the Town of Lisbon. The State is going to do exactly what they want to do; they own Route 196. Mr. Eldridge said it's a State road. Mrs. Fitzgerald said the State would be responsible for any repairs, routine maintenance, and plowing. Mr. Eldridge said that's correct. Mrs. Fitzgerald said there was a traffic count done. We have some businesses like Rite Aid, Aubuchon, and Food City. I have a feeling most of the businesses, I'm sure, did a traffic count before they decided to locate here and to make improvements. Traffic count is crucial to their business. At the previous Town Council meeting there was a gentleman here who said he was interested in purchasing the Worumbo Mill property and he asked about the population of Lisbon Falls and the traffic count. If we want to sell the Worumbo Mill property, do something that is going to be beneficial to the town tax wise, bring business and employment, a traffic count is going to be important. We need to be really proactive. We need to keep in mind that we have to protect the businesses and the residents of the Town of Lisbon. Look at Wiscasset. For years and years they fought the State about a bypass and the State finally won. We don't have the money that Wiscasset does to fight the State on something like that. Their proposals, the three lane, and five lane highway, and a bypass. They could use Plan 1 three lanes plus the bypass, or Plan 2 five lanes plus the bypass. It doesn't have to be either or, so the town really needs to be proactive. I'd like to see the Town Council, Town Manager, and all of the residents of the town proactive to protect us, to protect our town, our residents, and our businesses. Can you promise me that? Mr. Eldridge said we will.

APPOINTMENTS - NONE

COUNCILOR COMMUNICATIONS

Councilor Lunt said we talked about the map for the street lights. I wonder if we can see that map yet. Mr. Eldridge said we are still waiting for the Land Use Ordinance Zoning Map to be approved. It's going before the Planning Board this month. We have been out and identified 89 lights to be removed on some of the back roads. We have not targeted Upland road; we are going to wait because they will be removing poles and putting up new ones. We have told the engineer on that project that we would like a few new sections. We are moving forward with that. Councilor Lunt said are you going to flag those lights. Mr. Eldridge said yes, they've been marked. You will see an orange mark on them. Ryan has the list in his office. Councilor Lunt said okay.

Councilor Cote said I have two or three things I'd like to discuss. Number one, could we have put on the agenda for our next meeting, we're going to have a new Council together at that time, to discuss the 7:00 p.m. meeting. 6:30 p.m. is not working out for me at all. Could we set that on the next agenda? Councilor Bowie said yes.

Councilor Cote said we as Councilors received letters from Mr. Fillmore this week. I'd like to have them put on an agenda to go into Executive Session or whatever we have to do to discuss that and have Council answer questions for him. Councilor Bowie said yes, I'm not sure it will be the next meeting though. Councilor Cote said I understand that. Councilor Bowie said we have a lot going on at the next meeting.

Councilor Cote said as far as the next budget season, which will soon be here. We did the budget a lot different the last couple of years than we did in prior years. We were more itemized. We were more involved so that we could see where our money is spent. Is there a way that we could get back so we have a real budget that we can look at rather than what we've had in the last couple of years? The last couple of years, if you look at our budget, it was very simplified, it was not a detailed budget. We didn't know where our finances ever went. We've had citizens talking about it. We've had a lot of issues brought up about it. Why is it the way that it is? What are we hiding? Why can't we have it so that people can understand it?

Councilor Bowie said I thought we had a very detailed line item budget that explained each budget line. Councilor Cote said the first year I was on the Council we had a very open budget. It was very explicit and easy to follow. Now we have a budget that is simplified to the point where we have to take a lot for granted. Councilor Bowie said one of my suggestions would be for you to make a mock-up of the old one to the new one to see. There may be some limitations to the software that we are using. I do know that our old budget was not really done in the software. It was done on an Excel spreadsheet. Councilor Cote said exactly. Councilor Bowie said which isn't necessarily good because there is a lot more opportunity for mistakes there and then translating data back into the system again. Mr. Eldridge said if you could, give us some examples of what you are looking for. Jessica is making some changes under for more specific data or categories, so it might be something that we are working on. If you could, give her or me an idea of what you are looking for. Do what you can.

Councilor Pomelow said just for clarification, Roger, is that the budget with the green bar reports. I'm not sure that you can do green bar reports anymore with the new system. Councilor Cote said do you agree that that is a lot easier to follow. Councilor Pomelow said yes. Councilor Mason said no, you were flipping through pages and flipping back. Councilor Pomelow said you could see what was included in each one of those lines so that it did provide some additional answers. Having said that, would you mind if we just asked Mr. Fellows if he has any opinion from the Budget Advisory Board as to what they might like to work with.

Mr. Fellows said the first time I saw it, it was like we have it, for the last two years, but the more detail, great. If it requires a book and a half for everybody, that's too much. Councilor Cote said it wasn't that difficult. It was more thorough. It was broken down so you could see where the funding went. Mr. Fellows said any information that we can get would be helpful. Councilor Cote said that's the way I look at it because I think we are going to have a banger of a year coming up. I think that

the more information that we can have it's going to make our job easier. Councilor Bowie said I'm not sure if we can do this. I don't know if we still have all of the data. If we could take a report from the old system and compare it to what is in the new system, walk through it and explain it, it might help everybody to understand that the same data is there, it is just slightly represented differently. We may need a workshop to go through and look at that.

Councilor Cote said I think Lori brought up exactly what I am looking for which is the green bar. It just made it a lot simpler. Councilor Pomelow said an alternative to that, which may not be as overwhelming is that we use the budget that we work from, if there are any areas that we specifically want to know more detail for, I mean, if some of it is pretty self explanatory, there isn't much we can do about it, but there are some other lines within each one of the departments that you may want to know more about, then maybe the Trio posting registers could be printed off and that gives you a breakdown of what's been posted to that account. That might be as beneficial and not as overwhelming.

Councilor Cote said in the future budget we're going to be looking at a \$130,000 shortfall from the State and possibly more. We're going to have to make that up so we need to look at individual items and find out where we can cut within a budget. Right now we are going by what the manager of the department feels that they need. If the Council looked at their budget in detail we would feel that expenditure wouldn't have to be there. We're going to be making some tough decisions. I think the more information we have the easier it is going to be for the Council to make a decision. Councilor Bowie said would it be possible to get a green bar from the old budget, then print out all of the various reports available from the current Trio system.

Mrs. Maloy said I certainly can try. I have not seen the green bar to know what's being referenced. What I can tell you now is what I have been doing and it's been taking a big chunk of my time, is to go through each department. I've discussed this with Steve. I didn't like the way the budget process went last year. I thought there was a lot of back and forth of reiterating what had already been said with the budget and the questions would keep coming back. I have been trying to go through each line item on the sheet that you currently have, if it is professional development, exactly what that is, if it is the MMA designation at \$75 or the GFOA at \$150, so that you know the five pieces that make up the budget for professional development for me. I've been trying to do that and I will bring it to the department heads. I've been working off historical information in the system before I inundate the department heads and say I need all of this information. I'm trying to pull as much as I can based on what is already in the system to make it easier for everybody going forward. I think that sounds like what you are asking for, but not having seen the green bars, I can't say with 100% certainty that it would be what you want. Councilor Cote said the whole thing behind my question is that moving forward we are going to be looking at making cuts.

Mrs. Maloy said under each line item, as Lori alluded to, there are some things that there is not a lot of discussion to go into, like the county tax, so I'm not spending a lot of time on lines like that, but as far as the individual departments, I'm trying to go in and give you exactly what is making up that budget in black and white on your papers so that it is not flipping back and forth and saying what's included here, what's included here, doing the comparisons. It will all be written there on the Trio list for you in a bit more detail to help alleviate some of the questions. Councilor Cote said if you are going to sit down and vote on a budget and you are going to be looking at numbers and you have to ask what entails, we should have what entails. Mrs. Maloy said exactly what I'm trying to put in for you.

Mr. Eldridge said just for the Council and the new Councilor coming in, in January after we get the capital improvement budget, we come back to the first meeting in January and ask for direction from the Council on your recommendations for the budget. That includes recommendations to close the town office two days a week or cut other department manpower, or things like that. That's the kind of direction we're looking for. How drastically do you want us to cut? Do you want us to work on lowering the tax rate or do you want us to keep it flat, still accomplishing the things you want

like the reval or things like that. Prior to that, you have over a month to think about these things. If you could come back in January and give us direction, that's what we are looking for. You're right Roger, it's going to be a very difficult year. Staff has already been told that we are going to be looking at losing positions. There is no money coming from the State unless the new governor elect is going to find a new pile of money somewhere. We need direction. How deep do you want us to cut? What are your ultimate goals? What are the programs that you think we need to save to provide essential services.

Councilor Cote said another thing we did in another couple of budgets, we would have a spreadsheet and we knew what our dollar figure was. I think we need to start that right off at the beginning to know what kind of money we are looking for, what direction we have to go. The last couple of years we haven't got into that until crunch time. I'd like to see us start a little sooner to know what our overall budget is going to look like when we have our department heads coming forth with a budget. We're going to have an idea of what our starting point is going to be and where we need to go so that we have some idea and not wait until crunch time before we get to that. Do I make any sense at all?

Mr. Eldridge said let me just make sure I understand what you are asking for. Basically, you can look at what you have for the budget this year. This is the dollar amount that we are spending to provide the level of service that we have. We've gone through all of our retirees. We don't have any retirees right now that we could draw on to lose positions to save money. They're all gone. What we are looking at this year and I've told department heads that is that we're looking at cutting back on hours in different departments, Transfer Station may be closing a couple days of the weeks, this office may be closed a day a week, things like that. We might look at some areas that we could farm out that we can do cheaper than in house. These are things that we're going to be discussing through the month of December but come January what Jessica and I think the State might provide with revenue sharing numbers and not change it half way through. We can give you a better idea on our end of what we are looking at. When the Assessing office gets in line we will have a better idea of what our valuation is. We know coming into this year we're going to lose right off the top \$1,500,000 from depreciation; that's quite a bit. We're going to have to make that up somewhere. If revenue sharing stays where it is or even decreases, then we are going to have to make that up somewhere. We just got notified last week about our 9.8% healthcare increase. We are shopping that out and should have numbers by the end of the week from another company we've been dealing with for the last two years. These are things we are working on. By January when you go to make your recommendations I am hoping to have what you are looking for, a better idea of where we are going to be but it is still early. By March I should have some fairly good numbers. I think that is what you are looking for.

Mr. Fellows said this is generally what I think about the budget process. Having watched it closely for the last couple of years. We've gone back to the Town Manager a couple of times and said come in with the budget and he would say it's balanced, but we haven't really known what revenue is, nor have we known in a sense what the public will tolerate. I think the Town Council one way or another needs to find out what the public will tolerate; if we could get a good sense of that. If it's flat taxes, lower taxes, or if it's one mil or a half a mil, whatever it is, we need to get a good sense of that. From the revenues expected, conservatively, against it and then we know where we've got to go and we have to worry about what's going to happen with the School budget, because we don't have a very good handle on that one. Mr. Eldridge said Mr. Green and I are having more conversation this year than we had in the past year.

Councilor Mason said I have one thing to add to that. I think that we as Councilors have to be responsible about is that when we feel that there need to be cuts in a department we need to have solutions for those cuts. To come here and say we want to cut X department this many people or this amount of money, that's great and sounds wonderful on paper, but to impact service in that way and not have a solution, that's also difficult. That's something we need to be careful with. Cuts are going to happen, but you need to think about what the effects are going to be.

Councilor Mason said last Friday there was a mural unveiling on the Down East Energy building. The painting behind you is our Main Street in the 1930s. A mural artist [Jenifer Fox], who is our art teacher at the high school, divided it into segments. A video was made by Ryan at the credit union and it showed the progression of that process. He sent it to me today. I think it is going on the website. It was a really good short five minute video that showed what happened and how this mural came to be. Last Friday afternoon it was placed on the side of the Down East Energy building. It looks very nice up there. Mr. Gross who painted the original painting was there. I was not able to make it that day, but about 15 citizens showed up. If you get a chance drive by, it's up on top of the building. When you are going towards Anicetti's it's on the left.

Councilor Mason said our Very Merry Main Street is coming up. That's an event that the Revitalization Committee started last year and it's been a successful event. We've had a lot of people come to us and say they just love to see downtown Lisbon Falls come alive. It's like they remembered from years and years ago. It's on December 4 in the evening. It goes along with the Christmas Tree Lighting, the arrival of Santa, and then we all head downtown. Businesses generally are open that evening. We have carolers and a lot of different things happening that night. Mark it on your calendars. It snowed on cue last year. It was a great time.

Mr. Eldridge said Judy Hardy-Goddard and Kathaleen Bailey have been working on the Thanksgiving Dinner for the last couple of weeks. They are trying to engage some high school students. They've made some phone calls to the school. Councilor Bowie said how about the Lisbon Community students. Mr. Eldridge said remind me and I will talk to Kathaleen and see if they want to participate. Also they are trying to get the students involved in the Christmas Giving Tree.

EXECUTIVE SESSION-NONE

ADJOURNMENT

VOTE (2010-189) Councilor Mason, seconded by Councilor Lunt moved to adjourn at 7:55 PM.
Order passed - Vote 5-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Twila D. Lycette, Council Secretary
Town Clerk, Lifetime CCM/MMC

These Council meeting minutes were transcribed by Beth French.