



TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES MARCH 15, 2016

Christopher Brunelle, At Large 2016
Eric Metivier, District 1 2016
Roger Bickford, District 2, 2016
Dale Crafts, At Large 2017
Normand Albert, At Large 2018
Kasie Kolbe, District 1 2018
Allen Ward, District 2 2018

CALL TO ORDER & PLEDGE TO THE FLAG. The Chairman, Roger Bickford, called the meeting to order and led the pledge of allegiance to the flag at 7:00 PM.

ROLL CALL. Members present were Councilors Bickford, Brunelle, Crafts, Albert, Kolbe, and Ward. Councilor Metivier was excused. Also present were Diane Barnes, Town Manager; Mark Stevens, Parks & Recreation Director; Donald Fellows, Planning Board Member; Karen Paradis, Planning Board Chairman; Paula Jefferies, School Committee; and approximately five citizens in the audience.

GOOD NEWS AND RECOGNITION

Councilor Ward announced the Lisbon Unified Basketball team won the regional playoffs and they will be competing with Messalonskee Thursday night at the Lisbon High School. He mentioned that the Lisbon Drama team will be competing on Saturday out of town for the One Act Play competition. He said Laura Campbell is heading up that trip so anyone with donations may contact her.

PUBLIC HEARINGS - NONE

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION & RESPONSE FOR AGENDA ITEMS - NONE

CONSENT AGENDA

VOTE (2016-64) Councilor Kolbe, seconded by Councilor Crafts moved to approve the minutes of February 25 and March 1, 2016. **Order passed – Vote 6-0.**

COUNCIL ORDERS, RESOLUTIONS, & ORDINANCES

TRANSFER SNOWMOBILE REIMBURSEMENT TO RECREATION RESERVE ACCOUNT

INTRODUCTION: Mrs. Barnes said we just received the annual reimbursement from the state in the amount of \$2,250. She asked the Council for permission to transfer that to the Recreation Reserve Account that has been set up for these deposits until the snowmobile clubs make a request to expend them for equipment and/or maintenance of the trails when needed. The current balance in that account is \$4,917.67.

COUNCILOR COMMENTS: Councilor Albert asked how much was in that account. Mrs. Barnes said it is \$4,917.67 before the \$2,250 transfer. Councilor Ward asked how many miles the snowmobile clubs maintain in Lisbon. Councilor Bickford said he didn't know and explained that this account was set up years ago by former Selectmen to help with purchasing equipment.

VOTE (2016-65) Councilor Ward, seconded by Councilor Kolbe moved to authorize the Finance Director to transfer the snowmobile reimbursement funds in the amount of \$2,250 to the recreation reserve account which currently has a balance of \$4,917.67. **Order passed – Vote 6-0.**

RE-DESIGNATE FUNDS FOR BEAVER PARK TRAILER

INTRODUCTION: Mr. Stevens said the \$533 he is asking for is the money left in the general ledger account for ball fields. This was back in the day when we were allowed to carry forward funds that were not spent during the year so in an effort to spend these general ledger accounts down they have been looking for a used trailer to purchase; however considering the condition of the used ones and the fact that they have been looking for over a year now, it appears that they would be better off purchasing new. Mr. Stevens indicated he found one and would like the Council to designate the \$533 in the ball field account towards its purchase. He indicated all together there was about \$3,500 available.

COUNCILOR COMMENTS: Councilor Albert asked about how the Pinewoods ball field would be maintained. Mr. Stevens indicated there is another specific account to take care of that ball fields now. Mrs. Barnes explained we are not carrying forward funds like this anymore unless there is a specific purpose and it could not get spent in the current year. Mr. Stevens said the trailer would be used to haul the lawnmowers and Kubota tractor.

VOTE (2016-66) Councilor Kolbe, seconded by Councilor Albert moved to designate the remaining balance in the ball field account in the amount of \$533.01 for the purchase of a Beaver Park trailer. **Order passed – Vote 6-0.**

ELECTION OF OFFICERS - ANDROSCOGGIN VALLEY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENT

VOTE (2016-67) Councilor Ward, seconded by Councilor Kolbe moved to cast a ballot for the slate of officers as presented. **Order passed – Vote 6-0.**

OTHER BUSINESS

A. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Mrs. Barnes said the taxes were due today and that they are coming in strong. There were a lot of people at the counter. Several delinquent personal property taxpayers have made payments on their taxes. She mentioned she went to District Court and filed about 12 claims that will be appearing on the next docket at small claims court. She mentioned Mrs. Pelletier was making a lot of headway at collecting the insufficient funds checks now that we have brought that back in house.

B. DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS

(Written Reports)

Councilor Ward asked if the Public Works Director would be able to get some projects started early to save money in next year's budget. Mrs. Barnes indicated that he would be and sharing these plans when he presents his budget.

C. DEPARTMENT HEAD ORAL REPORTS

Parks & Recreation

Mr. Stevens said their first annual Winter Festival at Beaver Park was well attended and considered a success. He said, thankfully we had a stretch of cold temperatures and about 8 inches of snow fell just days before the festival. Our sponsors and attendees gave us a lot of positive feedback and they are looking forward to next year. Mr. Stevens said on the flip side, the un-seasonally warm temperatures were giving them an early opportunity to begin winter clean up on the trails and in the parks. They started selling 2016 Beaver Park Passes and so far they have at least one wedding planned this summer at Beaver Park. He said they have two possible scout projects in the works. One would be to build our first informational marquee on the newest section of the trail and the second bigger project building a bog bridge in Beaver Park.

Mr. Stevens said the Fishing Derby will be held on May 14th at Beaver Park. The ponds will be stocked with trout at least twice prior to the event. Currently, they have 103 students registered for their afterschool recreation program. This is the most participants they have had since starting this program nearly 10 years ago. Aline Strout is bringing Lisbon's seniors to Savannah Georgia in April, then Lancaster, Pennsylvania in May, and Pigeon Forge, Tennessee in September. He said they were planning a trip to Fenway Park and a white water rafting adventure in June. Mrs. Strout is getting prices on a possible trip to Alaska for 2017 too.

Mr. Stevens mentioned the department will be participating in the Androscoggin Chamber of Commerce Job Fair at Central Maine Community College on April 1. This will give them an opportunity to reach a greater number of potential candidates for the Parks & Recreation Department.

Mr. Stevens said Cherie and he will be attending the annual Maine Recreation and Parks Association Conference on Monday and Tuesday. There are sessions on hiring and training summer employees, managing internships, youth sports philosophy, safety standards, and the Maine Freedom of Access Act. The keynote speaker will be Retired Amy Staff Sergeant Travis Mills of the 82nd Airborne.

Mr. Stevens said, lastly, on Tuesday morning he will be representing their department doing an interview or two with WMTW's Channel 8 Weather Team at the Sugg Middle School as the kids learn about weather.

Code Enforcement - Dennis Douglass – Postponed

D. FINANCE DIRECTOR'S REPORT – SCHOOL FUNDING OVERVIEW

Mr. Karass presented an overview of how the State of Maine's Department of Education State Calculates Funding for Public Education (PreK-12). He explained how the state puts together its financial estimate of what is required for a budget for a school department under the Essential Programs and Services (EPS) funding act. Mr. Karass used the ED 279, a document created by the Department of Education that identifies what the state will provide for assistance and what the Town's minimum commitment toward the cost of education must be (see attached). He said there is no mystery to the funding formula. It's a very logical analysis and each section pyramids up to a total annual cost of education under the EPS model. This document identifies the level of funding required to ensure free and appropriate access to quality education for each student, and what the State's contribution toward the cost will be for the school year. EPS is a more scientific endeavor than in the past and is primarily driven by school enrollment and mil rate/property tax value. He guided the Council members through each section of the ED 279 explaining the purpose of each of the matrices; how they are calculated; and how the results of the computations contribute the funding of education in Lisbon.

E. FY 17 MUNICIPAL BUDGET PRESENTATION

Mrs. Barnes presented the first draft of the FY 17 Municipal and Waste Water expenditure budgets for Council review and a memo that outlined the following:

She proposed a budget for municipal services with the goal to maintain or have the lowest tax rate possible while providing satisfactory services provided to the citizens of Lisbon. She thanked the Department Heads and staff for their assistance in preparing tonight's proposal. Mrs. Barnes said the FY 17 estimated revenues were not part of the budget document, but will be presented later. (The expenditures listed are as of March 8, 2016).

2015-2016 was an extremely demanding and busy year. The Town Council and Department Heads worked diligently together ensuring the smooth operation of municipal government and assisted her with valuable advice and guidance. These efforts in turn enabled everyone to see that services were provided to the best of our ability at the most reasonable cost to the taxpayers. With so many uncertainties in the future direction of the economy at the state and national level, she said she would continue to find ways to be more resourceful in delivering quality services to our community. Although our municipal services are used to their maximum, non-controllable costs for some goods and services continue to escalate, causing our budget requests to react in-kind. Increases were

proposed only if absolutely necessary to keep pace with those non-controllable cost items that are critical to our service delivery.

The economy has a major impact on revenue available to fund municipal services. Considering the slow growing economy of the area, Lisbon is fortunate to benefit from a steady increase in motor vehicle excise taxes, a trend which could continue through FY 17. Excise tax is our major revenue source after property tax revenue. Property tax collections were up slightly from the previous year; however, the sale of tax-acquired property was a contributing factor to the increase. For the first time in many years, the Town's real estate portfolio consists of just a very few tax acquired properties.

Mrs. Barnes mentioned the revenues for FY 2017 were expected to increase due to a forecasted increase in State Municipal Revenue Sharing and the continuing growth in excise taxes. She indicated by June she would have better final revenue and expenditure estimates for this fiscal year and next.

The Budget

The Municipal budget, excluding the County Tax and the local contribution to the School Department, totals \$8,190,144.00 for an increase of \$674,639.00 or 8.9% over the current FY budget of approximately \$7.52 million.

The Town's share of the County budget has an increase of \$2,734 over the current calendar year budget.

Wages and benefits total \$4,407,446.00 comprising 54% of the budget. A 2% cost of living adjustment for all non-union and Public Works union employees has been included in the calculation of next year's personal services budget. A 9% cost increase in the health insurance premiums has been factored into the assumptions beginning January 1, 2017. The Town will be negotiating new collective bargaining agreements for the Police union employees effective July 1, 2016.

Some of the significant non-salary and wage increases include the following:

Technology:	Service & Software	\$ 58,823
Town Buildings:	R & M Building	15,000
	R & M Equipment	10,000
	Buildings	20,000
Police Department:	Restored Police Officer	63,545
Public Works:	Equipment	15,000
	Heavy Machinery	60,000
	Paving	175,000
	MDOT Match	217,500
Unclassified:	Abatements	15,000

Mrs. Barnes indicated there were a few unknown cost drivers, but she is working towards bringing a resolution. The electricity accounts remain unadjusted at this time due to the recent fixed price contract that took effect in February. She is waiting for the first bill with the new rate for each metered account before adjusting those accounts in terms of kilowatt rates and consumption. She estimated a 5% increase to the Town general insurance accounts as a placeholder. She will make necessary adjustments to those line items after the bid award in May.

Lisbon's unassigned fund balance has improved over last year; however the fund balance continues to lag behind our benchmark of 12.5% of the budget and far behind the industry recommendation of 16.7% which equals two months of reserves. While She is not anxious to dip into the unassigned fund balance for any purpose until Lisbon achieves the appropriate balance in the account, she recommended the Council might choose to use a portion of the unassigned for non-recurring capital costs only.

Mrs. Barnes said the Council meeting budget schedule is in the front of the binder. She indicated as they go through their budget workshops that they would be going through their binders department by department with Department Heads.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION & RESPONSE NEW ITEMS

Robert Kahler said fixing blame certainly doesn't fix anything and I know the Council has fixed a desire to do that relative to the school. He said as a building administrator, is a question for Mr. Karass is based on what a municipality raises locally for the minimum amount if the reimbursement rate is correct that's 67% so if we raise and expend anymore on the minimum amount are we reimbursed at that same 67%.

Mr. Karass said you are reimbursed exactly what it says in the ED 279; anything that the town spends over and above will be the second item on the warrant and must go to referendum. We are reimbursed nothing on that.

APPOINTMENTS

APPEALS BOARD (3) MEMBERS

VOTE (2016-68) Councilor Kolbe, seconded by Councilor Albert moved to appoint Lisa Ward term expiring in 2018, Fern Larochelle term expiring in 2017, and Chris Rugullies term expiring in 2016 to the Appeals Board.
Order passed – Vote 6-0.

COUNCIL COMMUNICATIONS

Councilor Ward mentioned Council Bickford asked three Councilors to sit with the School Committee to discuss their budget. He presented a handout outlining the 2016-2017 School Budgets as of today reflecting \$640,246 in debt service. Broken down as follows: Gym \$453,136, Track \$58,100, QECB \$78,496, and QZAB \$50,514 totaling 11.6% of the tax increase.

Councilor Ward said there is a .4% budget spending increase in their budget. They dropped \$2.7 million from the original budget, but as of today it looks like they got back a \$1.4 million windfall. Seven (7) full-time school positions were cut or not replaced as follows:

Field Maintenance Position
K-8 Grade Level Teacher
K-12 Art Teacher
1 SRO Officer

PE/Health Teacher
Administrative Secretary
Bus/Van Driver and
Restructuring Impact of AE/Guidance/Maintenance

Councilor Ward indicated there is a net \$67,771 increase in the State's Subsidy revenue due to the \$15 million funding approved mil rate that dropped from 8.44 to 8.3. This reduction will be partially offset by a decrease in state valuation as well as corrections to the ED 279, which are being allowed due to the extra \$15 million approved last week.

Councilor Ward said the net 13.0% increase in taxes is due in part to the \$241,000 reduction in usable revenue from the gym/track interest proceeds and energy savings, plus the \$478,000 reduction in State Subsidy at present due to the impact of energy savings taken as income on EPS calculation. He reported a \$90,750 decreased in school subsidy since 2/29/2016 due to recalculated Adult Ed's local share, increase in State Subsidy revenue, and other forecasts still outstanding like insurance (9% increase), workers compensation, wages, retirements, etc.

Councilor Ward mentioned that Superintendent Green had answered every question that they had asked of him. He said in regards to Mr. Kahler's comment earlier, it is one thing to walk the talk associated with a partnership; we need to truly honor it, if it's actually going to stick, because this budget is very much like the one presented in January and if we did not have the School Committee Chairman standing at the lectern here and the Council Chairman sitting up front that night we would not have had a budget deal to pass on to voters to approve. He said

we need seven of us to sell it. Although we can derive a budget, it's a very different thing to get one passed at a referendum.

Councilor Bickford asked that Councilor Ward work with Mr. Karass to better understand the 67% and when done to come back to the Council to explain it in simple terminology. Councilor Kolbe said in order to make this happen we need to work together and stop pointing of fingers. Councilor Bickford said he just wanted to get the facts out there and be as close as we can.

Councilor Albert said this is a great starting point and it's good to hear that. Working with Mr. Karass is a good thing, a welcomed opportunity, and hopefully it will build a bridge between Mr. Karass and Superintendent Green, who is a willing participant. This will help to repair some of the fractures from last year and sounds like a good first step.

EXECUTIVE SESSION - NONE

ADJOURNMENT

VOTE (2016-71) Councilor Kolbe, seconded by Councilor Crafts moved to adjourn at 8:50 p.m. **Order passed - Vote 6-0.**

Twila D. Lycette, Council Secretary
Town Clerk, Lifetime CCM/MMC
Date Approved April 1, 2016