

MINUTES

For a regular meeting of the Pittsfield Town Council held on Tuesday, June 21, 2011 at 7:30 pm in the Council Chambers.

PRESENT: COUNCILORS: Bob Stackhouse, Caleb Curtis, Deputy Mayor Gary Jordan, Jr., William Bradshaw, Christopher Carr and Louise Baker. **ABSENT:** Mayor Tim Nichols. Also present: Town Manager Kathryn Ruth and Town Clerk Nicole Nickolan. Audience members included: Don Hallenbeck, Mike Lange and Ron Smith.

1. **Deputy Mayor Jordan** opened the meeting by leading the **Pledge of Allegiance**. The Council observed a moment of silence.
2. Adoption of minutes of the regular meeting held on June 7, 2011

Moved by **Councilor Stackhouse** and seconded by **Councilor Carr** that the minutes of the regular meeting held on June 7, 2011 be adopted.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

3. **PRESENTATIONS, CONGRATULATIONS AND INTRODUCTIONS:**

Presentation by the Town Auditor Ron Smith of RHR Smith & Company on the audit for the period ending 12/31/2010

Mr. Smith stated that Pittsfield is still in rock solid financial shape. Pages 18 and 20 of the audit were reviewed in depth. Mr. Smith noted that the Town took in \$5.6 million in revenue, while spending \$5.4 million. Mr. Smith cautioned that Pittsfield has much of its money tied up in Water & Sewer infrastructure. It is a very high investment for a Town to run its own Water & Sewer Department. One suggestion Mr. Smith made was for the Town to consider a maintenance plan to deal with the future of our infrastructure in addition to the Water/Sewer Capital Improvement Plan. Mr. Smith indicated Pittsfield is a frugal, practical Town.

Community and Economic Development Activities and Events

Employment Specialist Available in Pittsfield:

Looking for employment and not sure how to go about it? Interested in job training or improving your work skills? Want to learn to use the internet to apply for jobs?

As of January 2011, an Employment Support Specialist from the Kennebec Valley Community Action Program is available at the Pittsfield Public Library from **11:00 AM – 1:00 PM every 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month.**

The Employment Support Specialist will work with you by providing guidance and support and connecting you with the resources you need to be successful in your employment goals. You can get help with:

- searching on the internet for jobs

- creating a resume
- connecting to training or education opportunities
- how to apply for jobs on-line
- creating an email account

and many other activities that will assist you in meeting your career goals.
Have questions? Feel free to call **1-800-542-8227 ext. 2533 or 859-2533**

Report on Meetings & Events:

Egg Festival Committee Meeting on June 9, 2011 at 5:30 pm in the Council Chambers. Activities are coming along well. More cash has now been raised this year than the prior year which is great considering that there are more activities to fund. Always looking for more help. Copies of the of the Craft Fair Entry Forms, Parade Entry Forms and Quiche, Cheesecake & Pie Contest Entry Forms are available at the Town Office in an Egg Festival Display by the Reception Counter. Forms may also be downloaded from the Egg Festival Site which can be easily accessed by going to www.pittsfield.org and you can click on the link. The forms are also on the Town of Pittsfield website.

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, July 14, 2011 at 5:30 pm in the Council Chambers.

Certificates to thank the teachers & students at MCI for Community Service Day Projects: We will process those certificates as soon as I get a list of names of the teachers who participated. We realize that there were so many students that we can not thank them all. The list of teachers has not been received yet. The teachers led the students in four areas: (1) Weeds and debris removal in the parking lot and town gardens; (2) Cemetery raking and cleanup; (3) Re-Use Building tasks; and (4) Recycling Center/road cleanup.

The Bi-monthly meeting of the HealthySV Coalition Steering Committee took place today in the Council Chambers. We received an update on legislation and funding in which the Healthy Coalitions will be fully funded as in past years in the new biennial budget. HealthySV is in the first year of the 5-year Drug Free Communities Grant in which the group is focusing on tobacco cessation and prevention as well as prescription over-use and prescription drug mis-use. A disposal brochure is available describing the options available to people to dispose of their unused prescription drugs, which we will be reviewing. There will be another Take-Back Day in October with the date to be announced in which people will be invited again to drop off their unwanted prescriptions. In addition, the drop off box that HealthySV purchased and donated to the Town can be used any day that we are open.

4. **PUBLIC HEARINGS/OLD BUSINESS: NONE**
5. **REPORTS: TOWN MANAGER, FINANCE, ORDINANCE & RECYCLING COMMITTEES:**

Town Manager's Report: Town Council Meeting of 06/21/2011:

1. The FYI Folder: FYI Folder which contains items that come in between the Town Council Meetings has the following this evening: NONE this meeting.

2. Sludge Removal Project: The sludge hauling continues at the Treatment Plant. This means that the Town will be closing on the final loan this summer and that means that a sewer rate increase will go into effect on July 1, 2011. Over the last 30 years, the Town made the choice to not put away funds for this project that is needed so that the Lagoon System can continue to function appropriately and not be clogged up. Therefore, the Town did not have a pay as you go philosophy so the only way to pay for the project is with our future bills. The bills that have been issued have a notice on them so that people will have several months to prepare for the rate increase. Citizens are able to make payments during the quarter and not wait for the bill if this is an easier way for people to pay. Effective July 1, 2011, the sewer rate will be \$7.25/1,000 gallons. Many people are aware of this due to the extensive newspaper coverage of the sludge removal project planning.

3. 2010 Sewer Rates in the State of Maine: The results of the Maine Rural Water Association's Sewer Rate survey was released this week. There were 125 Towns or Districts that funded their sewer systems with utility billings that responded including Pittsfield. There were a few towns that fund their sewer systems with taxation so I excluded them. Of the 125 Towns or Districts that issue sewer bills, 106 or 84.8% were higher than Pittsfield, then there was Pittsfield and 18 or 14.4% were lower than Pittsfield. The rates were converted to 8,000 cubic feet. Pittsfield's bill for this would have been \$284.24 per year. The Average State-wide rate is \$450.60 per year. So through 06/30/2011, we remain in the lowest 20% of sewer rates in the State of Maine.

4. 2010 Water Rates in the State of Maine: In March, I reported the results of the 2010 Maine Public Utilities Commission Water Rate Publication. There are 155 Water Districts/Departments including the Pittsfield Water Works. 23 Districts/Departments have water rates less than Pittsfield or 15%, then there is Pittsfield, then there are 131 Districts/Departments that have water rates higher than Pittsfield or 85%. This was after the Town's water rate increase was implemented after not having one for 10 years. While we were updating our rate, many other Districts/Departments went in also for rate increases. Therefore, we are still in the lowest percentage of water rates in the State of Maine. So basically, for both water and sewer rates, 85% of the Districts/Towns in the State of Maine had rates higher than Pittsfield's water and sewer rates in 2010.

5. Town Council Summer Meeting Schedule: The Town Council Regular Meeting schedule for the Summer is scheduled as one meeting in both July & August as July 12, 2011 and August 16, 2011.

6. Safety Enhancement Grants Awarded: The Town of Pittsfield has been awarded two grants from the Maine Municipal Association for Safety Enhancements. The first is \$522.73, which is 2/3 of the cost of a Flammable Cabinet to store materials in for the Fire Station/Municipal Building. The second is \$1557.08, which is 2/3 of the cost of eyewash stations for departments and an emergency shower for the Fire Department. Congratulations to Donnie Chute, Safety Coordinator, who wrote the grants.

7. Town of Pittsfield 2011 Board/Committee Openings: Positions expire every year on the Town's many boards and committees. The Town has over 20 boards and committees. Positions remaining available are the following: 1 Opening on the Board of Appeals; 2 openings of the Board of Assessment Review; 1 Opening on the Board of Ethics; 1 Opening on the Economic Development Team; 1 Opening on the Housing Rehabilitation Revolving Loan Committee; and 1 Opening for an Alternate member of the Planning Board.

8. Pittsfield Earth Day 2011 Backyard Compost Bin Sale: **READ Announcement.**
We are still accepting orders.

9. AARP Driver Safety Program: **READ Announcement.**

10. Trash To Treasure Re-Use Center: The new Trash to Treasure Re-Use Center is open on Saturdays from 10:00 am – 4:00 pm. The Grand Opening Ceremony held on Saturday, May 06, 2011 was great. A page has been set up in the Photo Gallery at www.pittsfield.org. The Re-Use Center is in the former Veterans of Foreign Wars Building opposite the Transfer Station and Recycling Center. The facility is on Saturdays from 10:00 am – 4:00 pm. Those who have completed their yard sales and have items left over that they do not want to take back to their homes might consider donating the clothing to Pennywise and the other items to the Re-Use Center. The Town has a comprehensive list of items that can be donated at the facility available at the Town Office.

11. Central Maine Power Company Installing New Meters: CMP has sent a letter to advise that the company will be beginning work in our area shortly for the installation of new meters. CMP has contracted with VSI Meter Services to install the "Smart Meters". CMP along with Bernstein Shur Government Solutions has offered to be placed on a public meeting agenda to discuss the Smart Meter Project. A package of materials was in a prior FYI Folder. Is there any interest in having CMP attend an upcoming Council Meeting to make a presentation on the "Smart Meters" which will be installed here in the near future? The Town Council members did not feel a presentation was necessary.

Finance Committee: No Report.

Ordinance Committee: The Ordinance Committee met tonight to discuss the chicken ordinance. We need some clarification on a few pieces of the proposed ordinance and will met again on July 12, 2011.

Recycling Committee: No Report.

6. **NEW BUSINESS:**

RESOLUTION 11-80: Resolved that the Town Council Approve a renewal application for a liquor license for the Sebesticook Valley Lodge of Elks at 140 Middle Street, Pittsfield, Maine 04967.

Moved by **Councilor Bradshaw** and seconded by **Councilor Carr** that Resolution 11-80 be adopted.

The Town Manager noted this is a yearly approval. The Police Chief advises that all is in order.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

7. **DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

Financial Reports as of 05/31/2011:

Budget Expenditure Report
Revenue Collections Report
Transfer Station/Recycling Monthly Report
Theatre Monthly Report
State Revenue Sharing Comparison Report
Excise Tax Collections Comparison Report
Personal Property Tax Collection Report
Real Estate Property Tax Collection
Tax Acquired Property Report
Reviewed Briefly by Town Manager

Other Reports as of 05/31/2011:

Building and Plumbing Permit Reports
Library Report-Librarian's and Library Trustees Minutes
Police Report
Self Explanatory – Not Reviewed

Grants Update:

New Grants:

Airport Grants: Stormwater, Security and FAA Review: The airport engineering walk through and inspection of the airport has taken place. The report with recommendations as well as the Stormwater Study is in the process of being completed.

Economic Development Administration Grant: Pittsfield Industrial Park

Expansion: The Town has completed as much of the ditching and driveway culverts as possible along the front section of the Industrial Park Street. The federal government has approved more work to be completed along Industrial Park Street. The contractor has asked to have until 08/31/2011 to finish all work on the grant which is the grinding and paving of Industrial Park Street as far as we can afford in the grant, punch list items and of course, the stringing of the power by CMP. Therefore, still proceeding on and still filing extensive paperwork.

L&W Conservation – Hathorn Park Legge's Field: We need to finish the basketball court, get all the volunteer and PW forms to determine how much match the Town has vs. the expenses, then file for reimbursement.

PUC Energy Efficiency: Block Grant to Towns: Three of the four fire bay doors which will help with heat loss have been installed. The boiler and solar thermal units are all on order.

Riverfront Community Development Grant: The State is very pleased with this project and as we are under budget, we have been approved to continue to supplement the park. Therefore, we are getting a list of park items together to include a liner for the skating rink; benches for the skating rink, picnic tables and other similar items. Then as soon as the bills come in, we will file for reimbursement.

Sludge Removal: The work is underway, the material is very dry and the sludge is being hauled to the licensed disposal site. DEP was on site and very impressed with the work. The contractor reported that the tonnage in the lagoons is under what was estimated so we are getting pricing for the removal of the sludge in Lagoon 2, which is not going to be as dry due to its composition.

Sewer Replacement including Sewer Evaluation Study with Camera Work, Dye Test/Smoke Test and Report: The work is completed and Olver Associates is working on the report.

The preconstruction meeting is in the process of being scheduled with Nitram, which was the low bidder for the end of the month. The surveying by Olver looks complete in the field for some of the areas being rehabilitated – specifically on Nichols Street. A second notices was delivered door to door so that people will be aware that this project is coming right up.

New Opportunity: MDOT Transportation Enhancement Grant:

In meeting with MDOT in late April we were advised on opportunities for a grant for flashing lights or sidewalks. MDOT officials reviewed Stinson Street and concluded that the best way to address public safety is to add one sideway. The Town has been advised that under the new program that the Town is eligible to apply for a sidewalk along the entire length of Stinson Avenue from Main Street to the Music Building or another point. Applications will be due in the Summer of 2012 and the project can begin in Summer or Fall of 2013 if chosen. This is wonderful news as in the past to obtain a sidewalk of this length, the Town would have to apply for 3 or more Safe Routes to School Grants. With the extensive federal requirements, this would have consumed large amounts of time and taken several years. This project can be one grant application as long as the Town has already designed the project and is ready to move forward when it applies. The Town would be responsible for a 20% cash match to obtain the 80% federal funding in the MDOT program. The Town Manager noted that she had been asked to work on public safety enhancements for this area and this opportunity was available. This is the last one to discuss. The Town Manager asked the Town Council for their opinion. Councilor Bradshaw indicated that the Town Manager has done an amazing job with all the grants. However, this grant should not be pursued. Deputy Mayor Jordan preferred to fix the current sidewalks rather than build new ones. The Town Manager noted that in the past we had been advised that new sidewalks could be funded under programs, but not repairs, which we would like to do. The Town Manager will check into the regulations with the State and Federal grants.

8. **REPORTS:** Audience, Council

Audience: None

Council:

Councilor Baker: No Comment.

Councilor Carr: No Comment.

Councilor Bradshaw: That was a good point that was brought up. It would be a good idea to update the current sidewalks in Pittsfield rather than fighting against MCI to put a sidewalk on the campus.

Deputy Mayor Jordan: I have seen the Water Department is putting in some new fire hydrants. That is nice to see. Wanted to mention what a marvelous job Mike Havey is doing with the mowing around Town. The Pinnacle really looks great!

Councilor Curtis: No Comment.

Councilor Stackhouse: Wanted to thank Ron for coming in. Glad the Town is in good financial shape. I wish we had an audience to hear the good news.

Mayor Nichols: Absent.

9. **ADJOURNMENT:**

Motion by **Councilor Stackhouse** and seconded by **Councilor Carr** that the meeting be adjourned at 8:13 p.m. All in agreement.

Nicole Nickolan, Town Clerk