

MINUTES

For a regular meeting of the Pittsfield Town Council held on Tuesday, March 17, 2015 at 6:30 pm in the Council Chambers.

PRESENT: COUNCILORS: Gary Jordan, Jr., Tim Nichols, Trudy Ferland and Robert Stackhouse. **ABSENT:** Heather Donahue and Michael Cianchette. Also present: Town Manager Kathryn Ruth and Town Clerk Nicole Nickolan. Audience members included: Scott Strom, Scott Varney, Devon Varney and family.

1. **Mayor Jordan, Jr.** 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 March 3, 2015.

Moved by **Councilor Stackhouse** and seconded by **Deputy Mayor Nichols** that the minutes of the regular meeting held on March 3, 2015 be adopted.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

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

Community Project: Recreation:

The Town has been approached by Devon Varney, who is a Life Scout. He is preparing for his Eagle Scout project. Devon has chosen revitalizing the Concessions Facility at Hathorn Park for his Eagle Scout Project. Devon is here this evening to present his project to the Town Council.

Devon Varney, Life Scout Troop #28: I am working on completing my Eagle Project. For my project I would like to increase storage and overall functionality for the concession stand at Hathorn Park. I have planned numerous updates for this project. I will replace the plastic tables with a counter and create additional space by building cabinets underneath. I will repaint the concrete floor. I will add shelving in the back storage area as well as storage space above the grill. If time allows I will update the bathrooms and paint the outside of the concession stand to match the dugout. I have been offered assistance from fellow Eagle Scouts Ethan Duplisea and Greg Vigue, as well as other friends who will help by donating their time to the project.

The Town Councilors commended Devon Varney for taking on such a large project and wished him all the best.

Community and Economic Development Activities and Events:

Saturday, May 2, 2015: 19th Annual SVCC Business and Community Expo
Wednesday, May 13, 2015: 8th Annual Regional Job Fair

General:

Several private sector business activities remain under review and small projects continue to be underway.

Several commercial properties have recently been sold, are under option, or will be leased. To address remaining available small to medium locations, additional promotional pieces beyond our regular promotion of available properties had been provided to economic and community development resources and sites. All properties have been acquired or are in process except the former Ben's Breakfast which has suffered some internal damage that is currently being addressed (before being marketed) and the former Chalice which has been taken off the market.

UTC Factory:

Planning continues for the announced factory closure of the local UTC facility by Global UTC Headquarters beginning in the 3rd quarter of 2014 through full closure in March, 2015. Planning consists of two phases, which includes recovery for the employees and for the site/community. The first Kennebec-Somerset Transition Team Meeting took place on May 01, 2014. The Pittsfield Economic Expansion Corporation has met with UTC at the plant and reviewed the factory on a detailed tour on May 23, 2014. Several tours have taken place. UTC hired CBRE The Boulos Company which deals extensively with commercial real estate across the United States and beyond. Multiple tours of the property have taken place, however, the Town was not involved. Multiple opportunities are being made available to UTC employees to meet with resource providers during their lunch one-half hour in the lunchroom. A schedule of dates/subjects was being scheduled and several events took place. Discussions were also underway regarding small job fairs in addition to the yearly Regional May Job Fair that Pittsfield and the Ken-Som Transition Team holds for several counties. Several events were planned for UTC lunch breaks at the facility specialized in areas such as banking/financial planning; education opportunities; etc.

At the last Ken-Som Transition Team Meeting, it was agreed to combine a number of events into one large resource fair to take place during February vacation when the schools are available for use. This event was held on Wednesday, February 18, 2015 at Warsaw Middle School Gym from 1:30 – 4:30 pm. It was a great success with approximately 52 businesses and resource providers. Over 303 people attended.

Review of the UTC Facility continues by parties. Hopefully a proposal will continue forward.

SAS Property:

SAS Property placed on the market by MTC Holdings, LTD of San Antonio, Texas and is offered by the LandVest, a Luxury Property Real Estate Company in Camden – The website promoting the property is linked to the Town's website. The Town has recommended that the building be available for lease of needed space, however, the company would like to sell the entire building/s. The December appointment with the out of state developer/investor was cancelled due to the winter storm. The Town met with commercial interests about the property in January, 2014. Several projects are underway to enhance the ability to develop this unique and interesting property. The pre-application required for the Historic Status of the SAS property (former Waverly Mill) to proceed forward to the National Register was completed in April and submitted. The Town has been advised that the Mill has received approval of its pre-application and has been placed on the State of Maine Historic Sites database. The Town now has a State of Maine Historic Commission letter stating the Mill's suitability for the National Register which can be presented to a developer who wishes to pursue the National Register application process or the Town can utilize the letter to hire an architectural historian or other expert to complete the process (upon receipt of appropriate funding source, i.e, grant or donation). The Town worked with the potential developer to line up interested agencies to tour the mill this summer. The first tour has taken place.

Background research continues to take place to locate funding resources. Recently there have been multiple contacts regarding the future of this site and the property is now in the process of being auctioned off. The Town Manager attended the Preview of the property on Monday, 11/24/2014. The Auction was set for 12/09/2014. As many people have been contacted that we can think of who could be interested in the facility. After the auction took place, we learned that negotiations were underway to purchase the building. The negotiations were confidential. In the end, the negotiations did not yield a buyer. As of the writing of this agenda item, a party is reviewing this facility to determine if it is interested. The review continues and further information is not available at this time.

Somerset Plaza:

The new Plaza owner has provided details on site vacancies to the Town and these have been advertised for the Plaza. Several referrals have been made to the Plaza. Some of the referrals have met with the Plaza owner to review possible leases. There are several potential business projects, therefore, reviewing the applicability of a Tax Increment Financing District (TIF) has begun and will continue once information is received. Further information required to evaluate this opportunity has not been received from the developer. The popular **Ken-A-Set Thrift Shop operated by Skills, Inc.** will move to the Plaza to the former Family Dollar Store location once vacated. Many calls have already been received by the Town Office staff from citizens and neighboring residents asking when the store will open! People are very excited about Ken-A-Set moving to Town. **United Insurance Company** has announced that it will be moving to the Plaza to the former Natural Food Store location across from Subway. The **Discount Warehouse** space has been thoroughly reviewed for retail and an announcement is expected soon.

North Lancey Building:

North Lancey Street Business Building placed on the market by Lancey Associates and is offered by Better Homes and Gardens Real Estate The Masiello Group. Gary has compiled a spec sheet for this property and it is on the web site as well as having been distributed. There has been interest in the location.

Family Dollar:

The Family Dollar Store is nearing completion. Employees have stated that they will be moving inventory over to the new location by the end of March, 2015. I will advise when we hear of the grand opening date.

Hancock Lumber:

Hancock Lumber continues to work on their development project to assist with production and has submitted the map for the agreement. The company is forwarding the Town agreement through the authorization process. We were advised that their project is scheduled for Spring, 2015 when weather permits.

American Legion:

The American Legion has received engineering assistance from Kleinschmidt Associates. An application for site plan review is being prepared for the building. Grant funding reviews have been underway with a couple of distinct possibilities located. The American Legion has launched a fundraising campaign to raise funds for the rehabilitation of their Middle Street property. At the 03/03/2015 Council Meeting, the Town Council approved a lease agreement for spots in the parking lot in order to meet site plan review requirements.

Former Corner Cupboard:

Officially the former grocery store (and auto shop) will become the new home for Insource Renewables. The business vehicles and inventory will be stored on the site. The office will continue to be located at North Lancey Street. The company is currently meeting with the Planning Board about their project.

Report on Meetings & Events:

FirstPark Marketing Committee Meeting on Wednesday, 03/04/2015 at 2:00 pm at the FirstPark Office in Oakland

Recycling Committee Meeting on Wednesday, 03/04/2015 at 5:00 pm - Cancelled

Sebasticook Valley Chamber of Commerce Trade Show (Business and Community Expo) Committee Meeting on Wednesday, 03/04/2015 at 5:00 pm at the Chamber Office in Palmyra

Special FirstPark Meeting on Thursday, 03/05/2015 at 4:00 pm at Inland Hospital Conference Room in Waterville

Sebasticook Valley Chamber of Commerce Strategic Planning Committee Meeting on Thursday, 03/05/2015 at 3:30 pm at the Chamber Office in Palmyra

Sebasticook Valley Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors Meeting on Thursday, 03/05/2015 at 5:00 pm at the Chamber Office in Palmyra

Planning Board Meeting on Monday, 03/09/2015 at 7:00 pm

Kennebec Valley Council of Governments Board of Director Meeting on Tuesday, 03/10/2015 at 9:30 am at the KVCOG Office in Fairfield

Kennebec Valley Council of Governments Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Meeting on Tuesday, 03/10/2015 at 11:30 am at the KVCOG Office in Fairfield

Somerset Economic Development Corporation Board of Directors Meeting on Thursday, 03/12/2015 at 11:00 am in Skowhegan

Somerset Workforce Connect Meeting on Thursday, 03/12/2015 at 1:00 pm in Skowhegan

Central Maine Egg Festival Committee Meeting on Thursday, 03/12/2015 at 6:30 pm

Kennebec Valley Council of Governments Strategic Planning Committee Meeting on Friday, 03/13/2015 at 1:00 pm at the KVCOG Office in Fairfield

Upcoming Meetings & Events:

Special FirstPark Meeting on Thursday, 03/19/2015 at 4:00 pm at Inland Hospital Conference Room in Waterville

Sebasticook Valley Chamber of Commerce Trade Show (Business and Community Expo) Committee Meeting on Wednesday, 03/25/2015 at 5:00 pm at the Chamber Office in Palmyra

Theatre Committee Meeting on Wednesday, 03/25/2015 at 6:00 pm

Kennebec-Somerset Transition Team Meeting on Thursday, 03/26/2015 at 10:00 am

FirstPark General Assembly Meeting on Thursday, 03/26/2014 at 5:00 pm at T-Mobile Conference Room in Oakland

The remainder of the meetings are in the process of being scheduled.

4. **PUBLIC HEARINGS/OLD BUSINESS: NONE**

5. **REPORTS: TOWN MANAGER, FINANCE, ORDINANCE & RECYCLING COMMITTEES:**

Town Manager's Report: Town Council Meeting of 03/17/2015:

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

2. Langlais Art Trail includes Pittsfield: The Town of Pittsfield is part of the Colby College Langlais Art Trail. Colby College is producing a state-of-the-art interactive map, which will serve as an extensive guide to Langlais works across the state of Maine. The launching of the Trail recognizes a state-wide art community that was created through the Kohler Foundation and celebrates the collaborative efforts to recognize this influential artist. The Town will receive a copy of *Bernard Langlais*, a copiously illustrated 250-page monograph on the artist, with essays by Hannah W. Blunt, Diana Tuite, Vincent Katz, and Leslie Umberger. This monograph is produced in conjunction with the Museum's retrospective exhibition this summer, opening July 19th. The scheduled launch date of the Langlais Art Trail was July.

The Town has kept in contact with the Kohler Foundation and were on a short list for consideration for additional works if they did become available. We were notified last week when I inquired as to the status, that it does not look like there will be any further works to be gifted. I thanked the foundation and their representative for all of their assistance and advised how much we like our art.

3. Pittsfield Community Theatre – Play presented by the Levi Stewart Community Theatre Volunteers: The Levi Stewart Community Theatre Group will come to the Pittsfield Community Theatre on Saturday, March 7, 2015 to perform “Death by Dessert” by Nathan Hartswick, produced by Special Arrangement with Heuer Publishing LLC. Tickets were \$5.00 each or \$15.00 for a family of 4. This was a fundraiser for the Theatre and it was a huge hit. The theatre was packed and we took in nearly \$1,500. The Theatre Committee will talk about having a couple of these events each year. The Levi Stewart group will go around once per year with a different play each year so definitely they were a hit so we have already asked them to come back next year. The Theatre Manager is looking for another performance group for a second play during the year. I have also asked her to look for a

performance during Egg Festival Week to draw people into Town that week. There is no reason why all of these events can not complement each other.

4. Library Program for Book Discussions: The book discussion group meets Thursdays at 4:00 pm. Everyone is welcome to join. The library can help you get the books.

Thursday, March 12 -- Yankee Warrior: the Story of a Civil War Hero From Maine: The Librarian and I talked about this event. It was a big hit.

Thursday, April 9 -- Grant and Twain: the Story of a Friendship That Changed America

Thursday, May 14 -- Whistling Past the Graveyard

5. Library Pre-Schoolers Story Time: Read Notice.

6. Spring Sports Sign Ups: Read Notice.

7. SVCC Executive Director: Read Ad.

8. Bequest from Estate of Ronello Brown: Advised Town Councilors.

9. Special Election for Town Councilor on April 23, 2015: Advised of event.

Finance Committee: None. **Ordinance Committee:** None. **Recycling Committee:** None.

6. **NEW BUSINESS:**

RESOLUTION 15-29: Resolved that the Town Council authorize the Police Chief to seek State Highway Safety Equipment Grant Reimbursement in an amount to not exceed \$1,500 or 75% of the cost of a new radar system and to execute required paperwork.

Moved by **Deputy Mayor Nichols** and seconded by **Councilor Ferland** that Resolution 15-29 be adopted.

The Town Manager noted all police departments in the State of Maine are eligible for a reimbursement type grant in which the department will be reimbursed 75% of the cost of specific equipment on an approved equipment list. The cost of the radar system is not expected to exceed \$2,000.00. The town's match of 25% or \$500.00 will be taken out of the budget.

The letter from the Bureau of Highway Safety excluding the lengthy list of equipment that can be purchased under the program was included in the Town Councilors' package.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

RESOLUTION 15-30: Resolved that the Town Council appoint Nicole Nickolan as Warden and Cammie Jemery, Tonja Lary and Emmalee Reed as Deputy Wardens for the April 23, 2015 Special Municipal Election.

Moved by **Councilor Ferland** and seconded by **Councilor Stackhouse** that Resolution 15-30 be adopted.

The Town Manager noted this is a necessary item under the State Law to have the Special Election.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

7. **DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

Financial Reports as of 02/28/2015:

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

Other Reports as of 02/28/2015:

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

Updates:

Water & Sewer Projects Update – Winter cleanup, addressing issues that develop, cleaning up the facilities, and improving the facilities has been on the work list. The inventory was completely re-done and the auditors were happy with that improvement. We can then easily update the inventory in the future. A third problem was down on Peltoma Avenue with a line that services just a few homes. After the Driftbusters' water was turned off, there just was not enough flow and the line froze up. It took two days and assistance from Allen's Environmental to get this completely unfrozen so we do not want to do this again. It has been quite a few years since this section froze up before as approximately 14 years ago this same thing happened. Scott has some ideas on how to re-route these few homes for the future.

CWSRF Peltoma Avenue Project – MDOT opening permit was approved with conditions involving some revisions in the final plan for the project; MDOT has decided not to pave Peltoma Avenue as they would like the trench paving to settle in for 2-3 years; and the project is on line to be put out to bid in March. There are still very few projects out to bid and very little work, so we should get some interest.

The actual interest rate is quoted at .5 of a percent, although when it is closed, likely next month, it will be a different rate, however, still low. We have heard that the next MMBB Meeting to approve applications is March 31, 2015. The Town received word a bit before the meeting tonight that we need to submit another year's worth of financial materials that

are audited as our audit is underway and will not be completed with the audit book by March 31. I will work on this. The interest rate is still very low. We should be able to close at the beginning of April after the April 3, 2015 bid opening date.

Highway Projects Update – Since the last meeting, snow removal, addressing areas with water and basic winter to spring maintenance has kept the staff busy. As we had nearly a week without any storms, Public Works was able to work on a few other projects to get caught up including the solar signal light on Somerset Avenue. John has been pursuing quotes for the necessary work. We received a concern regarding the Somerset Avenue sidewalk along the roadway with ice/slush at the end of the driveway. There are three driveways that appear to have this issue. As soon as the snow is gone, John will check the grades again of the sidewalk and driveway work. It appears this low spot is in the roadway which was Lane Construction work for the State of Maine. If so, we will ask MDOT to come down to look at that area. However, we want to double-check the sidewalk first to make sure that it was installed correctly and has not settled or heaved. It looks fine, however, John needs to re-measure.

Brush and Tree Cutting - After many conversations with the insurance company and/or agencies and discussion with the Town Attorney and other individuals, the best approach to brush and tree cutting is clear. To cut any of these small trees and to clear brush around Mill Pond in selected areas will require the Town Public Works crew and/or a tree cutting company with insurance coverage. The Town Manager updated the Town Council on the results of the insurance review. Vaughan's suggestion of a tree cutting company is the way to go for areas Public Works can not do. Regardless of how well-intended volunteers would be, they should not be out with chain saws and other tools to cut the brush and small trees along the shoreline at Mill Pond. There are steep drop offs and frankly in a few locations, Public Works does not feel they can safely do this work and we would not assign Public Works to do this cutting. The banks are very steep in locations and especially in one, an individual falling over the edge would likely be sucked through a culvert due to the current. Going out on the ice has not worked this winter due to the strange weather pattern and the Safety Coordinator's schedule. For areas: (1) Fendler Park looks really good and there is no further cutting; (2) Hartland Avenue culverts - We will plan to apply for the permit needed to cut along Hartland Avenue. The staff will determine how to safely address this area as there is a drop off. We do not think that we would be allowed to cut the trees down in the water so we would be trimming them to provide for a view; (3) Stein Park which has a steep drop off and erosion issues requires professional cutting if the bank is to be done; and (4) North Main Street along Mill Pond by the large culverts – this is a steep drop off. It does not look like it has been cut for many decades. Public Works might be able to cut a few items by the guardrail. A lot of the trees are very far down. The other areas that were brought up later on were the back of the former Pittsfield Pharmacy, the back and side of the Pittsfield Redemption Center and the extended area by the Sebasticook Road culverts. The last one is the area where the loons nest and the Town had been told to leave that area alone by DEP. In fact, we had put up signs instructing people to not go in there as it was a loon habitat. We can trim again by the road and it does need another trimming. We would not trim out on the peninsula.

Proposed State Budget Impact: Governor's State of Maine Budget Proposal in deleting SRS and transferring the funds generated by taxing the 2 way telecommunications industry would yield the following results for the Town of Pittsfield:

Pittsfield \$1,403,754

The Governor's budget has proposed that Towns can tax the 2 way telecommunications industry that the State currently taxes. It would be shifted over to the Towns to make up for the loss of SRS. Some towns have many millions of dollars of value while others have very little. It is not uniform or scientific vs. the formulas utilized for the distribution of SRS.

At the mil rate of \$19.10/\$1,000 = \$26,811.70 taxes to be picked up by Pittsfield.

This does not even begin to match the amount of SRS that would be lost which is now around \$254,000. Used to be over \$550,000 several years ago. We understand that the funds would go down as the economy is down and as long as everyone is treated the same, that is fine. The issue are the allocations being taken from SRS to fund the State Budget and this latest attempt in a line of attempts to take away all SRS.

So far there has not been any further information except reports on the testimony that took place on the Governors' budget:

Bureau of Labor Inspection Results: Last year the Town had a comprehensive review of all departments except the Fire Department by the Bureau of Labor. The final result of the inspection was \$0 fines and a \$140.00 administrative fee for their time as allowed under the State law. So it was a very good inspection and we learned of a few new items to check and work on, which were completed this year.

Tax Acquired Property Sale Status: The bids are due on April 8, 2015 for the two TAPs – one on West Street by the former Railroad Tracks/recreational trail with a small building; and one with just land along the Pittsfield/Palmyra town line off the Phillips Corner Road.

Code Enforcement/Junky Yards: Reviewed newspaper articles regarding Fairfield's and Hallowell's lengthy process to have places cleaned up and the legal costs. This is FYI only so that we will be ready when this is pursued here.

2015 Spirit of America Foundation Award & Ceremony in April 2015: We do need to select the candidate at this meeting and then present the award in April 2015. The Town Councilors received a listing of possible candidates along with brief background materials. This will be an individual recognized for their history of volunteerism, compassion and good deeds. This is an award that the Town Councilors can choose and then our Pittsfield Spirit of America Foundation Awardee will attend a county-wide event to be recognized. At that time, the Town is also recognized.

Councilor Stackhouse recommended that Spencer Havey be added to the list for consideration. The Town Councilors chose Beverly Rollins for this year's award.

Grants Update:

New Grants:

Airport Grants: Airport Master Plan Update – On-going, should have a summary document shortly. Town received projections of usage and requested they be revised

Airport Grants: Airport Taxiway Reconstruction – to be completed late this spring/early summer

Airport Grants: Airport Apron Expansion – to be completed late this spring/early summer

HealthySV: Community Resources Program – Events have been scheduled in Warsaw Middle School, Vickery School and Manson Park School. Officer Mike Cote is the Visiting Resource Officer. Reviewed the handout with the Town Council.

Project Canopy Grant: Gateway to Downtown – paperwork arrived; training session scheduled for this week; once have completed the training, the grant agreement will be returned to the State of Maine. Then we can start planning out the project based upon the new regulations to be reviewed during the official training program.

Other Grant Opportunities:

Efficiency Maine Incentives – will be exploring possibilities for some of the town buildings
Rural Development – USDA has advised that they have RD funds available through loan and grant that would fit well with the future sewer work. If the Town would like, RD will meet with the Town. There was a discussion about our new debt and how it is being handled in the sewer enterprise fund.

Located possible foundation funding: Review Opportunities

8. **REPORTS:** Audience, Council

Audience: None

Council:

Councilor Donahue: Absent.

Councilor Stackhouse: When I came down by Hathorn Park the other night I noticed the electrical box was coming off the concession building. The Town Manager noted we have had that repaired. It was damaged due to the tree coming down in the park onto the wire which evidently pulled it off. I have a friend visiting from California that is very impressed with the snow removal in Town. They expected to see more snow on the streets and roadways, but the Highway Crew has done a good job with clean up. Kathryn, keep up the good work upstairs!

Councilor Ferland: I apologize for missing the last two meetings. How is the snow removal budget doing? The Town Manager noted that the snow removal budget is together with the summer work budget. To date there has been no additional salt purchased and the sand should be able to last as long as we stop getting storms every other day! Overtime is always the biggest cost in any snow removal budget, but by the Town using a contractor, this helps cut down on that. The day after I got home from vacation there was a great Civil War talk at the Library and at the Community Forum. There were over 60 people in attendance.

Councilor Nichols: Thank you, Devon, for coming in and sharing your project plans with us. It is a great and worthwhile project. As far as the Spirit of America award, Beverly Rollins absolutely deserves it. It is hard to pick just one name from the list. All of the nominees are deserving of the award. I am glad to see some activity at Somerset Plaza. Very happy Vaughn purchased the Corner Cupboard.

Councilor Cianchette: Absent.

Councilor Jordan: Devon, good work on your project. I'm sure it will be beautiful when you are done. The snow removal this year has been good.

9. EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Executive Session for Title 1, Section 405, 6.C., Economic Development, Disposition of Property and Acquisition of Property

Motion by **Deputy Mayor Nichols** to enter into executive session to discuss Economic Development, Disposition of Property and Acquisition of Property under Title 1, Section 405, 6.C. at 7:34 p.m. The motion was seconded by **Councilor Stackhouse**.

Motion by **Deputy Mayor Nichols** to return to regular session. The motion was seconded by **Councilor Stackhouse**. The Town Council exited executive session at 8:06 p.m.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

10. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by **Councilor Stackhouse** and seconded by **Deputy Mayor Nichols** that the meeting be adjourned at 8:07 p.m. All in agreement.

Nicole Nickolan, Town Clerk