

MINUTES

For a regular meeting of the Pittsfield Town Council held on Tuesday, March 4, 2008 at 7:30 pm in the Council Chambers.

PRESENT: COUNCILORS: Mayor Tim Nichols, Deputy Mayor Wayne Fotter, Donna Chale, Michael Cianchette and Gary Jordan, Jr. **ABSENT:** Michael Gray and Louise Baker. Also present were Town Manager Kathryn Ruth and Town Clerk Nicole Nickolan. Audience members included: Scott Noble, Sharon Mack, Michael Haynes, Scott Therrian and Kris Bridges.

1. **Mayor Nichols** opened the meeting by leading the **Pledge of Allegiance**.
2. **Adoption of Minutes** of the Regular Meeting on February 19, 2008.

Moved by **Councilor Cianchette** and seconded by **Councilor Chale** that the Minutes of the Regular Meeting on February 19, 2008 be adopted.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

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

On-going Grant Projects:

1. Airport Vegetation Plan: The Town received project approval for a Vegetation Plan and Engineering Assistance for DEP Permitting for removing vegetation in the amount of \$119,800.00. 95% or \$113,810 is a grant from the FAA; 2.5% or \$2,995 is a grant from MDOT; and 2.5% is the Town's match. The Vegetation Plan was forwarded to the FAA and we are awaiting their comments. MDOT has been out to review the project. Reimbursements have been submitted for \$33,155. Costs have been incurred for the project, however, we need approval of the Vegetation Plan draft to submit the remaining bills. This project is nearly all completed.

2. Airport Runway 01 Approach Obstruction Clearing, Phase II: The Town received project approval for an Obstruction approach clearing, Phase II for the runway in the amount of \$158,120. 95% or \$150,214 is a grant from the FAA; 2.5% or \$3,953 is a grant from MDOT; and 2.5% is the Town's match. After designing and then bidding out the work, we awarded a contract for cutting for the eligible acreage. Reimbursements have been submitted for \$113,492 with \$44,628 left on the grant.

3. Project Canopy: Pittsfield Community Project: The Mill Pond Loop: The Town purchased the trees for Hathorn Park and Remembrance Park; held the Community Forum with speakers, presentations, display tables and lots of information; and now we need to design the map for the walking loop that shows all the trees that we received through all the grants. Once that is completed, we can submit a reimbursement for the grant. The actual grant award was \$3,090. The due date is April 30, 2008.

4. CDBG Business Assistance Grant for Moosehead Cedar Log Homes: This is the \$400,000 grant which the Town received for the company to build its sales office, a display home and a warehouse. The company is going to use the sales office as the display home and finish the warehouse. The project has been bid out with bids due February 28. The large warehouse or distribution center is to be brought in and installed on site. It will be fully operational in Spring with all of the hires in place by June 30, 2008. The company then will work on the smaller display home in the future. The number of hires were to be 14 with a minimum of 8 to be 51% low-to-moderate income persons. Grant expenditures to date have been \$252,030 with \$147,970 remaining.

5. Efficiency Maine Business Program Grant: We received approval for an incentive for \$2,055 to offset the purchase of efficiency lighting. This the grant that was approved, then the contractor and the vendor did not agree on what was being priced and now the cost is more. We need to get the contractor and vendor on the same page and then talk with the State to make sure the project is still appropriate as is and then bring it back for endorsement as it costs more.

6. Safe Routes to School Grant: Advised late last week, that we can proceed on this grant and the MDOT wants the timetable immediately. We received a grant for \$23,831 for the installation of sidewalk leading from the new ballfields to the side of Vickery School where there is pavement. There is no cost share on the project as 100% of the project is being financed, however, if the project goes over, then the Town and School are responsible for the cost.

7. Land & Water Conservation Fund Grant for the Swimming Pool: The Town was recently advised that we received a \$25,000 grant for the Swimming Pool essential components. I recently received a package of questions to answer for the federal government. Normally the State fills out these items, however, this is a new questionnaire requesting comprehensive information so this is going to take some time. All of this material must be compiled and provided to the State which will then forward to the Federal Government. It is going to be a while before we get the contract for the project and the ability to proceed ahead.

8. Land & Water Conservation Fund Grant for Stein Park: This grant is still not closed out, although we did recently receive our reimbursement from the July 2007 submittal. 5% or \$669.13 is kept by the State until the grant is closed out at the federal level.

9. FEMA Reimbursements: We have been notified by the State of Maine that the State's share of the storms from April 15-23, 2007 is now being processed by the State and will be submitted shortly. That 25% of the costs or \$382.05 will be forthcoming from the State and then we can close this grant out.

10. CDBG Public Facilities Historic Preservation: The Town was just awarded this grant through an invitation to Phase II Development of the project. The grant is for \$150,000. This project will repair major structural damage to the foundation of the library as well as related damage. The work includes The work inside includes: (1) removing all basement partitions and ceilings; removing existing concrete floor and subgrading; installing underdrain, crushed stone base and other materials to prevent the flow of water through the foundation. (2) replacing partitions and ceilings to make presently unusable space healthy and functional for library programs (includes painting

and all necessary electrical work); and (3) repairing areas of upper level plaster which have cracked due to settling. The work outside includes: (1) excavating and installing underdrain and backfill around the building exterior; connecting the under drain to the existing catch basin on Library Street; and (2) stabilizing the exterior area by loaming and seeding.

There is a comprehensive checklist of steps to complete in the Development Phase. Once the Development Phase is completed, then the Town can bid out the project, working hand in hand with the State Office of Development and the Historic Preservation Commission. CDBG Funding is usually available in July. The CDBG Program Manager will meet with the Library Building Committee and Town Manager this week to start plotting a course for this project.

11. New Century Grant from the Maine State Library Commission: This is a \$50,000 grant for the restoration of the project. The grant requires a 2-1 match, which means that \$100,000 needs to be spent on restoration activities and the Town will receive \$50,000. \$6,854 has been spent to date.

12. New Century Grant for Repair of Historic Windows from the Maine State Library Commission: The grant is for \$5,000 and is a 2-1 match which means that we need to spend \$10,000 to get our reimbursement of \$5,000. To date, 11 storm windows have been removed, stripped, prepared to be painted; repaired and then windows painted and the glaze repaired.

13. Brownfields Clean-up Grant: We filed a project for \$48,000 to remove all the contaminants at the 8 Mount Road (10 Eelwier Road) property acquired through tax foreclosure due to 1995 taxes. The grant request was for \$40,00 with the Town providing the 20% match or \$8,000 as in-kind and funding. There is some contamination at the site which is concentrated and appears to just be at the site in certain locations. Asbestos is on the smaller garage and a small amount of asbestos was found in the building in a few areas. Contaminations included heavy metals and petroleum related compounds associated with a petroleum storage tank. Considering the uses of the building such as a printing company, there was low contamination. The grant awards are supposed to be made by the EPA by March 21, 2008. If the contaminants were removed, the Town could have the building demolished. We could then get quotes on that work and try to use that information to apply for a CDBG grant for spot blight. This building is certainly a detriment to the neighborhood, people passing by and the Town.

14. Fund for the Efficient Delivery of Local and Regional Services: The Town submitted a grant application to the State last month. The Recycling/Transfer Station Coordinator and I worked on it for the Towns of Pittsfield, Palmyra and Detroit. The Town has submitted a grant application previously for this fund for a regional recycling vehicle for the Towns of Palmyra, Pittsfield and Detroit. The vehicle could also be offered for pickups/special days in other surrounding towns for cost-sharing.

The Fund is \$500,000 and the cost of the vehicle is approximately \$137,640. The project was not approved during the last round which was 2006-2007. With the monies needing to be divided up for the entire State of Maine, we understood our chances going on. But this is what the region needs. Our costs are a lot lower from regionalism for recycling and recycling pickup now. Palmyra's used truck is aging and we will need to find

another option at some point so, time permitting, we will re-submit the application. At least it keeps the issue at the forefront.

15. Airport Grant for Apron Reconstruction Design: for \$150,000 will need to be filed prior to May 1, 2008 so this needs to be started now. This work needs to be completed this year in order for the Apron Reconstruction Project to go forward in 2009. This is a major project for the Town which is greatly needed due to the condition of the apron or area that the planes are tied down and through which the planes travel to get to the hangers from the runway.

Economic and Community Development Projects:

Somerset Community Transition Team - The Somerset County Community Transition Team will be in full swing in March 2008 – This would be a group formed for Somerset County. SAS would most likely be the first group of employees assisted. The Team would be comprised of community resources such as the Career Center, Kennebec Valley Community Action Program, Community Colleges for Somerset & Kennebec & Penobscot Counties, Food Banks, community leaders, state agencies, federal agencies, etc. The function of the group would be to coordinate all of the resources available to assist displaced workers. The first meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 17, 2008.

The Transition Team will be a very helpful network of agencies, organizations and other entities that would work as a clearinghouse to provide assistance to those who need it in wake of layoffs. Individuals and other businesses want to help those who are laid off and the Transition Team would be the focus of those efforts to coordinate the resources available in the State.

GCS Update - GCS started their orientation for employees yesterday. The company will officially open tomorrow. There are a couple of trainings coming up for March 13 – March 16, 2007 and we were assisting with a location. GCS was approved for the Maine Quality Centers Training through the State of Maine and the Community College System for Insurance Agent Training. Two classes of 20 individuals were scheduled. Cianbro and GE have utilized the Maine Quality Centers Training Program.

Bud's Shop N' Save – adding onto the Somerset Plaza with 6,500 square foot addition which is approximately a 30% increase in size, of which 4,600 square feet will be for floor space and storage. This project will go before the Planning Board on March 10th.

Non-profit development project – still working on finding funding sources for a project that would utilize an older building here in town for a non-profit company. To date, have not found a grant program that this project fits into – I'm working with the KVCOG Community Development Director on this project.

Economic Development Projects – several meetings set up and discussions with businesses and other entities on potential opportunities. We need to spend some time on our projects for the State Stimulus Package, which were discussed at a prior meeting - we need to advance those projects.

KVCOG CEDS Meeting – We heard that there will be some restructuring of the Economic Development Grant Program at the federal level. A new field person will be

hired for the New England Area and will be a Maine resident so this is helpful. KVCOG is going to re-inventory all of the projects. Our candidate was the Industrial Park Expansion. The program is geared toward urban areas and not rural areas. If someone had time to dedicate to the IP Expansion, they could work on all of the various opportunities and put them together to actually piece together a project. This would be a very time-consuming process.

4. **PUBLIC HEARINGS/OLD BUSINESS:**

a. ***ORDINANCE 08-03:*** (Public Hearing)

An Ordinance to authorize acquisition and financing or lease/purchase of a new truck for the Water Department.

That the Town of Pittsfield Town Council hereby ordains the purchase and financing of a new truck for the Water Department of the Town on the following terms:

1. The Town accepts the bid of Whited Ford Truck to provide a new truck for the Water Department and authorizes the lease-purchase of a 2008 Ford F-350 truck with plow and service body (the "Truck") at a price of \$36,647, which amount is hereby appropriated.

2. The purchase of the Truck authorized above shall be financed by borrowing \$36,647 under the terms of a Master Equipment Lease Purchase Agreement (the "Lease"), hereby authorized, with Ford Motor Credit Company, with two annual payments in advance of \$19,054.71 each and with payments subject to annual appropriations and with such dates, maturities, denominations, interest rate(s) and other details as the Town Treasurer and the Chair of the Town Council shall determine. The Town Treasurer is authorized to execute all necessary documents, including but not limited to the Lease and a Delivery and Acceptance Certificate, for the Lease of the Truck. The Town Treasurer is further authorized to pay the \$36,647 portion of the purchase price ultimately to be financed, on an interim basis, out of the water fund of the Town, which costs the Town reasonably expects to reimburse with proceeds of a tax exempt lease purchase agreement to be issued by the Town in the total maximum principal amount of \$36,647.

3. This Ordinance shall take effect 30 days after its adoption.

There was no one who wished to speak in favor of this ordinance.

Michael Haynes was in attendance to speak against the ordinance. Mr. Haynes of Hunnewell Avenue questioned what kind of truck this was and why it costs so much money. The Town Manger explained that the ordinance is worded as required by law with the legal language. The information on pricing is of the lowest bidder and explains the bid process. Mr. Haynes questioned why we were buying another truck with a plow when we just purchased one. He questioned if the highway department can not handle the snow removal in Town. The Town Manager explained that the Town has not invested

money for many, many years in upgrading equipment or purchasing work vehicles. The old Water & Sewer truck needed extensive repairs and was not worth investing money into this old equipment. The Town Manager explained that the Water & Sewer Department not only plows their numerous locations, but also helps at the transfer station and other Town locations. Scott Noble, Water & Sewer Assistant Superintendent, stated that he requested a plow on the new truck because if a truck breaks down, they are without a plow. This situation occurred 2 years ago and a private company had to be hired for snow removal. This was very expensive and in the long term it is a savings to the Town to have additional plows if any of the other Town plow trucks break down.

Public Hearing was closed.

Moved by **Deputy Mayor Fotter** and seconded by **Councilor Jordan** that Ordinance 08-03 be adopted.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

- b. **ORDINANCE 08-04:** (Public Hearing): That the Town Council hereby ordains to approve the change of a E-911 address for Cianbro Corporation currently located off Easy Street to Cianbro Square due to uniqueness of the location.

There was no one who wished to speak in favor or opposition of this ordinance. Public Hearing was closed.

Moved by **Deputy Mayor Fotter** and seconded by **Councilor Chale** that Ordinance 08-04 be adopted.

The Town Manager noted there has been some confusion with having Cianbro with a regular street name for delivery services. After discussions between everyone involved, including the post office, we felt a unique address was required and came to the conclusion of Cianbro Square. The Post Office has agreed that the Town may assign this new address.

Councilor Cianchette questioned why this address is unique and what type of delivery issues have occurred. The Town Manager explained Cianbro is not getting its deliveries. Cianbro used to have an address called Hunnewell Square. **Councilor Cianchette** stated that he is not happy with the name of his street, but there was a public hearing when these were all changed and that was the time Cianbro needed to bring this to our attention. He does not feel this is an issue we need to waste the council's time with. The Town Manager noted the situation only came up after the E-911 address change.

**VOTE: 4 AYE/1 NAY (CIANCHETTE)
MOTION PASSES**

- c. **ORDINANCE 08-05:** (Public Hearing): That the Town Council hereby ordains to hold a Public Hearing on 03/04/2008 at 7:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building to discuss acceptance of a Special Projects Matching Funds CDBG Grant for \$15,000. The purpose of the grant is to provide working capital for Global Contact Services' new contact center to be located at the Somerset Plaza. Public comments will be solicited at this Hearing and will be submitted as part of the Project Development Phase. All persons wishing to make comments or ask questions about the acceptance of these funds are invited to attend this Public Hearing. Comments may be submitted in writing to Kathryn Ruth at the Pittsfield Town Office, 112 Somerset Avenue, Pittsfield, ME 04967 at any time prior to the Public Hearing. TDD/TTY users may call 711. If you are physically unable to access any of the Town's programs or services, please call 1-207-487-3136 so that accommodations can be made.

There was no one who wished to speak in favor or opposition of this ordinance. Public Hearing was closed.

Moved by **Councilor Cianchette** and seconded by **Councilor Jordan** that Ordinance 08-05 be adopted.

The Town Manager noted the State has advised that the Town would be eligible to receive funding to assist with this project, which is great news. This grant will provide Global Contact Services with working capital to establish a new contact center and expand their operations to Maine. This is a 100 seat contact center with two shifts. As the project ramps up over the next year, approximately 200 positions will be added.

A Special Projects Matching Funds grant is a CDBG grant and we have completed the checklist of materials required for the Development Phase. The packet is available this evening for review. The grant falls under the same HUD program as past grants received for Walpole Woodworkers, Inc. and the Moosehead Cedar Log Home project.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

- d. **ORDINANCE 08-06:** (Public Hearing): That the Town Council hereby ordains that Tax Anticipation borrowing for fiscal year 2008 be approved in an amount not to exceed Six Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$650,000), and that the Town Manager/Treasurer be authorized to prepare and seek competitive proposals for the Town's 2008 Tax Anticipation borrowing.

There was no one who wished to speak in favor or opposition of this ordinance. Public Hearing was closed.

Moved by **Deputy Mayor Fotter** and seconded by **Councilor Cianchette** that Ordinance 08-06 be adopted.

The Town Manager noted this is a yearly housekeeping process that the Town goes through, as the property taxes, the major source of revenue for the Town, are due once per year.

We have established the TAN as a line of credit for the last several years, therefore, we are borrowing as we need the funds through the months that the revenue collections are lower. The revenue collections increase when the tax bills are released and tax payments start coming in.

The Town can require the funds as early as the end of April – July and then pays the TAN back after taxes are due in October of each year. This year it is estimated that the funds will be needed around July.

Councilor Chale questioned if we seek competitive proposals from different financial institutions. The Town Manager noted that we send the Request for Proposals to numerous financial institutions and place an ad in the paper as notice to any other interested parties.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

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

Town Manager's Report: Town Council Meeting of 03/04/2008:

1. The FYI Folder: The FYI Book contains the following items this week: Read List

2. Pittsfield Area Business Forum: This is a forum or get-together for the businesses in Pittsfield and our surrounding towns. All individuals thinking of opening a business, expanding their business, who would like to receive information on local and state programs that could benefit the business or just network and meet other business representatives are cordially invited to attend.

Pittsfield Area Business Forum will be held on Tuesday, March 25, 2008 in the Vickery School Gym off School Street, Pittsfield. *Businesses & guests from all towns welcome*

6:30 – 7:00 p.m. Networking & picking up resources
7:00 – 8:00 p.m. Welcome, Presentations and Discussions
8:00 – 8:30 p.m. Refreshments & Socializing

Reasons to attend:

Brief presentations/discussions on assistance available for businesses

Find out about services & resources for your business

Meet other business owners/representatives & discuss what you have in common

Find businesses to work with or purchase products from in the future

Great resources if you are thinking of starting a new business

Questions, contact Kathryn Ruth at the Pittsfield Town Office (487-3136); Michael Gray, Pittsfield Ec Dev Team (487-5167) or Catherine Philbrick, Pittsfield Ec Dev

Team (1-800-310-8353, ext. 2651).

Storm Date: Monday, March 31, 2008 at 6:30 p.m., Vickery School
Sponsored by Town of Pittsfield and Seabasticook Valley Chamber of Commerce

3. Pittsfield Area Recreation Program Sign-up: We are proceeding forward with the Spring Sports Program. The Town Office will sign up interested parents and children. Tom Bertrand has offered to take all of the sign-ups to set up the teams and the game schedule which is greatly appreciated. Manson Park Committee members will be assisting this Spring.

When: Wednesday, March 19 from 8:00 am – 6:30 pm (includes evening hours),
Thursday, March 20 from 8:00 am – 5:00 pm and Friday, March 21 from 8:00 am – 5:00 pm

Location: Pittsfield Town Office, Main Offices (upstairs)

League Information: T-Ball: *Ages 5 & 6*, Farm League: *Ages 7 & 8*, Little League: *Ages 9 – 12* and Softball: *Ages 9 – 12*

(Cost is \$15 per child. Family Registration Maximum is \$45)

Individuals interested in coaching may submit their names.

The Town is still accepting applications for Recreation Director and Recreation Assistant. Contact Pittsfield Town Office, 112 Somerset Avenue (487-3136)

4. Upcoming Energy Forum to celebrate Earth Day and Arbor Day Week:

The Town of Pittsfield Recycling Committee will host an Energy Forum on Wednesday, May 14, 2008 for the community, businesses, schools and non-profits. Open to all communities. The event will take place from 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. at the Seabasticook Valley #2713 Elks Lodge off Central/Middle Street. Plenty of parking.

There will be a keynote speaker to discuss how everyone can conserve energy, provide tips on how to save energy at homes and businesses and other important tips. There will be tables with resource materials on energy, recycling, re-use and other key areas dealing with the environment.

Mark your calendars for an interesting and educational evening as well as a way to save money while conserving natural resources.

5. 2008 Tax Club: The Town makes available a tax club payment plan which enables taxpayers to divide their next year's property taxes into twelve monthly payments. The basis for the estimated 2008 tax will be the actual 2007 tax divided by the number of months left in the year when you join. To sign up for the tax club, ask any of the counter personnel at the Town Office or call the Town Office at 487-3136.

6. Neighborhood Watch: The Town's Neighborhood Watch Group is inviting everyone to join them to exchange ideas and share information to make the community a safer place. Get tips on how to protect your loved ones and your property while learning how you can make a difference doing things you already do. The next scheduled meetings are Monday, 04/07/2008 and Monday, 05/05/2008, both at 6:30 p.m. in the

Council Chambers in the Municipal Building. The group generally meets the first Monday of each month.

7. Animal Control Officer Needed: Chief Emery has announced that the Town is seeking proposals for an Animal Control Officer for the Town. Anyone who is interested in this part-time position should contact the Police Department and speak to Chief Emery beginning 02/25/2008. In the interim, the Police Officers are addressing any animal control issues as they have covered over the years when the ACOs have not been available.

8. The Paul E. Bertrand Community Pool Upcoming Fundraisers:

Exciting news on the Swimming Pool Fundraising Campaign. With recent donations, the total to raise on this \$400,000 project is now under \$100,000. Recent donations and revenue have brought the fundraising campaign to a total of \$79,329.46 since the official campaign was started last summer.

Over 151 individual and company donations have been made. In addition, hundreds of people have contributed through the Pennies for the Pool Campaign in the Schools, the collection cans around town, the Pittsfield Farmers' Market and the Egg Festival Booth.

The next fundraising event will be Scrapbooking for the Pool to be held on Saturday, April 26, 2008 from 9:00 am - 4:00 pm at the Seabasticook Valley Elks Lodge off Central/Middle Streets in Pittsfield. The cost is \$30.00. Registration includes a reserved seat and workstation, great door prizes, free coffee & tea. Refreshments will be by The Mad Hatter. The vendor will be Creative Memories.

For reservations, contact Mary Gaeta 487-5101, e-mail: petduck52@hotmail.com or Christine Cookson at 487-5590, e-mail: nutmegpaddy1@verizon.net. Registrations will also be taken at Heidi Ann's Flower Shop at 103 Main Street and the Pittsfield Town Office, 112 Somerset Avenue. Checks made payable to the Town of Pittsfield, note Scrapbooking.

9. Town of Pittsfield 2008 Training Calendar: The Safety Committee has established a training calendar for 2008, which includes one training session per month. This will be great. Generally, when all of the summer people come on, we have 5 training sessions all together in May – June. We will need to do a little bit of individualized training, however, this will spread the training out all year round. PPE Hazard Assessment Review took place in 02/2008 and we will have Hazard Communication in 03/2008. The next Safety Committee Meeting is 03/21/2008.

Finance Committee: No Report.

Ordinance Committee: No Report.

Recycling Committee: No Report.

6. **NEW BUSINESS:**

- a. ***RESOLUTION 08-18:*** That the Town Council hereby ordains to authorize the Execution of the Signature, Award and No-Litigation Certificate for the new truck for the Water Department of the Town.

Moved by **Councilor Jordan** and seconded by **Councilor Cianchette** that Resolution 08-18 be adopted.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

- b. RESOLUTION 08-19:* (To be set to public hearing on 04/01/2008)
Resolved that the Town Council repeal Chapter 13 Zoning Ordinance, Section 4 Performance Standards Signs and replace in its entirety with the attached Chapter 13 Zoning Ordinance, Section 4 Performance Standards Signs.

Moved by **Deputy Mayor Fotter** and seconded by **Councilor Cianchette** that Resolution 08-19 be adopted.

The Town Manager noted this amendment to the Zoning Ordinance is for revisions to the Sign Regulations to make the regulations clearer, take care of sign issues that have come up and provide the opportunity for individuals/businesses that wish to have extra signage or alternative locations to go to the Planning Board and apply for this alternative.

The Ordinance Committee had approved amendments to be sent to the Planning Board. The Planning Board made 1 change in pointing out that signs seen from I-95 be governed by the Maine State law. A certain distance from I-95 is regulated under the law. Putting this in the regulations makes it clear that applicants have to follow these regulations.

The Town Council Public Hearing needs to follow the Planning Board Public Hearing by at least 14 days.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

- c. RESOLUTION 08-20:* Resolved that the Town Manager has the authority to file grant applications and that the Town Council authorizes the filing of the Community Development Block Grant Program Application/Special Projects Matching Funds in the amount of \$15,000 for Global Contact Services, to make assurances as required by the application; to accept funds; carry out duties; and to sign documents necessary for the grant.

Moved by **Councilor Chale** and seconded by **Councilor Cianchette** that Resolution 08-20 be adopted.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

- d. RESOLUTION 08-21:* Resolved that the Town Council authorize the Town Manager and Assistant Treasurer to send to a collection agency the delinquent Fire Department past due invoices for services rendered.

Moved by **Councilor Cianchette** and seconded by **Councilor Jordan** that Resolution 08-21 be adopted.

The Town Manager noted in 2006, the Town Council instituted fees for the Fire Department for response to motor vehicle accident scenes due to the number of accidents the Town had been seeing in the community, especially on I-95. The argument was that the Town was not budgeting for so much additional work and that this was not a function of taxes, especially as the Fire Department was so overtaxed.

We were instructed to try this out for a year and come back with a report, especially about uncollectibles. Traditionally, ambulance and fire department billings will result in a lot of uncollectibles. A survey recently conducted by a community interested in exploring billing results in a number of towns explaining that after trying to collect, they abandoned the fee structure. Other towns collected about 10%. In other communities where I have worked, we have been very happy when collections hit the 50% mark.

Many of the 2007 uncollectibles were billed at the end of 2007, therefore, they have not been outstanding for awhile. This agenda item is to determine how we would like to proceed and has been written to proceed to a collection agency if you so desire. Some of the uncollectibles to date have moved, no phone #s, running them on the White pages reveals 8 or 20 people with the same exact name. Tracking down some people will be difficult. The Assistant Treasurer and I would recommend the following:

1 more billing for 2006, bill the insurance companies if we know which ones. Then a letter that the matter is being turned over to the collection agency. Then proceed to a collection company.

2 more billings for 2007 as the most of the bills are recent. Then a letter that the matter is being turned over to a collection agency. Then proceed to a collection company.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

- e. **RESOLUTION 08-22:** Resolved that the Town Council Approve the Renewal of the Alcoholic Beverage License for Town Tavern at 613 Main Street, Pittsfield, Maine 04967.

Moved by **Councilor Cianchette** and seconded by **Councilor Chale** that Resolution 08-16 be adopted.

The Town Manager noted this is a yearly housekeeping item, all is in order.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

7. **DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

Financial As Listed Below:

- A. Financial Reports as of 01/31/2008:
 - Budget Expenditure Report
 - Revenue Collections Report
 - Tax Acquired Property Report
 - Review of properties

Economic Development Revolving Loan Update
Payment plans established - 2
Housing Revolving Loan Update
Transfer Station/Recycling Monthly Report
Theatre Monthly Report
Personal Property Tax Report
**The Tax Acquired Property Report and Economic Development
Revolving Loan Updates were briefly reviewed by the Town Manager**

TAP report:

We have 10 TAP properties:

1 is up for Brownfields Grant Assessment. Those grants are still under review by EPA.

Janette Jones outstanding taxes for 7 years is at the Town Attorney's Office. After a number of requests from her attorney for paperwork, still no payment plan has been provided, so this will be formerly filed

As you know, a number were recently paid up and quit claimed. John Haskell's was paid up in February and will be coming before the Town Council at the next meeting.

A couple of accounts are in default, they have refused letters, won't come to the door when other letters are delivered, etc. so those will be coming to a head. Everyone else who has plans has been doing fine. 1 of the 3 new ones needs to be abated as it is a mobile home that took off from town in the past without payment of taxes.

The Neville's will start their 3 installment payment plan shortly.

Economic Development & Housing Loans:

\$681,212.26 in the banks between the two loan programs.

These are all old loans from the 1990's

4 regular loans o/s

Everything is in bankruptcy or has no collateral

For the two which are not in bankruptcy, they have agreed to payment plans as follows:

Melissa Kuespert, Let's Party (now Ramsey) had been making payments and doing very well in 2004-2006. She will begin payments again: \$200.00 by the end of each month until the debt is paid off.

Penny Neal, Penny's Booptique (now Patten) had not made any payments since 1996. She will now begin payments again: \$50.00 every two weeks by a payment schedule until the debt is paid off.

Two very good developments.

B. Other Reports as of 01/31/2008:

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

Other Item: Water Meter Upgrade and Sewer System Projects

Automated Reading System Water Meter Upgrade:

As we know, the Town has been working on the Water Meter Upgrade, which has been a time-consuming complex project to bid out a new Automated Water Meter Reading System with new residential water meters. This was a very comprehensive project that has taken several years. The first billing with the new system for 2 of the 7 books took place at the end of February. We are going to set up a chart to review the quarters billings to see what the changes are from having updated metering. As reported by the Assistant Water/Sewer Superintendent, most of the meters were reading in favor of the customer. The Town has had a number of different types of meters from many different decades. This project updates the meters to 1 type for residential use. The commercial meters had not been malfunctioning like the residential ones so we did not replace those meters. Sewer flow for sewer billings are based upon the water meter readings.

As everyone knows, the Town’s sewer system is antiquated with piping dating back to the early 1900’s in many cases. Without proper revenue, we did not have the funds to do much more than keep the system going. The Town can’t spend money that it does not have.

As we are finishing up the meter reading project, the next step we decided upon was to start putting projects together for sewer upgrades.

The Summer Street Sewer Project was our first project worked on in 2006-2007. Due to the engineer finding stormwater in the sewer lines, we needed both a stormwater system and a sewer system. That project was shut down last year when MDOT would not issue the Town an entrance permit onto the State road. The Town was unable to find the proof that the project was approved such as the original stormwater study, permits, etc. from the 1992-1993 project. I hired Kleinschmidt and they have acquired some of the documents and are working to clarify exactly what was approved in 1993. As soon as we can determine that we can proceed, we will start negotiations with MDOT to use the stormwater drainage system that the Town built.

In anticipation of finishing the meter reading project, we have also solicited quotations for engineering to get several projects ready to go out to bid. The low bidder for the project can start immediately with field work for some of the areas in the sewer system that need repair, working with the Assistant Water/Sewer Superintendent. The idea is to get the packages ready up to bidding with the plans and documents that are needed. Once we determine how the future funding from the new water meter system is working, we may be able to bid out the work because we will have enough funding for a loan payment. If not, then we will also be working with the Maine Rural Water Association to determine how to structure sewer rate increases.

Now that the complex time-consuming first step for the water meter upgrade is coming to a conclusion so that in the next several months we will have reliable readings, we can start:

Getting projects engineered

Watch the sewer billing collections vs. historic collections

Determine if we can afford another loan for sewer work.

Work with the Maine Rural Water Association on rate increases if the new collections do not generate enough money for some sewer system upgrades.

The system needs so much upgrading that there will need to be a sewer rate increase. Right now, the Town has the second lowest sewer rate in the State of Maine. Until recently, we had the lowest rate in the State. That rate does not allow the system to be upgraded, only to be barely maintained for decades.

8. **REPORTS:** Audience, Council

Audience: No Report

Council:

Councilor Baker: Absent.

Councilor Cianchette: Noted it is always a privilege to be able to serve on the Council in this democratic manner. Wanted to thank the audience members for attending. Wanted to note that there was a Neighborhood Watch Meeting last night where organization of the Committee and future goals were discussed. Scott Therrian has presented Mike with a \$100 donation to jump-start the purchase of Neighborhood Watch Signs.

Councilor Chale: Congratulations to Kathryn and the Library Committee on being awarded the grant for the Library. Also, wanted to mention she spent some time at the Pinnacle this Saturday and it is such a wonderful resource for the Town.

Councilor Jordan: No Comment.

Councilor Gray: Absent.

Deputy Mayor Fotter: Extended his congratulations to Scott Noble and his staff on the water meter replacements. Everyone has been commenting on what a professional job the team is doing. Wanted to also congratulate Kathryn and her staff on being awarded the Library grant. Deputy Mayor Fotter wanted to let Kathryn and the staff at the Town Office know they are doing an excellent job.

Mayor Nichols: Noted you can tell by the list of grants that are being worked on how hard everyone is working. The Town has really jumped leaps and bounds from seven years ago. Congratulations to Kathryn and the Library Committee on being awarded the grant. Happy to hear of T-ball sign ups because that means spring will soon be here! Mayor Nichols wanted to be sure all the Townspeople know how hard Kathryn and the staff work in the Town office. It is not an easy job, and he wanted to let the girls to know the work does not go unappreciated.

9. **ADJOURNMENT:**

Moved by **Deputy Mayor Fotter** and seconded by **Councilor Cianchette** that the meeting be adjourned at 8:35 p.m. All in agreement.

Nicole Nickolan, Town Clerk