

MINUTES

For a regular meeting of the Pittsfield Town Council held on Tuesday, September 16, 2008 at 7:30 pm in the Council Chambers.

PRESENT: COUNCILORS: Mayor Tim Nichols, Deputy Mayor Wayne Fotter, Donna Chale, Michael Cianchette and Louise Baker. **ABSENT:** Michael Gray, Gary Jordan, Jr. Also present: Town Manager Kathryn Ruth and Town Clerk Nicole Nickolan. Audience members included: Donnie Hallenbeck, Carolyn Dodge, Sharon Mack, Scott Monroe, Clem Spencer, Walter Reuter and others.

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

Moved by **Councilor Cianchette** and seconded by **Councilor Chale** that the Minutes of the Regular Meeting on September 2, 2008 be adopted.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

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

1. Economic Development for the Region: Seabasticook Valley Chamber of Commerce Strategic Planning

The Town Manager made a short presentation on the Seabasticook Valley Chamber of Commerce Strategic Planning information that was included in the package.

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

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

Town Manager's Report: Town Council Meeting of 09/16/2008:

1. The FYI Folder: The FYI Book contains the following items this week: LIST READ

2. Somerset County Transition Team: The next meeting of the group which functions as a clearing house of information, sponsors job fairs with other entities and provides a strategy to address layoffs will be meeting on Wednesday, October 01, 2008 from 9:30 am – 11:00 am in the Town Council Chambers.

3. Pittsfield Farmers' Market: The Farmers' Market is going strong rain or shine from May 1 – October 30 at Hathorn Park every Monday and Thursday from 2:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. Several Farms are involved. More information is available from www.pittsfieldfarmersmarket.org or you can pick up a brochure at the Town Office.

4. Annual Sebasticook Valley Healthy Communities Coalition Meeting: The Annual Meeting/Retreat for the Sebasticook Valley was held on Tuesday, September 16, 2008 at Occasions in Newport from 8:30 am – 1:00 p.m. It was very interesting and quite well attended. I will summarize the direction of the next year of the Coalition at the next meeting.

5. Neal Bridge Closing, Route #100: It has been reported that Day 2 of the Route #100 or Main Street Road Closing has gone well. We put out a lot of advance publicity regarding the route to utilize and that the large trucks should not be on the country roads due to the 5 ton prohibition. The State of Maine DOT also has a lot of signing out. The Town's Ordinance indicates that all thru trucks in excess of 5 tons are prohibited from traveling on these roads.

6. Fuel Bid: The Maine Power Options issued a second fuel bid and the pricing was too high. We are bidding this out ourselves to determine a course of action.

7. WorkReady Program: The Work Ready Program held a meeting for SAS Employees on 09/15/2008 with an excellent turnout. Funding is being provided for a WorkReady Program for SAS Shoe so we are fortunate to receive this program funding. WorkReady is an employer-recognized credential for those completing a 60-hour training program. It is a soft skills training program which offers a portable credential to participants signifying that people have acquired the skills that local employers want in job applicants. We had a presentation at the last Somerset County Transition Team Meeting and this program sounds very, very good and has excellent results. It helps people to become competitive in the marketplace for positions.

8. Pittsfield Area Energy Forum: The second Annual Energy Forum for this area will be held on Monday, 09/29/2008 from 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm at Vickery School Gym. The Keynote Speaker, back due to popular demand will be Dick Fortier, the Solar Program Manager with the PUC. Mr. Fortier will explore all of the energy resources available from the PUC which is quite extensive. We will have booths and displays again from local companies, CMP, Skills, Inc., Pennywise and others on how to save energy, energy resources and general conservation. Of course, we will have our regular recycling and re-use focus. This session has the potential of really being packed due to the current energy prices. This will be our Fall Community Forum.

READ Ad

9. Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day: READ Ad

Finance Committee: No Report.

Ordinance Committee: No Report.

Recycling Committee: The committee met on 09/03/2008. The main focus of the meeting was the upcoming Household Hazardous Waste Day. Ideas for Maine Recycling Week were also discussed. The Energy Forum was discussed in length. This event will be geared toward individual homeowners.

6. NEW BUSINESS:

- a. ***RESOLUTION 08-122:*** Resolved that the Town Council Accept the proposal of Carter Tree Service of Skowhegan, Maine in an amount not to exceed \$ 5,250.00 for the 2008 Removal of Trees and Stumps.

Moved by **Deputy Mayor Fotter** and seconded by **Councilor Cianchette** that Resolution 08-122 be adopted.

The Town Manager noted the low bid is Carter Tree Service of Skowhegan, recommend approving \$5,250 by deleting Tree #s:

#10 trim; #13 trim; #16 removal and #20 stump and trim, for the 2008 Removal of Trees and Stumps.

The Town has a budget of \$4,500 for Tree Removal. These are great prices. PW has reviewed the list and believes that they can cut a couple of the trees themselves, especially, as someone topped a tree in between the time we marked it and bid it so it will be easier for them to cut. With such excellent pricing, we should have as many trees cut as possible.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

- b. RESOLUTION 08-123:* Resolved that the Town Council Authorize the Town Manager and Assistant Treasurer to establish the Keeping Our Neighbors Warm Program for Pittsfield and to accept donations for the program.

Moved by **Councilor Chale** and seconded by **Councilor Cianchette** that Resolution 08-123 be adopted.

The Town Manager noted the Town staff recommended that we establish a program to assist those who can not heat their homes this winter who run into an emergency situation with not being able to afford fuel. Obviously, we have the General Assistance Program in which we enforce the State regulations, expend funds from the budget and are generally reimbursed 50% of our costs. Once in a while, someone is just above the income guidelines and we are unable to assist them and they are in a bind even with other available programs. This additional program would not assist those who are disqualified from GA for not searching for work, quitting work and a variety of other reasons.

The second group of people that we see this fund assisting are those who will not come in for GA, who are home very cold or deciding to not buy food or prescriptions, generally our seniors. We see very few seniors for GA, rarely do we see a senior and they just try to get by. With the fuel cost so high, I think less people are going to just get by this winter. We want to help them.

If approved, the staff will advertise the program, contact non-profits, contact businesses and the public to see if they would like to become a part of this program.

The Keeping Our Neighbors Warm Program would be targeted for December 2008. Most seniors and other individuals of lower income will receive their allotment of HEAP assistance and use that, then the funds are going to run out and some will need help.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

- c. RESOLUTION 08-124:* Resolved that the Town Council Approve and Authorize the Town Manger to sign the grant-in-aid application to the Department of Conservation, Bureau of Parks and Lands Snowmobile

Program for an estimated project of \$38,039.00 to improve the snowmobile trails for the Driftbusters Snowmobile Club.

Moved by **Councilor Cianchette** and seconded by **Councilor Baker** that Resolution 08-124 be adopted.

The Town Manager noted each year we file an application for the Driftbusters, the Pittsfield Area Snowmobile Club, to assist them with grant funding to maintain the snowmobile trails. Considerable maintenance and in turn costs are associated with grooming the trails and keeping them in proper order.

The grant application is for a higher amount this year due to the increase in maintenance, suspension bridge repairs, a lot of bushhogging, and more trail grooming due to more snow and storms projected.

The group does an excellent job each year maintaining approximately 95 miles of trails.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

- d. RESOLUTION 08-125:* Resolved that the Town Council Authorize the Town Manager to execute modification #1 to the Safe Routes to School Project Agreement between the Town of Pittsfield and the State of Maine, Department of Transportation, Federal Project Number SR-1635(900)X, State Pin (16359.00)

Moved by **Councilor Cianchette** and seconded by **Councilor Baker** that Resolution 08-125 be adopted.

The Town Manager noted we were fortunate to receive a second grant from MDOT for the continuation of the Safe Routes to School Program at the Warsaw and Vickery Schools. The original project has been revised to include a curb the entire length of the project to ensure that the traffic does not drive onto the sidewalk and it will assist better the drainage at the site.

The revised project is for 480 linear feet of 5' wide paved sidewalk and curb, necessary catchbasins, 134 linear feet of drain and other related items. The State has granted the Town an additional \$10,000 for the project so the grant award will now be \$33,831.

The State is still waiting for their approvals. If possible, we will bid the project out this year if the work would not be too far into the cold weather. Otherwise, this may turn out to be a spring project, which can be bid out during the winter, and we may just get better pricing.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

- e. RESOLUTION 08-126:* Resolved that the Town Council Allow the Town Clerk to opt-in to LD-2293 Resolve, which would prohibit in-person absentee voting on November 3, 2008 in Pittsfield.

Moved by **Councilor Chale** and seconded by **Councilor Cianchette** that Resolution 08-126 be adopted.

The Town Manager noted this is a new law passed to deal specifically with the upcoming Presidential Election in November in which people could still pick up absentee ballots and return them to the Town Office on the day before the Election, however, they could not vote absentee in front of the clerk on the day before the Election.

The thought pattern behind this is the fact that with the Town Clerk tied up with absentee voters all day the day before the election that it is hard to get the list updated on the State site and the proper Voters list run out.

Absentee voting is very, very easy now, however, it has been a problem for Towns to get their lists in order for the next day without working long hours the day before the election and one is certainly working long hours the day of the election.

Nicole, the Town Clerk, can further describe this resolution if necessary. **Councilor Chale** questioned if we were taking away the right to vote on the day before election. The Town Clerk advised that the residents can still get an absentee ballot to vote at their home, but this Resolution will prevent them from voting directly in our office on the day before the election. There are many tasks that need to be completed the day before the election and having a line of voters in front of the Town Clerk all day does not allow her to accomplish the State and Federal requirements.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

7. **DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

Financial As Listed Below:

- A. Financial Reports as of 08/31/2008:
 - 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
 - Personal Property Tax Report
 - Real Estate Property Tax Collection
 - Briefly Reviewed by Town Manager**

- B. Other Reports as of 08/31/2008:
 - Building and Plumbing Permit Reports
 - Library Report – Librarian’s and Library Trustees Minutes
 - Police Report
 - Self Explanatory – Not Reviewed**

Discussion Items:

1. Update on Water Project: Water Meter Replacement and Automated Meter Reading System (AMR):

We are still 80% completed in installation of the meters (excluding the mobile home parks which we will keep the single meters in for the time being). We are installing the master meters for the mobile home parks for informational purposes only at this time and then will meet with each of the mobile home park owners to go over the readings at the end of the quarters.

2. Update on Sewer Projects:

Summer Street (and Summer Court) Sewer Separation Project: Manter Construction has moved in and the project is underway. We found a sewer stump that we could hook into so we did not have to cut into Peltoma Avenue, which is very good. They are laying pipe as fast as they can go. S&G provided the costs for the paving and it is more than last year but we are working on addressing it somehow and the company will work with the Town. Obviously, Summer Street needs to be the first road to be paved next year on the Paving List.

Main Street, West Street and Hamilton Cross Country Sewer Projects: Haley Construction has started the Main Street project is cutting the cross country area for the Hamilton Cross Country Sewer Projects. So we are underway.

Sewer Flow Study Results: We had the last rain event and expect the Sewer Flow Study from Bill Oliver around the end of September 2008. It may be a good idea to schedule Mr. Oliver of Oliver Associates to come to a Council Meeting.

Work Plan/Study for Removal of Sludge from Lagoon System: Project is due 10/09/2008. Acheron reports they are right on schedule. It may be a good idea to schedule Mr. Ball of Acheron Engineering to attend a Council Meeting for a presentation.

Other Sewer Projects/Updates: We are working on improvements at the Sewer Treatment Plant and may be coming in for approval for expenditures.

3. Grants Update:

New Grants:

Brownfield's Grant: Cleanup Grant for 8 Mount Road (10 Eelwier Road): No changes, we had conducted the public information process earlier this summer. Waiting now for the new federal grant year which starts on October 01, 2008 so we should get our grant award paperwork and then this project will start in earnest.

The KVCOG is conducting a new Brownfields Assessment Program, having received a second grant so we would hope to participate in this with one of the properties in Town. There will be additional Brownfields work within the community.

CDBG Grant/Public Facilities/Historic Preservation/Library: The project began in earnest the first week in September. The downstairs has been off limits to everyone except the construction company. We have the first Pay Requisition Meeting on Thursday, 09/18/2008.

Other Grant Opportunities:

Economic Development: There are two economic development grants that we are looking at for the Pittsfield Industrial Park. I had very good meetings with federal agencies and now have a lot of work to do to apply for these grant opportunities. I have completed a federal pre-application for economic development funds. It appears that the Town can apply for ½ of the project cost of \$1,035,430 or \$517,715 toward the 6 business lot expansion of the Industrial Park. The other \$517,715 would need to come from other grants which are non-federal in nature – so state and local. We would need to apply for an Economic Development CDBG grant which is coming right up during the next few months. The remainder of the project could be paid for with a Tax Increment Financing District with sinking debt which is financed by the Economic Development Revolving Loan Fund. So the Town could loan itself funds for the project and pay the loan back with proceeds from the tax dollars that come in for the lots. This fits within the loan guidelines and would not involve the Town going to the bank or bonding for the project cost since we already have funds in the Economic Development Revolving Loan Fund.

Riverfront Community Development Bond: This is a new grant request to assist and encourage communities along the river to revitalize their riverfronts in an environmentally sustainable manner and to promote river-orientated community development and enhancement projects. We are quickly working on a grant application – Jenn Siter, President of the Ski Club; Gary Jordan, Jr., Secretary of the Ski Club; Matt Bernier, Officer of the Sebasticook River Watershed Association and myself. The Town Manager reviewed parts of the grant and timetable.

8. **REPORTS:** Audience, Council

Audience:

Council:

Councilor Baker: Wanted to let the Council know that she is still interested in wind power. Councilor Baker appreciates all the help the Council has given her, and Carolyn will be helping out also.

Councilor Cianchette: Wanted to thank the audience for showing up. Also wanted to welcome Carolyn aboard. Noted it is good to see the Library and Sewer projects being done.

Councilor Chale: Thrilled to see the Library work getting started. It is good to see the Keeping our Neighbors Warm project being started up for our community.

Councilor Jordan: Absent.

Councilor Gray: Absent.

Deputy Mayor Fotter: Wanted to welcome Carolyn. She will be a lot of help to the Town and it will be a learning experience. It is good to see all the projects getting started around Town.

Mayor Nichols: Wanted to welcome Carolyn Dodge. Look forward to hearing from her. She will be a big help. Noted that the Town Manager and himself went on a tour of Edward's. It is amazing what they do there for work. Homeland Security is

one of Edward's top customers, which was a surprise. Mayor Nichols noted that 95% of the work done at Edward's is done by hand. Noted that the Riverfront Grant would be wonderful. Also, Mayor Nichols would like to challenge people to not let one person go hungry or freeze this year. We need to step up as a community and help our neighbors. If anyone knows of a situation we need to band together to help, Mayor Nichols hopes that everyone comes together this Christmas to help families that have children.

9. **ADJOURNMENT:**

Moved by **Deputy Mayor Fotter** and seconded by **Councilor Chale** that the meeting be adjourned at 8:40 p.m. All in agreement.

Nicole Nickolan, Town Clerk