

MINUTES

For a regular meeting of the Pittsfield Town Council held on Tuesday, December 1, 2009 at 7:30 pm in the Council Chambers.

PRESENT: COUNCILORS: Mayor Tim Nichols, Wayne Fotter, Caleb Curtis, Donna Chale, Christopher Carr, Louise Baker. **ABSENT:** Deputy Mayor Gary Jordan, Jr. Also present: Town Manager Kathryn Ruth and Town Clerk Nicole Nickolan. Audience members included: Donnie Hallenbeck, Bob Stackhouse, Chris Cousins, Mike Lange, Lyn Smith and others.

1. **Mayor Nichols** opened the meeting by leading the **Pledge of Allegiance**. The Council observed a moment of silence.
2. Adoption of Minutes of the regular meeting on November 17, 2009.

Moved by **Councilor Curtis** and seconded by **Councilor Chale** that the minutes of the regular meeting on November 17, 2009 be adopted.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

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

Community and Economic Development Activities and Events

Sebasticook Valley Healthy Communities Coalition 11/24/2009 Meeting and the Forces of Change Survey. The last leadership meeting of Healthy SV was held on 11/24/2009. We heard that the Director Dawn Littlefield is leaving to work for the State, which is definitely a loss. We discussed the coalition's Strategic Planning process as well as the deliverables. One of the deliverables is the Forces of Change survey which is on-line in which everyone's opinion of the health of the communities is very important.

Training Class for employees laid off by General Electric Security, Inc. 12/01/2009. This month, the U.S. Department of Labor awarded a \$372,839 National Emergency Grant (NEG) to Maine to assist workers affected by layoffs at General Electric Security, Inc. This NEG is funded by resources made available under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The NEG will be awarded to the Maine Department of Labor and will be administered by the Central/Western Maine Workforce Investment Board.

Keep ME Warm 2009 Program for Winterization Kits

The State of Maine has announced a second year of Keep ME Warm Winterization Kits to be available to local communities, civic groups, community groups and faith groups. Last year Trudy Ferland from the First Universalist Church organized this event. Trudy is working away on the Welcome Table so she can not organize the effort this year.

The Recycling Committee is interested, however, we need more volunteers. In addition, the Town is working on the list of locations, however, would like to make sure that we cover the community. So this agenda item is two-fold.

First, to announce the training session that is necessary to learn what is involved as well as to learn how to order the kits. The kits will not all be the same this year, they are to be specific for the home so this means two trips to the home. One to check on what is needed and second, to install the kit once we get them.

The training session is on Saturday, 12/12/2009 beginning at 9:00 am at the Somerset County Extension Office in Skowhegan. It is estimated to be 4 hours in length. All volunteers do not need to attend the training, however, 1 volunteer in each team or group that goes out to install the kits needs to have a trained member. So if we have 10 people go to the training, we can use 10 teams. If people like to volunteer and work on weatherizing homes, contact the Town Office to sign up for the training. If you are unable to attend that specific training, but would like to help, please let us know about we will notify you of when the project is going forward.

Second, we are working on the list of homes to be winterized. We want to include everyone who needs help. Contact the Town Office to get on the potential list of homes to be winterized. We are looking for older homes where people need help – both houses and mobile homes. Senior citizens who need help should call. We can not guarantee that we will get enough winterization kits for everyone because no one knows how many kits are arriving for each County. We will do our best.

United Way Keeping Mid-Maine Warm Program Grant Award

The Town has received \$1,000 from United Way of Mid-Maine from the Keeping Mid-Maine Warm Program to assist senior citizens with furnace cleanings and emergency fuel. The Town was fortunate to be awarded funding for an application submitted to United Way to assist senior citizen households.

If anyone knows of a senior citizen or senior household who may need assistance or if any seniors would like to contact the Town directly, we are taking names and will be meeting with the seniors. We expect to be able to assist 5 households with furnace cleanings or 3 households with emergency fuel or some combination of furnace cleanings and fuel assistance. Contact the Town Office and ask for Emmalee or Kathryn.

4. PUBLIC HEARINGS/OLD BUSINESS:

- a. **ORDINANCE 09-23:** (Public Hearing) The Town of Pittsfield hereby Orders and Ordains that pursuant to Section 5.09(d) of the Pittsfield Town Charter, the following capital balances shall be transferred from their existing accounts to a new account to be entitled “Revenue Stabilization” which funds will be made available and expended, as needed, in order to meet budget shortfalls at the end of the year: Paving/Resurfacing \$52,640; Municipal Parking Lot \$15,000; Highway Mower \$2,632; Municipal Building \$5,000; Theatre \$5,000; Revaluation \$5,000; Library \$5,000; Highway Equipment \$36,000; Fire Utility \$17,860; Fire Equipment \$15,000 and Fire Station \$5,000 for a total of \$164,132.

No one wished to speak in favor or against Ordinance 09-23. Public Hearing closed.

Moved by **Councilor Fotter** and seconded by **Councilor Baker** that Ordinance 09-23 be adopted.

The Town Manager noted the Town traditionally transfers funds at the end of the year so that a few department budgets are not overexpended. Over the years, we have had less transfers even though budgets have become tighter and tighter.

This year, the transfer process is being used to balance the budget at the end of the year. The budget shortfall is in the revenue collections. There are no expense budgets overdrafted.

The Town continues to run behind schedule on revenue collections, which have not followed any usual trends during the last 10 months. The Town has attempted to save over \$90,000 from the budget by cutting back on projects, cutting out projects, no equipment purchases, people donating travel, less postage and notices, not paying subscriptions or memberships and many more items on the two page listing that the Town Council received. In addition, all other regular accounts are frozen, however, these are maintenance accounts, which cannot be guaranteed as emergencies, breakdowns and unexpected costs need to be addressed.

Back in September, we decided to freeze all capital balances in the budget and review them in December 2009. Normally, these funds would be forwarded to the capital reserves at the end of the year to save them toward future projects. As the economy has not jumped back, it is prudent for the Town to place these funds against the actual town budget. The Town is very revenue dependent as we have many revenue accounts in addition to taxes, we have been dealing with slow revenue collections for nearly all revenue accounts.

To summarize, all cuts were already made to the budget in an attempt to net as much as \$90,000. Any further cuts to the budget will result in service problems. We have one of the lowest budgets in the State of Maine for a community of our size and one of the lowest number of staff members. Departments are running at any all time low in terms of personnel and work is backed up. We are also trying to do much more than the town has done 10 or 15 years ago from review of the Town Council records. We are a very good example of a community doing a lot more on a lot less.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

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

Town Manager's Report: Town Council Meeting of 12/01/2009:

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

2. The Welcome Table: The Welcome Table is open from 10:30 am to 1:30 pm every Friday at the First Universalist Church in the Community Hall at 6 Easy Street. This is a local program staffed and funded by volunteers whose mission is to provide a warm place to gather, socialize

and share a hot meal. Games, puzzles and cards are always available. The meals for December will be provided by the following volunteers:

December 4th – Kleinschmidt Associates

December 11th – Blue Women

December 18th – GE Security

December 25th – to be determined if opening that day

January 1st – The Welcome Table Volunteers

All are invited to attend. For further information, please call Trudy Ferland at 487-6523.

3. Holiday Concert: There will be a holiday concert held on Sunday, December 6th at 2:00 pm at the First Universalist Church on Easy Street. The Easy Street Singers and the Quintessential Winds will be performing. There is no admission charge, however, donations will be gratefully accepted. Refreshments will be served after the performance.

4. Sebasticook Valley Chamber of Commerce Networking Breakfast:

The SVCC networking event is scheduled for Tuesday, December 8th from 7:00 am to 8:30 am at the Masonic Lodge at 138 Hamilton Terrace right off Route #152 by the JW Parks Golf Course. The speaker will be Peter Vigue, Chairman, President and CEO of The Cianbro Companies speaking on the economic conditions of Maine. The menu includes coffee, juice, scrambled eggs, muffins, sausage and bacon. The cost per individual is \$7.00. The Eastern Star will be catering and they are really good cooks. RSVP to the Chamber at 368-4698 as soon as possible.

5. 2009-2010 Winter Season at The Pinnacle: The Club's Purpose is to:

- a. To Promote skiing for children and adults;
- b. To Encourage greater interest in skiing in the surrounding communities;
- c. To Conduct a ski school, equipment sales and social events;
- d. To promote other snow sports and other outdoor sports and events as the Club may deem advisable; and
- e. To Support Ski-related activities.

Sign up for your Winter membership at the Pinnacle: Family rates are \$75.00; couples \$50.00 and individuals are \$30.00. Family memberships are for a family of 5 and family membership is for immediate family members only. As part of your membership, you are expected to sign in and work 10 hours of service. Checks should be made payable to the Pinnacle Ski Club. Forms are available at the Town Office.

6. Pittsfield Community Theatre Christmas Movie: Letter Read.

Finance Committee: No Report.

Ordinance Committee: No Report.

Recycling Committee: No Report.

6. **NEW BUSINESS:**

- a. ***RESOLUTION 09-157:*** Resolved that the Town Council Authorize the Town Manager to Execute Change Order #1 in the amount to not exceed \$10,213.00 for the Alterations and Addition to the Pittsfield Public Library Project and Amend the Contract with Nichols Construction, LLC dated June 05, 2009 from \$916,716.00 to \$926,929.00.

Moved by **Councilor Chale** and seconded by **Councilor Fotter** that Ordinance 09-157 be adopted.

The Town Manager noted the Pittsfield Public Library Alterations and Addition project is nearing completion. The total of the change order on this complex project is \$10,213.00. The Town Council received a description of changes required for completion of the project as well as additional work that should be completed while excellent pricing is available. Cianbro's donation of staff time with Bob Greene as Clerk of the Works has been extremely helpful in managing this project. The Contractor has been very reasonable on pricing and work is progressing in a timely fashion. The project is scheduled to be completed in December.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

7. **DISCUSSION ITEMS: NONE**

8. **REPORTS:** Audience, Council

Audience:

Council:

Councilor Baker: No Report

Councilor Carr: No Report

Councilor Chale: No Report

Deputy Mayor Jordan: Absent.

Councilor Curtis: No Report

Councilor Fotter: Wanted to congratulate Councilwoman Chale and thank her for all her efforts in dealing with the Pittsfield Public Library. She has helped this project tremendously.

Mayor Nichols: Wanted to echo Councilor Fotter comments. Donna has been instrumental in the Pittsfield Library Project.

9. **EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

Title 1, Section 405, 6.A., Personnel: Yearly Evaluation of Town Manager

Motion by **Councilor Curtis** and seconded by **Councilor Chale** to move into executive session according to Title 1, Section 405, 6.A., Personnel: Yearly Evaluation of Town Manager.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

The Town Councilors entered executive session at 8:38 p.m.

Motion by **Councilor Fotter** and seconded by **Councilor Chale** to return to regular session after completing the Town Manager's evaluation.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

The Town Councilors exited executive session at 10:01 p.m.

10. **ADJOURNMENT:**

Motion by **Councilor Carr** and seconded by **Councilor Fotter** that the meeting be adjourned at 10:02 p.m. All in agreement.

Nicole Nickolan, Town Clerk