

# MINUTES

For a regular meeting of the Pittsfield Town Council held on Tuesday, December 4, 2007 at 7:30 pm in the Council Chambers.

**PRESENT:** COUNCILORS: Mayor Tim Nichols, Deputy Mayor Wayne Fotter, Michael Gray, Gary Jordan, Jr. **ABSENT:** Brian Philbrick, Louise Baker and Christinalyn Hamel. Also present were Town Manager Kathryn Ruth and Town Clerk Nicole Nickolan. Audience members included: Dwight Doughty, Commissioner Roy, Commissioner Quinn, Jim Banks, Michael Cianchette, Norman LaBarge, Paul Bertrand, Andi Vigue, Tom Bertrand, Lynn Smith, Doug Fratti, Sharon Mack and other residents.

1. **Mayor Nichols** opened the meeting by leading the **Pledge of Allegiance**.

For a matter of record **Mayor Nichols** will be voting tonight to make a quorum.

2. **Adoption of Minutes** of the Regular Meeting on November 20, 2007.

Moved by **Councilor Gray** and seconded by **Councilor Jordan** that the Minutes of the Regular Meeting on November 20, 2007 be adopted.

**VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE**

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

Update on the 2008 Somerset County Budget

Commissioner Roy attended the meeting to review the 2008 Somerset County Budget in depth and update the progress on the new jail currently under construction. Commissioner Roy reviewed key information and noted the drastic changes that would occur over the next few years. The Council received a copy of the 2008 Somerset County Budget in your Council Package. The Councilors and Town Manager all expressed great concern for our residents and if these upcoming changes in the County Budget would create hardship.

Projected impacts will be increased property taxes, having to borrow TANs sooner if the assessments are due sooner, and the possibility of having to cut municipal services to pay for the County Jail/Prison services.

4. **PUBLIC HEARINGS/OLD BUSINESS:**
5. **REPORTS: TOWN MANAGER, FINANCE, ORDINANCE & RECYCLING COMMITTEES:**

## **Town Manager's Report: Town Council Meeting of 12/04/2007:**

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

**2. 2008 Budget Calendar:** The calendar of meetings has been available at the Town Office since September and on the Town's web site. A budget session will be held this evening with the public hearing on the budget held on 12/18/2007.

**3. 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 12. Payment books will be available 12/15/2007 at the Town Office for those that had participated in the Tax Club in 2007. For further information or to sign up for the tax club during December or January, ask any of the counter personnel at the Town Office or call the Town Office at 487-3136.

**4. Board/Committee Positions:** Anyone interested in the upcoming openings due to term expirations, please contact the Town Clerk on or by 12/10/2007. The following boards have openings coming up: Airport, Board of Appeals, Assessment Review, Ethics, Health, Cemetery, Economic Development Team, Housing Rehab Revolving Loan, Library, Parks and Recreation, Personnel Appeals, Pinnacle Park, Planning, Pool, Recycling and Theatre.

**5. New Water Meter Installation for the Automatic Reading System:** Letters have gone out to schedule the appointments for installation of the new meters. Books 3&4 will be the first area to have the new meters installed as those are the last readings to be taken. Letters will be sent out a couple of weeks and will be staggered, which means that given the number of meters to be installed across Town, that this project will be on-going this Winter into Spring. Books 3&4 include Lancey; Nichols; Franklin; Peltoma; Harrison; Cianchette; Chester, Summer; Cross; Main (formerly South Main); Stinson; Library; Manson; Libby; and Raymond Streets. The first installations are on November 26<sup>th</sup> forward.

**6. Neighborhood Watch:** A new neighborhood watch group has been formed and they are 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 meeting is:

Monday, 01/07/2008 6:30 p.m.: Street Security: Know your neighbors and know your neighborhood and Keys to a good neighborhood watch system.  
All meetings are at the Council Chambers in the Municipal Building.

## **7. The Paul E. Bertrand Community Pool Upcoming Fundraisers:**

**Pennies for the Pool:** Students in each of the elementary schools - Manson Park, Burnham, Vickery and Warsaw - are collecting pennies for the pool. Contribute your change to a student that you know!

Scrapbooking Expo: Coming in late January, 2008

The Fundraising Goal: \$400,000

Raised to date: \$275,141.03

Funds Left to Raise: \$124,858.97 (now less than \$125,000 so we are 75% there)

Now we need to concentrate on raising the funds and donations for the essential components of the pool – the security lighting, new fencing, bathhouse/restrooms, picnic tables, groundwork, paving, etc.

Send contributions to the Town of Pittsfield, c/o Pittsfield Community Swimming Pool Fund, 112 Somerset Avenue, Pittsfield, ME 04967 to help make this entire project a reality!

**8. Pinnacle Reunion Meeting:** The Pinnacle Park Board will be calling a reunion or revitalization meeting for the Pinnacle on Tuesday, 12/11/2007 at 7:00 p.m. at the Pinnacle Facility off Waverly Avenue. The purpose of the meeting is to determine interest in revitalizing the facility, updating people on the work that could be done to update the facility, get people together to plan opening up the facility this winter and determine possible new uses for the site. This should be a fun evening and for a wonderful cause – keeping the facility open where 1000's of children learned to first ski.

**9. Somerset County Family Enrichment Council:** The Council has a new curriculum available to parents and care providers of pre-teens and teens. There are six sessions in which parents and care providers will learn about current teen issues, problem solving as a family, reinforcing your teens courage and inner strength, building your teen's sense of responsibility, and communicating effectively with or without your child's assistance. To schedule this class in your area call Ruth Lessard at 859-2533.

**10. Pittsfield Community Theatre Holiday Family Day – movie, combo, drawing & concert:** Holiday Family Day will be celebrated on Saturday, December 15, 2007 at the Pittsfield Community Theatre. All activities are FREE! The holiday movie this year is Surf's Up, rated PG. Come enjoy the movie and a free small combo (small drink and small popcorn) free of charge. The doors will open at 1:15 p.m. and the movie will show at 2:00 p.m. We will also be drawing for gifts after the movie. Approximately 4:00 p.m. the Sebecook Community Band will hold a Holiday Concert featuring your favorite holiday music.

**Finance Committee:** No Report.

**Ordinance Committee:** No Report.

**Recycling Committee:** No Report

## 6. **NEW BUSINESS:**

- a. **ORDINANCE 07-20:** (To be set to public hearing 12/18/2007) That the Town of Pittsfield hereby Ordains that the Town Council Authorize the

transfers of unencumbered appropriation balances to various departments as follows:

FROM:	30-05	General Assistance	\$7,700
TO:	01-25	Assessing	\$ 700
	01-40	Municipal Building	7,000

Moved by **Councilor Gray** and seconded by **Councilor Jordan** that Ordinance 07-20 be adopted.

The Town Manager noted by following the budget goals set each year, we have very frugal budgets. There are no built in contingencies or emergency funds. Transfers used to be higher, but in the last few years have averaged around \$7,000 - \$8,000. Because we can transfer, it allows the Town to budget bare bones and helps with the amount of taxes raised. The explanations are on the agenda sheet – Assessing due to the Map Upgrade and TRIO/Harris Computer cost increases. Municipal Building due to the mechanical systems, floors, roof, propane and fuel oil, furnace and so forth. This involves a variety of building issues and most items in the budget are contractual with most contractors raising their costs. We are budgeting reserve funding toward the building infrastructure.

**VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE**

- b. **RESOLUTION 07-136:** Resolved that the Town Council Make End of the Year Transfer to Capital Reserves for 2007 as follows:

Transfer Cable Franchise Funds of \$18,840 in the Expenditure Budget  
Cable allocation to the Cable Reserve.

Moved by **Councilor Jordan** and seconded by **Councilor Gray** that Resolution 07-136 be adopted.

The Town Manager noted this is a housekeeping transaction. The Cable Franchise payment is received as a revenue, we have the estimated amount in the expenditure budget. This is a wash. The funds are transferred to the Reserve each year and then payment is made to MCI for running the public access station in accordance with the contract.

**VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE**

- c. **RESOLUTION 07-137:** Resolved that the Town Council Authorize the Town Manager and Librarian to file a Letter of Intent for the 2008 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Public Facilities Program.

Moved by **Deputy Mayor Fotter** and seconded by **Councilor Gray** that Resolution 07-137 be adopted.

The Town Manager noted generally, the Town has not been eligible for the Public Facilities Program. In order to proceed with an application, we need to meet national

objectives of 51% low and moderate income or slum and blight. We are fortunate to not have a really high level of low income in the community and we do not have slum and blight in the community.

With the condition of the foundation that has been uncovered by the Library Building Committee Chairperson Doug Frati, the Town would be eligible to apply for funding from the CDBG program under a specific category called “spot blight.” The application would be under the stand-alone category of “Historic Preservation” for the Pittsfield Public Library with grant funding available of up to \$150,000.

The first step in the program is to submit the Letter of Intent and if the DECD deems it to fit the criteria, the Town would be invited to submit a full grant application. The Council Package contained the draft materials.

Photographs of the condition of the foundation that has been discovered in a middle room/area in the basement were passed around before the meeting as well as the spot blight declaration by the Code Enforcement Officer. I will note that this new discovery is contained to the basement. Doug Frati is here in the audience this evening, as well as other Library Building Committee members and guests, to answer any questions.

**VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE**

7. **DISCUSSION ITEMS: NONE**

8. **REPORTS:** Audience, Council

**Audience:** James Banks was in the audience to discuss an issue with his tenants parking overnight in the municipal parking lot. The tenants have always been able to park there over the last ten (10) years. Last night the tenants received tickets and were advised that in the future they will be towed if parking in the lot overnight. The Town Manager noted that there was no issue in the past as there was one (1) or two cars (2) once in a while. Lately there has been upwards of six (6) or seven (7) vehicles. This creates an issue when trying to plow the parking lot during snowstorms and when the Highway Department performs clean up in the parking lot. The Town Manager suggested Mr. Banks speaks with Police Chief Emery regarding this matter to see if we can work out a solution.

**Council:**

**Councilor Baker:** Absent.

**Councilor Hamel:** Absent.

**Councilor Philbrick:** Absent.

**Councilor Jordan:** No Comment.

**Councilor Gray:** Still does not understand the 25 – 30% pay increases in the County Budget. Councilor Gray and Dwight Doughty will meet to discuss this issue further.

**Deputy Mayor Fotter:** Last year we received additional revenue sharing in the amount of almost \$100,000 and lost it to county taxes. Deputy Mayor Fotter feels the Council should be notified earlier of the upcoming budget issues by the County Commissioners.

**Mayor Nichols:** Stated there is no easy answer. They have shut down jails to reopen new jails in a 10-year period. The State needs to stop spending money we don't have.

The third budget workshop, scheduled for directly after the council meeting, was held prior to the executive session so the public and employees did not have to wait for the executive session to be completed to review the budgets.

9. **EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

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

Motion by **Councilor Gray** and seconded by **Councilor Jordan** 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 9:25 p.m.

Motion by **Councilor Gray** and seconded by **Deputy Mayor Fotter** 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:**

Moved by **Deputy Mayor Fotter** and seconded by **Councilor Gray** that the meeting be adjourned at 10:02 p.m. All in agreement.

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Nicole Nickolan, Town Clerk