

MINUTES

For a regular meeting of the Pittsfield Town Council held on Tuesday, December 6, 2011 at 7:30 pm in the Council Chambers.

PRESENT: COUNCILORS: Mayor Tim Nichols, Bob Stackhouse, Caleb Curtis, Deputy Mayor Gary Jordan, Jr., Christopher Carr and Louise Baker. **ABSENT:** None. Also present: Town Manager Kathryn Ruth and Deputy Tax Collector Emmalee Reed. Audience members included: John Watson, Alan Stevens, Lynn Smith, Donna Dunphy 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 meetings held on November 1, 2011 and November 15, 2011.

Moved by **Deputy Mayor Jordan** and seconded by **Councilor Stackhouse** that the minutes of the regular meetings held on November 1, 2011 and November 15, 2011 be adopted.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

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

Community and Economic Development Activities and Events:

A number of private sector projects are under review and in the development phase at this time.

The Town has located a grant opportunity for the restoration of the Historical Railroad Depot, which we have placed on the Town's Capital Improvement Plan as an important project. Funding is obviously an issue and the necessary work to save this historic treasure from further deterioration and restore it would require grant funding. The Council was provided a scope of work that is under progress for review by the Historical Society. The Town has verified that it is eligible to apply for a Historical Preservation Grant. The Letter of Intent is due on or before January 20, 2012 and if invited to apply, the grant application is due on or before March 10, 2012.

Report on New Business Activity & Opportunities in Pittsfield:

1. Employment Specialist Available in Pittsfield:

Looking for employment and not sure how to go about it? Interested in job training or improving your work skills? Want to learn to use the internet to apply for jobs?

An Employment Support Specialist from the Kennebec Valley Community Action Program is available through a grant obtained by KVCAP. The Employment Support Specialist will work with you by providing guidance and support and connecting you with the resources you need to be successful in your employment goals. You can get help with:

- searching on the internet for jobs
- creating a resume
- connecting to training or education opportunities
- how to apply for jobs on-line

- creating an email account

and many other activities to assist you in meeting your career goals -call 1-800-542-8227 ext. 2533 or 859-2533 to schedule an appointment with the Employment Specialist in Pittsfield at the Pittsfield Municipal Building or Pittsfield Public Library.

Report on Meetings & Events:

Egg Festival Organizational Meeting scheduled for Thursday, November 10, 2011 at 5:30 pm at the Municipal Building

EGG FESTIVAL PRESS RELEASE

The Central Maine Egg Festival is organizing for a great 2012 Festival -which is the 40th Anniversary of the Egg Festival! We had a great 2011 festival and plan to build upon the event to add more activities. This year's event was met with positive enthusiasm and was so successful that many who participated are already committed to next year's Festival. Sponsors, committee members, participants and festival goers alike agree the Festival is a must attend family and community event with an emphasis on fun.

With our focus on family and fun, it is time to pick a theme for 2012. We have a few suggestions, but we are asking for help from the central Maine community. If you have a theme idea, the Egg Festival Committee would like to know about it. The committee is open to all ideas and welcomes your contribution. Suggestions must be received by 12:00 noon on Wednesday, December 28, 2011 at the Pittsfield Town Office.

We would also like to invite those who are interested to join our committee. The 2012 Egg Festival Organizational Meeting will be held on Thursday, January 12, 2012 at 6:30 pm in the Pittsfield Municipal Building Council Chambers.

If you have a theme idea, activity suggestion or want to help out, please e-mail your ideas to Kathryn Ruth at townmanager@pittsfield.org or drop your suggestions off at the Pittsfield Town Office. The Town Office staff is assisting the Committee until their organizational meeting in 2012.

Pittsfield Community Theatre Free Movie and Christmas Concert on December 3, 2011 at the Theatre went well, as well as the Small Business Saturday that was held on November 26, 2011.

Upcoming Meetings & Events:

Ken-Som Transition Team Meeting will be held at the Kennebec Valley Council of Governments at 9:00 am on Thursday, December 08, 2011 to organize for 2012. We will be discussing the Greater Waterville Career Pathway; Pathways to Responsible Fatherhood Grant; Somerset Connect; WorkReady 55+, Rapid Response Update and the Pittsfield Job Fair.

4. **PUBLIC HEARINGS/OLD BUSINESS: NONE**
5. **REPORTS: TOWN MANAGER, FINANCE, ORDINANCE & RECYCLING COMMITTEES:**

Town Manager's Report: Town Council Meeting of 12/06/2011:

1. The FYI Folder: FYI Folder which contains items that come in between the Town Council Meetings has the following this evening: List read.

2. 2012 State Valuation: The Town's proposed State Valuation has been released coming in at \$234,350,000 million. In total, the Town's valuation has decreased \$12,600,000 during the last two year's valuation determinations. Much of this is due to the change in personal property tax in which the State Legislature voted a number of years ago to basically phase out personal property tax on many types of equipment. This will affect State Revenue Sharing, School Aid and assessments made by other agencies to the Town in a positive manner, however, affect the Town's valuation, which is used as the basis of property taxation in a negative fashion.

3. Stress on Taxpayers: Due to the economy and so many people out of work now due to job losses across the State of Maine and the nation and in many cases, unemployment eligibility running out, we understand that many more people than usual were not able to pay their 2011 property taxes. Many more people need water and sewer payment plans to pay bills and we have a lot of payment plans now. The Town will work with everyone on payment plans. As explained to a number of people who have never had any issues paying their taxes before, this is not the taxpayer's fault, it is not anyone's fault, it is a sign of the times, we recommend that people make payments when they can to try to keep the interest down. It takes 3 years from the date of commitment for a property to become automatically foreclosed under the State law for uncollected taxes. We recommend that people meet with the staff and set up a tax payment plan. Please make sure that if you have lived in your property for a year that you have met with the Assessor and applied for a Homestead Exemption. If you are 62 years old and a veteran, please make sure that you meet with the Assessor to file a Veteran's Exemption. Property owners can also apply for a Property Tax and Rent Refund Circuit breaker for refunds of property tax assessed during 2010 that have been paid. If you are eligible, you can use your refund to pay for 2011 taxes. The booklets and applications may be downloaded from www.maine.gov/revenue (click on Tax Relief) or call 207-626-8475.

4. Energy Efficiency Workshop: Weatherization Tips for Winter at the Pittsfield Town Office Council Chambers, 112 Somerset Avenue, Pittsfield on Tuesday, December 13, 2011 from 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm. All are welcome to come and learn more about energy efficiency and winterization of your home or business. Ask questions to local experts. There will be a tour of the Municipal Building Energy Efficiency Retrofit under the Maine Efficiency Block Grant. We will also have a hands on demonstration of how to build window inserts to assist with air sealing and insulating your home or business. Contractors and Businesses that will be at the workshop are Yankee Solutions (Solar); Triple D Construction (Weatherization), C&C Sprayfoam (Insulation); Trafton Plumbing and Heating (Boiler replacement/control upgrades) ; and Osher Environmental (Energy Auditor).

5. Pittsfield Historical Society Heating Oil Raffle: 100 Gallons of oil was donated by Webber Energy Fuels. Tickets are 1 for \$1 or 3 for \$2. The drawing will be held 12/15/2011 at 6:00 pm at the Historical Society monthly meeting at the Pittsfield Library. Meetings are open to the public and people are invited to come to the drawing. All proceeds will go toward the building renovations. Tickets can be purchased at the Town Office and the Historical Depot when open.

Finance Committee: No Report.
Ordinance Committee: No Report.
Recycling Committee: No Report.

6. **NEW BUSINESS:**

ORDINANCE 11-15: (To be set to Public Hearing 12/20/2011) That the Town of Pittsfield hereby Ordains to authorize the transfer of unencumbered appropriation balances to various departments.

FROM:	25-05	Recreation	\$6,000
TO:	01-40	Municipal Building	\$2,000
TO:	05-10	Police Department	\$4,000

Moved by **Councilor Curtis** and seconded by **Deputy Mayor Jordan** that Ordinance 11-15 be set to Public Hearing.

The Town Manager noted the Charter provides for the Town Council by ordinance to transfer part or all of any unencumbered appropriation balance from one department to another. This is a housekeeping process required under the Town Charter. Until 2002, the Town had not processed transfers for several years and the Auditor had identified this as needing to take place in the 2001 audit.

For 2011, it is proposed that \$6,000 be transferred. This is estimated high at this point and can be refined at the 12/20/2011 public hearing as we will have nearly all expenses for the year charged to the budget at that time.

This is estimated high to try to ensure that we do not exceed these departments budgets. No transfer of funds is required from unappropriated surplus.

By tightening the budgets and utilizing budgets, which do not cover any emergency and additional expenses, the transfer system is very important. The transfer system **assists in raising less taxpayer dollars**, as we know at the end of the year that we can transfer funds between budgets.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

ORDER 11-06: Ordered that the Town of Pittsfield Town Council authorizes equipment lease purchase financing and appropriation of the proceeds thereof to finance the costs of acquisition of a Xerox WorkCentre WC4666PT System.

Moved by **Councilor Stackhouse** and seconded by **Councilor Carr** that Order 11-06 be adopted.

The Town Manager noted the Town has been out to bid twice in the past 10 years for a copier and each time, after testing the photocopiers of the bidders, found that Transco's copiers were far

superior. The Town has received very good service over the term. Transco has located a machine, which is superior to the current copier and proposes a lease-purchase agreement and service contract for a 5-year period, which is \$56.22/month less, or \$3,373.20 less over the 5-year term, a savings of 16.5%. Yearly cost is \$3,420. 5 year total is \$17,100 for lease-purchase and service contract.

The Town Attorney prepared an Order for this lease purchase option.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

RESOLUTION 11-128: Resolved that the Town Council authorize the Town Manager to execute all necessary paperwork for the lease-purchase of a Xerox WorkCentre WC5666PT system at a cost to not exceed lease and service contract totaling \$285.00/month for a 5 year period, a savings of 16.5% per month over the last lease-purchase.

Moved by **Deputy Mayor Jordan** and seconded by **Councilor Carr** that Resolution 11-128 be adopted.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

RESOLUTION 11-129: Resolved that the Town Council authorize a License to the Peltoma Fish & Game Driftbuster Association (Driftbusters) to rebuild the existing bridge at Manson Park and Authorize the Town Manager to Execute the License.

Moved by **Deputy Mayor Jordan** and seconded by **Councilor Curtis** that Resolution 11-129 be adopted.

The Town Manager noted the grant application, which was on the fast track with the Driftbusters due to the time crunch, was provided to the Town on Monday, December 5th. I forwarded by e-mail a copy to the Town Councilors as well as an update on the motions that were needed.

As the Driftbusters have found that they can file as the applicant with the Department of Conservation, only Resolution 11-129 and 11-130 are required. We can pass over 11-131 and 11-132 because the Driftbusters Board of Directors or membership has voted to file the grant and the Driftbusters are certifying that their group has the ability and intent to finance the project.

The Driftbusters received approval from the Planning Board for their site plan based upon having engineering drawings and other regular board requirements. Approval/Agreement with the project has been received from the Manson Park Committee. All that is left is Town approval. Alan did an excellent job on the grant application that is before you.

John Watson and Alan Stevens were in attendance to answer any questions on the proposed project. John Watson noted it would be in the same location, as it is the highest point on the river and that will help to avoid spring flooding. The new bridge will be 12 feet wide. The new bridge will be capable of handling the trail groomer and will give the Manson Park employees a way to get to the land on the other side of the bridge for trail grooming.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

RESOLUTION 11-130: Resolved that the Town Council authorize the Town Manager to sign a Trail Use Permit for the Peltoma Fish & Game Driftbuster Association (Driftbusters) allowing use of the property for the proposed project indicating the length of time, types of trail use allowed and other conditions attached to the use of the property.

Moved by **Councilor Curtis** and seconded by **Deputy Mayor Jordan** that Resolution 11-130 be adopted.

The Town Manager noted this is a requirement of the grant application.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

RESOLUTION 11-131 AND RESOLUTION 11-132 WERE PASSED OVER, AS THEY WERE NO LONGER NECESSARY.

RESOLUTION 11-131: Resolved that if the Town is the Project Applicant, then “The Board of the Town of Pittsfield, the Town Council, voted on 12/06/2011 in favor of applying for the Recreational Trail Development Grant from the Bureau of Parks and Lands for the construction of the Snowmobile Bridge for the Peltoma Fish & Game Driftbuster Association (Driftbusters) trail project. The vote was _____ to _____ in favor of applying for the grant.”

RESOLUTION 11-132: Resolved that if the Town is the Project Applicant, then Authorize the filing of the following statement with the Department of Conservation: “The Project Applicant, the Town of Pittsfield, has the ability and intent to finance its share of the proposed project costs, including the long-term management and maintenance. Actual project development will not start until the sponsor and BP&L have signed a project agreement. The project, if approved, will begin promptly and will be completed by the date indicated on the project agreement. If the project is approved, expenditure documentation submitted will reflect only those items listed in the project budget. Any changes must be approved by project agreement amendment. The applicant understands that this is a reimbursement grant.”

RESOLUTION 11-133: Resolved that the Town Council authorize the Town Manager to execute a contract for the Police Department with the Somerset Humane Society for the period of January 1, 2012 – December 31, 2012 at the sum of \$439.06 per month or \$5,268.75 for the year.

Moved by **Councilor Stackhouse** and seconded by **Councilor Curtis** that Resolution 11-133 be adopted.

The Town Manager noted for 2010, the Somerset Humane Society had announced an increase of 10 cents per capita which means that the cost has increased from \$408.85 per month to \$437.50 per month or a 7% increase per year.

For 2011, the Society requested \$438.85 per month or a .3% increase per year. This results in the Town paying \$16.25 more per year. This is quite reasonable.

For 2012, the Society requested \$439.06 per month or a .21 cents per month or \$2.52 per year.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

RESOLUTION 11-134: Resolved that the Town Council authorize the Town Manager and Deputy Treasurer to transfer any funds that remain in the 2011 Enterprise Fund Budgets after all charges are made for the end of the year to the Sewer Restoration Reserve and the Water Restoration Reserve for 12/31/2011.

Moved by **Councilor Stackhouse** and seconded by **Councilor Curtis** that Resolution 11-134 be adopted.

The Town Manager noted this was a recommendation from the Town Auditor when the firm attended the Town Council meeting in June 2008. As the infrastructure is old, it was recommended that any funds left over in the enterprise fund budget at the end of the year be transferred to a reserve. These two reserves were created in 2008, however, after depreciation was charged to the budget, there were no remaining funds that were appropriate to transfer. In the future as the rates increase, there will be more of a potential for funds to be available and therefore, be transferred at the end of the year. We will not know until after the audit is conducted as to the level of depreciation to be charged, however, there is more of a likelihood that funds will be available this year.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

RESOLUTION 11-135: Resolved that the Town Council authorize the Town Manager to transfer and expend \$11,500 from PITT 28 (G-1-605-00) Municipal Building Capital Reserve as the Town's Match Commitment for the EECBG Custom Project for the Energy Retrofit and Solar Thermal Project at the Municipal Building and Fire Station.

Moved by **Deputy Mayor Jordan** and seconded by **Councilor Baker** that Resolution 11-135 be adopted.

The Town Manager noted as part of the Town's grant application, we committed to the required match for the Energy Efficiency Grant applied for on 11/04/2009 and offered to the Town by Maine Efficiency Trust in mid-2010. The Town has been working on the grant since late 2010 and will finish the grant shortly.

The grant is coming to a close and it is now time to transfer the Town's cash match for the project. The remaining match is through town staff in-kind work on the project. This is one of the few grants that we have had a cash match as our contribution. The Town is working on the close-out of the grant now.

A copy of the grant application, original grant contract, additional grant amendments from Maine Efficiency Trust and further requirements from Maine Efficiency Trust is available in the Town Office and was brought to the Town Council Meeting. The Town Council has seen the grant application, original grant contract and the additional grant amendments from the Efficiency Trust. Further requirements were then received from the Maine Efficiency Trust.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

RESOLUTION 11-136: Resolved that the Town Council authorize the Town Manager to execute the 2011 Project Canopy Assistance Agreement for the Pittsfield Town Farm Forest Management Plan Project.

Moved by **Councilor Curtis** and seconded by **Councilor Carr** that Resolution 11-136 be adopted.

The Town Manager noted the paperwork received from the State of Maine on the Town's recent award of a 2011 Project Canopy Assistance grant for the Planning and Education project that we applied for in October 2011 was provided in the Council packages along with a copy of the grant application.

The grant project is as follows: The Town desires to properly maintain its own property, a parcel it has owned for many decades through the creation of a Forest Management Plan. The Town's 1997 Comprehensive Plan and 2007 Comprehensive Plan Update support forestry management of town property. The Comprehensive Plan reflects a need to properly manage town parcels for wood harvest and wildlife habitat. The plan recommends that the Town employ a professional forester to inventory parcels and develop a management and harvest plan. The former Town Farm Lot along lower Peltoma is the first parcel that is noted.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

7. **DISCUSSION ITEMS: NONE**

8. **REPORTS:** Audience, Council

Audience: None.

Council:

Councilor Baker: No Report.

Councilor Carr: No Report.

Deputy Mayor Jordan: No Report.

Councilor Curtis: No Report.

Councilor Stackhouse: No Report.

Mayor Nichols: No Report.

9. **EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

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

Motion by **Deputy Mayor Jordan** and seconded by **Councilor Curtis** 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 8:45 p.m.

Motion by **Deputy Mayor Jordan** and seconded by **Councilor Carr** to return to regular session after completing the Town Manager's evaluation.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

The Town Councilors exited executive session at 10:11 p.m.

10. **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by **Councilor Curtis** and seconded by **Councilor Carr** that the meeting be adjourned at 10:12 p.m. All in agreement.

Nicole Nickolan, Town Clerk