

# MINUTES

for a regular meeting of the Pittsfield Town Council, held on *Tuesday, February 15, 2022* at 6:30 pm in the Council Chambers at the Pittsfield Municipal Building at 112 Somerset Avenue and by teleconferencing technology.

Councilors Present: Mayor Michael Cianchette, Deputy Mayor Peter Logiodice, Councilor Brent Frost, Councilor Jason Hall, Councilor Ronald Jester and Councilor Eric Saucier.

Councilors Present by ZOOM: None

Councilors Absent: None

Also Present: Town Manager Kathryn Ruth; Annaleis Hafford, Olver Associates Inc.; Paul Dube, Property Manager, Cianbro; and Alfred Bachrach, Attorney.

Also Present by ZOOM: Chief Bernard Williams and Kaitlyn Budion, Morning Sentinel.

## **1. OPEN MEETING/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE, FOLLOWED BY A MOMENT OF SILENCE:**

Mayor Cianchette opened the meeting of the Council by leading the Pledge of Allegiance. The Council observed a Moment of Silence.

## **2. ADOPTION OF MINUTES OF: Regular Meeting held on February 1, 2022.**

**Moved** by Deputy Mayor Peter Logiodice and seconded by Councilor Hall to adopt the Minutes of February 1, 2022.

Motion passed with all votes in favor.

**VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE**

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

- A. Presentation regarding the Town's Budget and Mil Rate History: The Town Manager advised that she has been compiling the history of the Town's budget and mil rates as well as other pertinent information. She reviewed a list of materials that she thought would be helpful. Town Manager Ruth briefly reviewed how the Town used to have extensive taxable personal property and when the State law was changed to phase out personal property taxes, the Town had been very fortunate to be diversified as the value was reduced. She also noted that the Town has extensive property that is not taxed as it is owned by non-profits. Councilor Saucier expressed his concern over how it has been a long time since there was a thorough review of properties, however, indicated that he was not interested in a revaluation. He noted how another Town had divided the community into four sections and each year went out to make sure that everything was picked up. The Town Manager will check with the assessor on how a review could be conducted of the Town properties beyond checking on building permits and reports of buildings and revisions. Ms. Ruth will have one spreadsheet with helpful information to review the Town's budget and mil rate available at the next Council Meeting.

**B. Community and Economic Development Activities and Events**

1. Projects and Grants:
  - a. Route 11 (known as Route #11/10 and Main Street) Highway Construction/Rehabilitation
  - b. Main Street Sidewalk Project Grant Funding; Project Canopy Grants; and multiple smaller grant projects
  - c. Main Street Sewer Main Rehabilitation Project including DEP American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Grant Funding
  - d. Airport Grants
  - e. Many other smaller Grant Opportunities
  - f. Certificate/s
  - g. Ceremonies

Town Manager ruth briefly reviewed some of the updates contained in the Budget Package and next steps. Several meetings have taken place to consolidate information and verify the deliverables required by MaineDOT.

**4. PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

**ORDINANCE 22-02:** The Town of Pittsfield hereby Ordains to transfer back to Pittsfield Woolen Yarns Co., Inc. a parcel of land transferred to the Town September 02, 1997 by Pittsfield Woolen Yarns Co., Inc. by quit claim deed in Somerset County Registry of Deeds Book 2349, Page 226 – 227 and further shown as Parcel #3 on a Standard Boundary Survey Plan for Pittsfield Woolen Yarns Co., Inc. dated June 30, 1997 prepared by G.B. Robison/Surveyors. Said property was part of a land transfer and is no longer needed as the business has closed. In order to clear up the title and facilitate sale of the property for development and having determined that the 1184 square foot parcel has no use for the Town, the Town Council has determined that the property will be transferred back to Pittsfield Woolen Yarns Co., Inc. The Town Council further authorizes the Town Manager to execute a municipal quitclaim deed releasing the Town’s interest in said property to Pittsfield Woolen Yarns Co., Inc.

The Mayor opened the public hearing.

Mr. Dube and Attorney Bachrach explained the situation behind the Ordinance. Mr. Bachrach noted that the Quit Claim Deed has been drafted and submitted to the Town Manager. Mr. Dube does not have a timeline for the construction yet but anticipates starting work in the Spring with demolition of the existing wooden structure which has a large amount of asbestos. The footprint of the new structure has not been determined yet because setbacks need to be determined.

The Mayor closed the public hearing and called for a vote to adopt Ordinance 22-02.

Ordinance 22-02 was adopted with all votes in favor.

**VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE**

**5. REPORTS:**

**A. Council Committees:**

Finance: No report.

Ordinance: No report.

Recycling: No report.

B. Board and Committee Updates by Town Councilors and Manager:

Town Manager Ruth reported that the Planning Board met on February 14 to review and approve the Town Airport Hangar Site Plan Review application. She reported that there are a few anticipated applications expected in April or May.

C. Town Manager's Report:

It has been another busy and dynamic month with plenty of projects and items to address. The Town is enjoying a large influx of new citizens as properties continue to change hands. Usually, it is quiet at this time of year, however, it is busier than ever with a lot of new transactions:

New Items and Important Reminders:

These items will be referred to but not read as the Council has heard them several times. These items are important though for the citizens, especially those who new and tune in to Town Hall Streams, watch the videos later or use the website:

1. Maine On-line Burn Permits Became Free of Charge: On-line Burn Permits are now free of charge. Burn permits are available at [maineburnpermit.com](http://maineburnpermit.com)

2. Important Reminder: 2022 Transfer Station Stickers: In order to reduce costs at the Transfer Station by making sure that only those who should be dumping garbage are doing so, new stickers are being issued each year. Stickers have been sale since December 01, 2021. Residential stickers are \$20.00 each and Commercial are \$40.00 each.

3. Important Reminder: 2022 Dog Licenses: All dogs over 6 months old must be registered prior to January 31, 2022. As of February 01, 2022 there is a \$25.00 late fee per animal licensed. The State law requires the late fee be assessed now. We have been registering dogs since October 15<sup>th</sup> and have had this information advertised for quite some time with regular updates at the Town Council Meeting. We apologize, however, the fee must be charged.

4. Important Reminder: Online Services: For re-registration of vehicles, boats and other services go to [www.pittsfield.org](http://www.pittsfield.org) and click on the Citizens' Tab, choosing on-line services at the top of the page.

Please remember that Motor Vehicle has advised the Town that there is an aluminum shortage and we will receive a reduced inventory of new plates so if you do not need a new plate and can use your current plate, please do so. We are also going to receive reduced inventories of stickers.

5. On-line Council Materials: We would also like to make sure that people know where to go to get the Town Council packages. Go to [www.pittsfield.org](http://www.pittsfield.org) to the right-hand side of the home page and click on Government Services, then click on Town Council Packages and then on 2022 Council Packages. Then you can review the pack. If you print it out, make sure that you look at it first to see how many pages it is as you may only want a section of the page along with the agenda.

6. Cleaning out Your Home / Downsizing – Think of the Re-Use Center:

Please consider donating your left-over items to the Trash to Treasure Re-Use Center. Citizens who are cleaning out their homes for sale or just downsizing may contact the Pittsfield Town Office at 487-3136 or [finance3@pittsfield.org](mailto:finance3@pittsfield.org) to schedule an appointment to drop off items to the Re-Use Center. As the Center is now closed due to COVID restrictions, an appointment is needed. Please do not drop off items in the yard as they will get wet and not be of any use to anyone. We are currently re-stocking the building so we need new materials. Please remember, no bedding or clothing. All clothing should be donated to Pennywise. Bedding can be dropped off in our Textile container as you enter the Transfer Station. The building is still accessible this winter so we are still taking items. If at any point, we have to stop taking items, we will advise of this.

Current and Upcoming Activities:

7. Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Advisory sessions:

Update:

A meeting with held with our Main Street Engineer at Haley Ward. Chip Haskell then met with the principal engineers for our project at MaineDOT. He has also talked to his company's Electrical Engineer regarding the downtown control box and underground wiring. This is an interesting setup that needs to be replaced. We will be holding a meeting as soon as practical with those who have worked on the system to repair it in the past and Haley Ward. This will assist the engineering firm to be able to determine some pricing estimates and bid specs as this work will need to be bid out similar to other components of the Main Street Project. We have focused on the sidewalk, however, there are a number of infrastructure improvements in the downtown that will provide needed enhancements.

Background:

Although the snow is coming down shortly, we will be planning out the Main Street Sidewalk and learning more about the Main Street Road Rehabilitation Project. Once we have more members for the Committee to oversee the CDBG project, we will start meeting in earnest. Some of the partners have not been available for meetings prior to the holidays, however, we need to start up shortly in order to have plenty of time to make sure that the project is planned out correctly. There are many grants, requirements, deadlines and it is complex so all the help that we can get would be appreciated. Once we are organized as we are still looking for members, then it would be great to have a zoom meeting that people could watch or some slides that explains the progress on the project. The Town is still seeking citizens for the Community Development Advisory Committee for oversight of the Main Street Sidewalk Project.

8. Airport Hangar, Apron and Taxiway Project:

Update:

I wanted you to know about this as we are reviewing the Site Plan for the Airport project at the Planning Board Meeting Monday evening.

Over the weekend, it became apparent that there is a large wrinkle in this project. The State and Federal Government have worked on a potential solution. Unfortunately, the contractor with the lowest bid that was accepted by the Town Council for the project last October was able to pull out of

the project indicating that their company needs an additional 20+% due to higher costs for building materials and supplies as well as labor. This seems to be over \$350,000. Although this is upsetting, it is better to happen now rather than to have extensive change orders brought forth throughout the project that we could not approve. A general concept has been put forth by MaineDOT that would result in re-bidding the project. If the pricing is favorable, which likely will be higher, then there could be an additional year added onto the multi-year grant in which the Town would receive additional funding; the inter-loan agreement with Rangeley will be moved back one year which Rangeley has agreed with as they do not need the funds until then; and the Town would be loaned funds by another Town that has funding that it does not need right now and would likely lose it. The Town has an intergovernmental loan put together by the MaineDOT with Rangeley now. We may need to amend that loan document and perhaps re-do the Ordinance authorizing it and process a new Ordinance with a second town depending on the circumstances. The funds that the Town borrows would then be paid from our future entitlement funds that airports receive each year. This is in concept stage right now with a meeting just scheduled for Thursday, 02/17/2022 early in the morning to work out the details. We have been advised that within reason, we would receive additional grant funding so that the project can move forward.

#### History:

This also will be a major project at the Airport and really put the Pittsfield Municipal Airport on the map as there will be actual new spaces to rent for people to bring or locate their airplanes at the airport. Currently, over 30 planes are housed at the airport, however, some are outside and others are closely fitted in rental spots. Anyone interested in a new T-Hangar spot, please contact Caleb Curtis, Fixed Base Operator and Airport Manager at 487-5213. Once this project starts moving forward, it would be interesting to have some photographs or overhead pictures to place on the Town's website.

#### 9. Request for Proposals for 2022 Paving Plan:

It is important at the Town Council Meeting to begin to discuss which roads will be paved in the 2022 Paving Program. The Request for Proposals should be placed on the next agenda in order to bid out the work. Our Public Works Director Don Chute had been working with the Public Works employees on areas that should be paved as they are the major issues. Please remember that the Plan is based upon the average paving cost over the last few years and not the lower price that we received last year. With costs going up on what seems to be everything, it is unlikely that last year's price would hold.

With a massive infrastructure bill coming out to fund water, sewer and other items projected for the next five years and a new Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund round coming out with much higher levels of forgiveness, we have a chance to take care of areas where there are sewer issues. Regarding the sewer system conducted in Forest Park, we received the bill, but not the study. Olver Associates had to call for the study. Evidently the company is having major staffing issues and items are behind. Olver Associates was notified that they did not finish the project as they could not get through. There should be more information shortly as we need to know if the sewer is in good condition or not. Annaleis just received the report for the work that was conducted in December 2021. It sounds as though a section may have a lot of roots in it but we do not know for sure. So far, we have not received word of any Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Funds. We do know that Birchwood Terrace needs a new water line. Normally, I would recommend saving out enough paving funds for Birchwood Terrace, however, without the water or sewer funds, we would not

utilize the paving funds in this bid unless there was a major breakthrough in timing. Instead of reconstructing Birchwood Terrace, perhaps we can reclaim it as this has worked well before. I would further recommend that a section of Webb Road and a section of Bean's Corner Road be reclaimed as well as a few in-town roads with high traffic volume be paved to save them so that paving can continue their life. I am awaiting Don Chute's recommendations so that we can put them together. We have to spread the work out as we cannot just fix one road as the rest of the Town will not see improvement. This was why I kept recommending several years ago when we got the two large loans that while we concentrated in the country that we pave a few small roads in town. Since we all have different ideas, this will be an interesting discussion.

In the meantime, I have asked Plymouth Engineering to pull out the bid specifications for the second culvert on Sebasticook Street and the Mosher Bridge Work on Crawford Road so that we can bid both, each with their own cost so that if we can only afford to do one project, we will be able to do so without negotiation with the low bidder.

#### 10. 2022 Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund (CWSRF) Infrastructure (Construction) Projects:

The loan program for 2022 for Sewer Construction (and Rehabilitation) projects was just received with a due date of March 18, 2022. Each year, the United States Congress has appropriated federal funds for the base CWSRF program to finance wastewater infrastructure projects and water quality improvement or protection projects. The funds are passed through the Environmental Protection Agency to State CWSRF programs to capitalize their loan programs. The Maine Department of Environmental Protection and the Maine Municipal Bond Bank administer Maine's CWSRF program. This program's allotment and the share of the funds that can be distributed in the form of loan principal forgiveness depending on the passage of the federal budget and the Appropriations Act language. The DEP has not yet received notification of the State's base CWSRF 2022 allotment; however, the Department is soliciting projects for funding so that they can make funds available as soon as possible.

President Biden signed the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) on Monday, November 15, 2021. This is a huge and bold investment in our nation's infrastructure. For the State of Maine's CWSRF program, DEP is anticipating this supplemental funding to be \$13.7M for 2022, with an increasing annual amount from this fund through 2026.

The CWSRF Program will also be incorporating the remaining \$8.8M in ARPA funds that was announced with the enactment of Public Law 2021, Chapter 483 (LD1733) of the 130<sup>th</sup> Maine Legislature, which was approved by Governor Mills' *The Maine Jobs & Recovery Plan*. This will further assist municipalities' wastewater infrastructure needs throughout the State.

Thus between the base CWSRF, the BIL Supplemental CWSRF, the ARPA funds, and the CWSRF repayments that come back into the program for reuse, the program will have an estimated \$80M in funds of which an estimated \$22.6M will be in the form of principal forgiveness and/or Grants. In the past, the base CWSRF and the CWSRF repayments for reuse would only provide an estimated \$50M in funds, of which \$4.9M was given out in the form of Principle Forgiveness. This is a significant increase in funding for our wastewater community in this time of need.

These projects will be environmentally ranked, and, if available, principal forgiveness will be offered to applicants based on the applicant's ability to afford the proposed project. Given the larger amount of funding available, the Town of Pittsfield, which often does not rank high as our sewer rates are lower than average and to date, we have had few environmental problems, may be able to score high enough for forgiveness.

I will work with Olver Associates Senior Process Engineer Annaleis Hafford on this opportunity to determine proposed projects. We will need to determine how far in the future the projects will be as that will determine when roads are paved so funds will need to be available. One never knows which project will be chosen, if any, which makes the paving component very difficult.

I know that it has been said that we should be saving money for all of these projects, however, given the cost of sewer main replacement, the Town will be unable to save the millions of dollars that are needed. Right now, we have the opportunity to compete for forgiveness so that part of the sewer project will not be required to be paid back which is similar to getting a grant. Therefore, we should take advantage of this opportunity to apply for some projects. This item will come back to the Town Council when the recommendation is ready in enough time to apply prior to the deadline.

Updated and/or Continuing Items:

11. 2019 Tax Liens foreclose on Friday, January 21, 2022:

Update:

Our regular Assessor has not been available. The individual who is filling in is working on other types of projects so the properties that have foreclosed have not been reviewed with the Assessor who is familiar with the Town and properties.

History:

Unfortunately, a few people did not pay their 2019 property taxes and to redeem their property will have to pay the 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022 taxes if after April 1 of this year along with the Town's costs such as advertising fees and notices. Letters will be sent to the last known address for those whose property is now owned by the Town of Pittsfield due to the automatic foreclosure process. If someone does redeem their property within the timeframe that is established, an Ordinance will be placed on the Council Agenda to schedule a public hearing to transfer the property back to the former owner and then the public hearing held. After the public hearing is held, the Council would then vote to authorize the quit claim deed to be issued.

There are 6 new properties added to the town's rolls, properties that we do not want to own so after the redemption period is completed, it is likely that some properties will go out to Tax Acquired bid. If there are people interested in the Tax Acquired properties when the TAP Sale is authorized by the Town Council, please call the Town Office and provide your e-mail address for the notice and packs to be sent to you. There are two parcels of land and some land with dwellings. We need to see if the people can redeem their property in accordance with the law first. A meeting needs to be held with the Planning Board to see if any of the properties should be retained by the Town as a requirement of the TAP Ordinance. Then in the future after all of the steps are completed, there will be a discussion and action, if appropriate at the Town Council Meeting to schedule a sale. From reviewing the history of the parcels dating back to 2019 and before, one has had significant assessing issues and may need to be mitigated.

For those who have not yet paid their 2019 taxes, the liens on the property will automatically foreclose at the end of business on January 21, 2022. This is for taxes that were due in October 2019. There are now 24 properties on the foreclosure list. We urge those owners to pay their taxes

in full by Friday. Notices of impending automatic foreclosure went out in December. If the taxes are not paid in full on Friday, the Town will own these properties. The Town does not want to own any tax acquired properties. In order to buy the property back, all taxes, interest and costs for 2019, 2020 and 2021 will need to be paid in full in order to receive a Quit Claim deed from the Town after a public hearing. This would be very expensive so we would encourage you to pay off the 2019 tax lien in full.

## 12. Computer Services / Managed Services Onboarding:

### Update:

To date, we have not received a schedule as the company does not know when all the parts will be available due to supply chain issues. Electronics seems to be quite affected. The company is starting to work on e-mail, software and other items. The company project manager calls to ask questions about our current setup as they are in the planning stages while waiting for enough equipment to arrive.

In the meantime, we applied for and have received the paperwork for the new Recreation bank account at Androscoggin. It should be ready to go this week.

### Background:

The contracts for the new server and new computer equipment were signed the day after the December Public Hearing on the new 2022 budget. The order was then placed for the upgrade. Logically has received a number of the computers and/or parts, however, is lacking a number of strategic electronics in order to proceed ahead. The company is going to start to put the computers together. So far, they do not have a time that the electronics are going to be delivered to their company but hopefully will the next time that we call back. I provided the Assistant with a number of questions on the process and whether on the timetable we can install all or part of the new setup on a Wednesday when we are closed to avoid the disruption of customer service or can we leave two computers up and running to serve customers while they work on the complete upgrade. When our Assistant has the schedule, I will provide an update to the Town Council.

## 13. Code Enforcement Actions:

### Update:

The Building Inspector has a list of assignments regarding these properties and is to provide several reports as to his findings. At the Council Meeting, we will discuss these recommendations to see how the Council would like to proceed. The property owner of 153 Washington Street has discussed the building with the Building Inspector so there will be an update specifically on this property. At this time, I have not received all the details.

Regarding the 4 specific cases, below is the review of Attorney McCall working on these code violations:

153 Washington Street (Map 29, Lots 50 & 51): The file indicates that this property is likely dangerous within the meaning of the dangerous building statute, *i.e.* siding is missing, holes in foundation, etc. The Town Council can most effectively address this property by noticing and conducting a dangerous building proceeding at the local level. Upon completion, the property



owner may be forced to undertake the necessary repairs or else risk having the building demolished. This property should be the Town's immediate priority, given the available options and need for more immediate remediation.

Chief Williams noted that the concern with burning the building down is the proximity to electrical lines.

140 Leonard Street (Map 26, Lot 37): This property was the subject of a Rule 80K land use enforcement matter in 2015, regarding alleged violations of the Town's plumbing and fire codes, as well as the illegal establishment of a junkyard. The matter was resolved by entry of a final order and judgment on January 9, 2016. The Order required the property owner to: (i) remove or fully screen all junk materials from the property, (ii) fully enclose or secure the property's foundation to prevent further vermin infestation, and (iii) reimburse the Town for its attorney's fees and costs, totaling \$3,247.35. Later correspondence from the CEO, dated April 9, 2021, shows that full compliance with this court order was not achieved. Recent photos of the property show a tall stockade fence surrounding the entire yard, making a determination of the structure or yard's status difficult. The Town could attempt to enforce the existing court order from 2016 by filing a motion for contempt with the District Court; however, additional proof of non-compliance would be needed, and absent the property owner's consent, an administrative inspection warrant is likely required to allow for further inspection. Alternatively, the Town could focus efforts on the state of the structure itself, and consider initiating a dangerous building proceeding (correspondence from April of 2021 describes this as a possibility). Further evidence of the structure's dilapidated state would be needed in order to substantiate such a finding. Ultimately, the potential difficulty of collecting additional information regarding the property's current state could prove to be expensive and time-consuming. The Town Council should consider those costs and weigh the same against the benefits of moving forward at this point in time.

231 Somerset Avenue (Map 28, Lot 51): This matter has been ongoing for many years. The photographs in the file do indicate potential violations of the property maintenance code, but they do not appear to be major. We also understand that the property owner may still be in a long-term care facility due to a fall from the roof. Given the nature of the problems with the building, the fact that some progress appears to have been made, and the property owner's current condition, the Town should consider monitoring this property for further improvement. Reaching out to the property owner's attorney for any potential status update could also improve the situation. However, moving forward with a Rule 80K proceeding at this stage is probably a step too far at this point, given the nature of the violations and the potential difficulty of conducting a hearing and/or enforcing any court order given the property owner's current condition.

139 Manson Street (Map 25, Lot 42): I agree with the Town's assessment that proper remediation of this property has taken too long. However, the property owner has a documented history of health issues that have stalled efforts to complete necessary renovations. Furthermore, reports from the then-CEO in November of 2021 indicate that substantial repairs have been made to the building, including the installation of a new roof, and that "Over all I would say that the house is sound." The most recent pictures do indicate issues with some windows, peeling paint, and other issues with the siding. It is possible that the property still remains in violation of the Town's property maintenance standards, particularly given the state of the building's exterior walls. However, given the progress made, and the difficulty in navigating the court system with a defendant with a documented history of health issues, continuing to work with this property owner

towards and eventual resolution of the documented issues is likely the most effective and cost-efficient way forward.

#### History:

Alternate Code Enforcement Officer Al Tempesta is working in Town now for a few weeks. We have provided the files on the code enforcement actions that the Council approved for his review and to see if any more information needs to be collected. Mr. Tempesta will be the Code Enforcement Officer who will be bringing the cases to court so he needs to be involved. For the Somerset Avenue property, the elderly owner was repairing the facility himself and fell off the roof. He has a long recovery period in order to be able to get around. The gentleman did work on the property. We will send the file to the Town Attorney, however, ask how to address this. Basically, the owner is recovering from a dreadful fall and will be unable to go to court. The Washington Street property file has more enforcement action in it against the former owners of the property vs. the current owner. I wrote a letter for the former Code Officer just before he retired after I went out and saw the property last year. Bob Geaghan, the new Code Officer has written letters requesting compliance. We are asking the attorney for advice on how to proceed. The Leonard Street property seems to have more junk now than it had before so that file is going to the Town Attorney. The Manson Street property is neat and orderly in the yard; however, the building needs considerable work. The owner wrote to the Town that he has been ill and explained out what has been taking place. We will ask for advice on all of these. Since Al will be taking the cases to court, we needed him to be involved which he now has been. Copies of the files are being forwarded to the Town Attorney on Wednesday, 01/19/2021.

The Code Enforcement Officer (CEO) was dispatched to a property at the corner of Harriet and Madawaska Avenue which is a very dilapidated building. The owner was to be instructed to tear it down due to its condition.

The CEO was persistent with the owners of the property at the corner of Lancey Street and Peltoma Avenue. After multiple calls and letters, the owners did schedule a major tree cutting day at the property. The owners have also pulled a building permit to fix up the property. The CEO has been instructed to keep in contact with the owners to monitor their progress.

Today, the Alternate Code Enforcement Officer was working on a letter to the property owners on Webb Road. The facilities at this property have expanded without proper permits.

#### 14. Board and Committee Positions:

The Town is looking for volunteers for its boards and committees. This is a yearly process. We know that there are issues over having enough time as life does seem busier now and about COVID concerns. We have set up the Meeting Room with nice air filtering devices. The Fire Chief/EMA Director selected them and in talking with contractors who come to the building as well as people who have had COVID, we have been told that these are really good units. A list of boards/committees with expiring terms was published in The Rolling Thunder and is available at the Town Office. The Town has many committees and boards and perhaps there is an area that you might be interested in. Since COVID, we have had trouble filling spots and that is understandable, however, we do need to proceed forward with meetings.

15. The Planning Board is very important:

While we have a list of committees looking for volunteers, I would like to bring your attention to the Planning Board. This is a very important board for the Town. Activity in terms of commercial growth is coming to Town and you can be a part of it by being on the Planning Board. This board generally meets once per month to review applications and may be meeting to review ordinances at various times during the year. The membership is down and as people are already planning for projects for this summer – 3 applications are coming in – we need volunteers. You would receive a package of materials, review the materials and then attend a meeting to make sure that the project meets the ordinance requirements. There is staff assistance including a planner from the Kennebec Valley Council of Governments who reviews materials. If you like helping businesses or you like making sure that business projects are good for the Town, the Planning Board is for you. Although terms are 5 years in length, there are a few unexpired terms available for 3-year terms.

16. Water/Sewer Projects:

There is a lengthy list of Water and Sewer Projects available for completion. A Departments Meeting was held recently which was very informative on priorities and addressing particular items in the most commonsense and systematic fashion.

A comprehensive list of the projects to be undertaken will be provided at a later date once more planning is conducted on how to accomplish as much as possible.

I will mention two items:

*a. Water/Sewer Billing:* I had reported on the water/sewer billing in December 2021. This has been very difficult due to staffing levels during the busiest period of time that we have had for many years but also due to an issue that turns out to apparently be with some meters. There is a malfunction that affects all or several books depending on how many are read at a time. We were looking to get up to date so more books were inputted into the computer than usual having been read. All of a sudden, a new error code showed up in a few accounts which then affects the books for billing purposes. We had to extract a lot of information after checking regular items for the billings. The meter accounts themselves had to be checked and by process of elimination, locate the issue. One section of town in one book was very affected while there were very few issues in the other parts of town so we worked around this, extracting out each book to send out bills. We did not know what the issue was as it could not be determined until we focused in one particular area. Therefore, each bill had to be checked. In the end, all bills have been produced. The Town is basically out of meters, having ordered them last summer in anticipation of needing them now. There have been a lot of requests for meters as there are many new lots in the mobile home parks and multiple new lots or development taking place. It appears that some of the meters that have been recycled from other locations do not read properly. Some read backwards with creates a major issue. The number of meters with issues was very small, however, it created a large problem. We are in the process of determining how, if at all, the recycled meters will be used and if not, what do we do. In any case, the amount of time utilized to process the bills should be much lower for the next round which starts shortly.....The good item is that I have never worked in-depth on the billings but I have determined that there are some other items that would be good to do for the customers so once we start the next billings, some enhancement will be offered.

*b. A citizen was advised that someone was not billed for 5 years:* As I had to review each account that was being billed to address the code processing issue, I reviewed the accounts. I did not see an

account that was not being billed unless it had been listed as turned off and there was a record of why it was turned off. I did see the following items:

1. The Town has a list for each Book of Locations where water is turned off: In our Departments Meeting, we determined that each of these locations needs to be reviewed in the field. It is possible that the Water/Sewer Department provided the Town Office with a list of locations where they were going to turn off the water for non-payment or because of the owner's request to do so. Then upon arrival, was unable to turn off the water at a location and then there may not have been further communication or mis-communication. It is possible but not likely as there is a last step in the process in which the department communicates the result to the town office staff and then this is checked. There is also the possibility that someone got hooked into a line and we do not know about it. There are also some locations in town where several homes are off one small line and perhaps another home was built and then they hooked in. In any case, we determined that it would be proper due diligence for Olver Associates staff during regular hours in non-winter conditions to go out and check the Shut Off List to make sure it is correct. We agree that trying to match up every real estate account with every water/sewer account and make sure that it is on would not be a productive use of our time. I did this for one road and it was not helpful, therefore, we will start in the field first.

There are many other projects to work on which include:

- c. Leak Detection, of which we have had fantastic results;*
- d. Rehabilitation of the Wells;*
- e. Sewer Video Work for roads that may be paved;*
- f. Inspection and Cleaning of Water Storage Facilities;*
- g. VAS Program with E.J. Prescott;*
- h. Grant for the Stationary Backup Generator;*
- i. Grant for the Capacity Study;*
- j. Creating and bidding out the Painting of one or more Water Storage Tanks and the most critical one with all of the funding coming up;*
- k. To look for, determine and apply for funding with the Town Manager for water and sewer projects.*

There were two discussions after the Town Manager's Report was reviewed pertaining to the Code Violations and to the Paving with Water and Sewer Main Discussions.

#### Code Violations:

It was consensus that all of the Code violations will continue to be pursued with an understanding that the property owner on Somerset Avenue is not mobile from his fall from the building roof. Therefore, the Code Enforcement Officer will pursue continued repair with the owner's attorney. The Code Enforcement Officer is to continue to contact the other owners to work out schedules for repair in addition to the Fire Chief reviewing the Washington Street violation to determine if the building can be safely burned in such close proximity to other homes and the electrical/telephone lines. If burning is not an option and it likely is not, the Code Enforcement Officer is to work with the property owner to determine if the owner will tear down the building by a set date if the Town provided a container to be hauled to the Transfer Station. This option is also to be discussed with the property owner on Leonard Street for a thorough clean-up of the yard. The Code Enforcement Officer is to continue to work with the property owner on Manson Street to get the building condition and appearance addressed.

**Paving with Water and Sewer Main Discussions:**

This was a lengthy discussion due to the complexity of the issue and the condition of the water and sewer records over the decades. Olver Associates discussed how the official water and sewer maps detailing the mains were not correct. These had been professionally completed in the late 1990's at considerable cost by another engineering firm. The Town Manager advised that we had been utilizing the sewer main flow study conducted in 2009 by Olver Associates which was a comprehensive study of infiltration. If a road had a problem sewer main identified for infiltration, it was not being paved. The discussion revolved around how it would be great to have the roads all laid out in order to be paved with a date, however, we do not know when the funding will be available for water and sewer projects and whether our application will be successful. Therefore, the Town has been utilizing Priority categories. Annaleis Hafford spoke of the work completed by Olver Associates and will collect up the information in the Study and water/sewer department records to determine to the best of our abilities with the information that we have, the sewer mains that should be in good condition and can be paved over. Water is more difficult to determine because if it has not had major leaking, it would generally not be known to be an issue. The inventory created will not be complete as the Town does not have information on all of the mains. There are a lot of unknowns. Testing and/or video review would be required in order to have a complete record.

**6. OLD BUSINESS:** None.

**7. NEW BUSINESS:**

***ORDINANCE 22-03: (Set to Public Hearing on 03/01/2022):***

**TOWN OF PITTSFIELD  
ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING ISSUE OF UP TO \$1,068,000  
PRINCIPAL AMOUNT OF GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS**

The Town of Pittsfield Town Council hereby ordains the borrowing of up to \$1,068,000 to finance costs of improvements to the Town's sewer system through the State's Clean Water State Revolving Fund on the following terms:

1. Pursuant to the Constitution of the State of Maine, Maine law, including Title 30-A, Section 5772 and Section 5953-A of the Maine Revised Statutes, as amended, and the Town Charter, and all other authority thereto enabling, the Town of Pittsfield is authorized to borrow from the Maine Municipal Bond Bank Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund (SRF) pursuant to a loan agreement between the Town and the Maine Municipal Bond Bank (the "Bank"), a principal amount not to exceed One Million Sixty Eight Thousand Dollars (\$1,068,000), and to expend the proceeds of the loan or loans to finance the improvements and upgrades to the Town's sewer system which may include, but are not limited to the rehabilitation of sections of the Main Street Sewer Main (the "Project"), or such amount of the foregoing Project as is approved by the State for participation in the SRF. The Town hereby approves and authorizes the issue, sale and delivery to the Bank as evidence of any loan and against payment therefor, General Obligation Bonds of the Town in a principal amount not to exceed \$1,068,000, for a term not to exceed 20 years, and any Notes in anticipation of such Bonds; such Bonds and Notes to be executed on behalf of the Town by the Town Treasurer and counter-signed by the Mayor of the Town and to be at such interest rates, if any, as may be established by the Bank and approved by the Treasurer and the Mayor, with such maturities, and to be on such further terms and conditions as may be prescribed by the Bank, and

approved by the Treasurer and the Mayor (the "Bonds" and the "Notes"), such approval to be conclusively evidenced by their execution of the Bonds or Notes. If the Bank approves only some but not all of the foregoing Project as eligible for funding under its SRF program, the Town is authorized to proceed with the borrowing of the amount and project approved by the Bank, even though the State may have approved only some but not all of the Project described above.

2. The Mayor and the Treasurer are hereby authorized to execute and deliver on behalf of the Town a loan agreement, relating to the issuance of the Bonds and any Notes in anticipation thereof, in such form and on such terms as the Bank shall require, which loan agreement is hereby approved, and may contain such other terms and provisions, not contrary to the general tenor hereof, as the Treasurer may approve, with his/her approval to be conclusively evidenced by his/her execution thereof .

3. The Mayor and the Treasurer are hereby authorized to execute and deliver on behalf of the Town loan application and other applications to the Bank for borrowing under its SRF Program.

4. The Mayor, the Treasurer and other municipal officers and officials of the Town are hereby authorized to execute all documents and certificates, and to take all action, including affixing the seal of the Town, as may be necessary or convenient to carry out the full intent of the foregoing votes or any one of them, and are hereby authorized and empowered in its name and on its behalf, to do or cause to be done all such acts and things as may be deemed necessary or desirable in order to effect the borrowing authorized herein.

5. The Town has been awarded a grant of \$498,210 through the Maine Jobs & Recovery Plan Allocation of Wastewater Infrastructure Funding from funds received pursuant to the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, and hereby appropriates such grant funds to be applied to the Project subject to the conditions of the grant to be administered by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection, Bureau of Water Quality.

6. This Ordinance shall become effective in thirty (30) days.

**Moved** by Deputy Mayor Logiodice and seconded by Councilor Frost that Ordinance 22-03 be set to public hearing on March 1, 2022.

Town Manager Ruth explained supporting information for the Ordinance and answered questions.

Motion passed with all votes in favor.

**VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE**

**RESOLUTION 22-21:** Resolved that the Town Council confirm the Town Manager's appointment for the Part-time Recreation Director Position in accordance with the Personnel Policy Regulations.

**Moved** by Deputy Mayor Logiodice and seconded by Councilor Hall to adopt Resolution 22-21.

Motion passed with all votes in favor.

**VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE**

**RESOLUTION 22-22:** Resolved that the Town Council waive the Bid Policy, Chapter 2, Administrative Code, Section 106, to accept the proposal from Steeves Property Maintenance to continue with the same pricing for 2022 for the Departments Mowing, Pittsfield Parks and Municipal Properties and Pittsfield Municipal Airport Mowing and to authorize the Town Manager to execute the contract for said work with the same conditions as were in place for the year 2021.

**Moved** by Deputy Mayor Logiodice and seconded by Councilor Hall to adopt Resolution 22-22.

Motion passed with all votes in favor.

**VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE**

**RESOLUTION 22-23:** Resolved that the Town Council approve the Request for Quotations for the Pittsfield Wastewater Department Main Street Pump Station retrofit and authorize the Town Manager and Olver Associates Operations Manager to seek bids for same.

Ms. Hafford explained the background, the requirements and the scope of the project.

**Moved** by Deputy Mayor Logiodice and seconded by Councilor Hall to adopt Resolution 22-23.

Motion passed with all votes in favor.

**VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE**

## **8. DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

### **A. Department Reports for 01/31/2022: Accomplishments/Achievements**

The Town Manager advised that all of the reports were self-explanatory.

Town Manager Ruth advised that Bernard Williams and her had been going around and around with the state and federal contacts on the definition of PPE for purchase with the ARPA funds and that Bernard has some great news he would like to report.

Chief Williams reported that he had not been happy with the guidance and lack of a definition of PPE. He had been getting the runaround from the officials. He had contacted MMA a last time and was told that the Final Rule just approved establishes an automatic blanket coverage for every municipality in the US for \$10,000,000 revenue loss up to the amount of the award. All items that fit under government budgeting can be purchased. This means that the Pittsfield Fire Department can buy the SCBA's.

## **9. REPORTS: Audience, Council,**

Audience: None.

Councilor Frost: Noted that on the Library Report the attendance in person and the WiFi use has gone up significantly.

Deputy Mayor Logiodice: No report.

Councilor Jester: No report.

Councilor Saucier: Would like to have a discussion with appraisers at the Council meeting to talk about how they have done updates in reviewing property value to make sure that everything is being taxed. Since it has been so long since a revaluation and not everyone has obtained a building permit, there will be some value to pick up.

Councilor Hall: Wants a formal paving plan put together by a company that does this type of work and a third-party review of procedures and processes in all departments for efficiencies.

Mayor Cianchette: Thanked everyone for attending. Thanked Bernard for pursuing the ARPA funding clarification. Thanked Councilor Saucier for his idea on how to increase the town's valuation.

## 10. ADJOURNMENT:

**Moved** by Deputy Mayor Logiodice and seconded by Councilor Hall to adjourn the meeting at 8:40 p.m.

Motion passed with all votes in favor.

**VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE**

Respectfully submitted,

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Kathryn Ruth, Deputy Town Clerk

*Minutes are a synopsis of a meeting. For more detail, please go to [www.pittsfield.org](http://www.pittsfield.org) and click on Town Meeting Videos to listen to videos of Town Council and other Board/Committee Meetings.*

