

MINUTES

for a regular meeting of the Pittsfield Town Council, held on Tuesday, August 4, 2020 at 6:30 PM at the Pittsfield Municipal Building and by teleconferencing technology due to the Governor's Proclamation of State of Civil Emergency for the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Directions to join the meeting by teleconferencing are available at the end of the agenda.

PRESENT: COUNCILORS: Mayor Heather Donahue, Deputy Mayor Matthew Bolster, Councilor Timothy Nichols, Councilor Amanda Collamore, Councilor Debra Billings and Councilor Peter Logiodice.

Also present: Town Manager Kathryn Ruth

AUDIENCE: Michael Wyle and Michael Gray.

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

3. **ADOPTION OF MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING HELD ON July 21, 2020.**

Moved by Councilor Billings and seconded by Councilor Nichols that the Minutes of the regular meeting held on July 21, 2020 be adopted.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

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

A. Community and Economic Development Activities and Events

Upcoming Events

The traditional Egg Festival Window Contest will be taking place in August 2020. More details to be available shortly.

There was considerable discussion about the many projects that are being planned, moving forward and/or were listed on the Planning Board agenda. The Town Manager announced that 487 Nutrition was coming to Town at the Somerset Plaza and citizens are quite excited about this!

5. **PUBLIC HEARINGS/OLD BUSINESS: NONE**

5. **REPORTS:**

A. **COUNCIL COMMITTEES:**

FINANCE: The first meeting for a Budget Workshop is on August 11th with a Finance Committee meeting on August 25th.

ORDINANCE: We have not met because we have not heard back from the Planning Board. We will have a meeting on September 8 at 6:30 pm to discuss items including the Sewer Ordinance.

RECYCLING: No Report. Our next meeting is on September 16 at 5:00 pm.

B. BOARD AND COMMITTEE UPDATES BY TOWN COUNCILORS AND MANAGER

The Parks and Recreation Committee had their second meeting and is looking at 4 main focus areas: Pinnacle Park, Parks in general, Swimming Pool and Recreation Program (Youth and Adult). She advised that the group will be looking at a master plan for the parks, fund raising and grants. Their next meeting is on Friday, August 14 at 5:00 pm.

C. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

1. Thank you during the civil emergency: We would like to thank everyone for how well they did during the civil emergency to date – thank you for your ingenuity and support of not only the community, our businesses, our organizations and the Town, but also of each other. Information is always changing and evolving as we have not been through a period such as this. While we are re-opening up more and more, we would ask people to be considerate of your neighbors, friends and people who you do not know by wearing a mask when required, following the arrows at the stores and staying on the social distancing circles on the floors at establishments. We have had great compliance here with the distancing. We appreciate the fact that so many people wear masks when coming to the Town Office.

2. November 2020 Election Site: Due to COVID-19 requirements, the building was set up differently with the flow in the back door and out the front door with less polling booths. The flow worked really well and it was very comfortable. For a November election, though, we are concerned with the setup for the number of voters anticipated. As school would be in session, MSAD#53 indicated that we could not utilize their facilities which is understandable. Calls are going back and forth with MCI so we will know shortly and then if a facility is available, the Town Clerk, EMA Director and anyone else needed to evaluate the site will look at it. We need a good setup for COVID-19 requirements in addition to a site being large enough and handicapped accessible with enough parking. The Town Clerk will advise as soon as she knows as we would need to apply to the State to change the location.

3. Nomination Papers Available: READ Notice

4. Town Office RE-opening: Our town office, as well as town offices across the state fit under the Governor's Phase II opening of June 1, 2020. After the 07/14/2020 election, we revised the hours back to the regular schedule of:

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday open 8:00 am – 5:00 pm

Closed on Wednesdays

Thank you for your understanding and patience as we comply with all of the rules and try to keep everyone safe in these unprecedented times.

5. On-line services for Town Business Update:

Since April, the following services have been available on-line: READ

We have a handout on the Town's website at www.pittsfield.org and links on the Facebook page.

6. New Registration List: Knowing that new registrations can be complicated with all of the paperwork involved, we have updated and refined a list of items required for (a) a new vehicle registration; (b) for used vehicles (dealer sale) and (c) required for used vehicles (private sale). This was created and placed at the Town Office as a handout as one comes inside the building/outside the building; on the Town's website and links were placed on the Facebook Page.

7. Transfer Station New Fee System was to go into effect on June 01, 2020 and has been pushed back to August 1, 2020. We had a very active campaign with several ads in the Rolling Thunder as well as many

notices on Facebook. Our last ad stated that this was the last week to get transfer station stickers for the effective date. In fact, I was told to stop sending out Facebook as I had forwarded the notice so much. We also contacted known contractors who use the facility, etc.

On Saturday, 08/01/2020, there were 151 vehicles that came to the Transfer Station. 33 vehicles were sent away. People from Palmyra were convinced that they could use our transfer station. There were residents who had moved to the neighboring town because the taxes are lower but decided to still use the Pittsfield Transfer Station and we had people from Unity College bringing over college garbage. There has been little activity of this nature during the week so it does seem to be a Saturday problem. The staff will have to check for the stickers on the vehicles.

We have 688 new stickers issued as of this afternoon. We will have a few more.

8. Code Enforcement Violations: The cases that the Town Council agreed upon earlier this year and we sent the background in on have been put together to await when the courts open up. Cases like this for 80K will be further down on the list of cases to be heard. With this information in hand, one of the property owners has been working on their property, however, it is not clear what is being done (Somerset Avenue).

Also, I would note for landlords and tenants out there, the Courts Reopening plan will end the ban on August 3, 2020 for court hearings that would result in evictions. So there is concern that there could be a rush of evictions as tenants unless able pay rent during COVID-19 are evicted while landlords have large amounts of rent due. This type of case would be much higher up in the que than the Town's Code Violations. There is also talk of a program at the State level to help people pay their rent. If and when we receive details, we will advise.

9. Pittsfield Summer Recreation Program: READ Basketball Parents Notice for the 1-week Basketball Camp.

10. Porta Potties: This has worked well to date. There was one incident at the beginning of use with the porta potty being tipped over and the contractor came right off to assist the staff and cleaned it up. Nature's Way, a local company, is very customer orientated and the prices are less than other companies. We will be changing over at the Transfer Station. A good item with this setup is that the location can be open all the time for children playing.

11. KVCOG Textile Recycling: We happened to mention to the new Solid Waste Director at KVCOG the need to pull all of these heavy cloth items out of the waste stream. He has developed a textile recycling program with Apparel Impact. Once the details are worked out, a closed container with a door/opening will be delivered to the Transfer Station for free disposal and pickup for all of the surplus cloth that is thrown away or clothing that can no longer be sold at Pennywise. This is a great enhancement. Right now, we have someone on our Recycling Committee who transports used clothing to the Homeless Shelter. This effort can continue, however, the items that simply can no longer be used can be recycled which is great.

12. Fire Station and Municipal Building Projects: Our Fire Station Masonry Repointing Alternate to Replacement and Municipal Building Masonry Wash, Seal and Repointing began on June 24, 2020 and was completed last week. The employees were very polite and kept out of the traffic flow even when they had to work on the building entrances/exits. We need an inspection and then I have received the bill for payment. The cost was lower than the budget in total so this may leave some funds for another project on the 2019 list which are Public Works orientated.

13. Municipal Building and Fire Station Roof Projects: C.O. Beck, which was the low bidder for these projects late last year indicated it was too late to start the projects last year which was reasonable and then

were going to start early this year, however, COVID-19 came along. They have just gotten their crews back and are starting projects. They will complete the project by September 1, 2020 and believe they will be done in August. Given the current health crisis, they wanted a bit of extra time which was fine. Their pricing was exceptionally good and they do high quality work. The Fire Station roof was worked on and they will be back in the near future.

14. Sewer System Work: The Town was able to negotiate a contract with Olver Associates to be the official operator of the Pittsfield Sewer Treatment Facility/Lagoon System for \$375/week rather than the original \$600/week. So that would be \$1500 a month rather than \$2400/month. Olver is starting tomorrow to work with the Plant Manager. We are also collecting information for the water rate review which is needed. This is needed in order to more effectively operate the system as well as address additional loan opportunities for capital improvements and partially due to the fact that the Water and Sewer Systems must have depreciation which is charged to our budget as though it was an expense.

15. Highway Projects:

Two very large trees on Main Street were cut down last week. It took part of a day to do this work with the Town coming back after the contractor left to haul off the wood left over and branches. These trees as well as other trees are on the Tree list for cutting with a contractor coming, however, the low bidder is held up with all of the debris from the April storm. The low bidder was agreeable to the Town obtaining another contractor to take care of these very large trees. The low bidder, which provided the Town with really good pricing, now believes their company will arrive this Fall to work on the trees assigned by the Public Works Foreman. In the meantime, I think it would be a good exercise to ask the PW Foreman to provide an estimate for the number of trees that should be cut in total so that this figure as well as details would be available for the budget discussions.

Public Works will start this week on the preliminary work for Higgins Road culverts and ditching. It is estimated that this work will take up to 1 month. Pike representatives are being very understanding and will pave after this work is done. In addition, I contacted Pike copying the Public Works Department on having Pike at the same time pave the Town's back walkway at the same pricing. Pike agreed so Public Works will need to dig up the walkway, lay and compact good gravel and then we will need the fine grading and paving. This would need to be advertised as we will need to let people know for traffic flow.

16. Town Logo on Vehicles for Identification and Promotion: We are collecting up the list of vehicles and heavy equipment that need Town identification for lettering. SHOW LOGO.

17. Electricity Contracts: The supply contracts for many of our smaller and medium sized electricity accounts are coming up as the pricing is getting ready to climb so under a prior approval to join the cooperative, I am going to sign the Town up for the Maine Power Options Cooperative again this year. If we signed up today for a three-year option, we would have a 11.2% reduction in pricing. Before the price climbs, we will execute the contracts for a multi-year contract.

18. Airport Grants: We received unofficial notice that the Town has been awarded \$372,100 which included \$37,210 in additional funding from the CARES Act. We are also waiting for verification again if we can use the CARES funds for cracksealing as we were advised absolutely not and then when we went to our State Capital Improvement Plan meeting, we were told that we could do so.

6. **NEW BUSINESS:**

RESOLUTION 20-94: Resolved that the Town Council Endorses Small Business Saturday on Saturday, November 28, 2020.

Moved by Councilor Collamore and seconded by Deputy Mayor Bolster that Resolution 20-94 be adopted.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

RESOLUTION 20-95: Resolved that the Town Council authorize the Town Manager and Deputy Tax Collector to issue notices of Tax Acquired Property Sale and place Tax Acquired Parcels out to bid as follows: Property Map 18, Lot 64, Located at 456 Canaan Road, Pittsfield, ME; Property Map 23, Lot 05, located at 132 Peltoma Avenue, Pittsfield, ME; and Property Map 27, Lot 59-12, located at 133 Dorothy Street, Pittsfield, ME.

Moved by Councilor Nichols and seconded by Councilor Collamore that Resolution 20-95 be adopted.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

RESOLUTION 20-96: Resolved that the Town Council Waive the Bid Policy, Chapter 2. Administrative Code, Section 106. Regulation of Bids and Contracts to Approve the purchase and installation of four (four) sewer manholes at a cost of \$17,500.

Moved by Deputy Mayor Bolster and seconded by Councilor Billings that Resolution 20-96 be adopted.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

RESOLUTION 20-97: Resolved that the Town Council Authorize the Town Manager to Execute all paperwork for the installation of the G.A.R.D System at the Pittsfield Municipal Airport to include all state and federal government paperwork such as the Non-Monetary Airport Cooperative Agreement for the installation and the State of Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT) Agreement.

Moved by Deputy Mayor Bolster and seconded by Councilor Collamore that Resolution 20-97 be adopted.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

RESOLUTION 20-98: Resolved that the Town Council Proclaim November 08-15 as Maine Recycles Week for the Town of Pittsfield.

Moved by Councilor Billings and seconded by Councilor Nichols that Resolution 20-98 be adopted.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

RESOLUTION 20-99: Resolved that the Town Council move the regularly scheduled Town Council Meeting of Tuesday, November 3, 2020 to Wednesday, November 4, 2020 due to the election.

Moved by Councilor Collamore and seconded by Councilor Billings that Resolution 20-99 be adopted.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

RESOLUTION 20-100: Resolved that the Town Council Appoint members to fill the vacancies on the various Town Boards and Committees.

Ronald Watson was appointed to the available Regular position expiring 12/31/2021 from his Associate position; Mark Lagross was appointed to the available Regular position expiring 12/31/2020 and Kelley Carter was appointed to the Personnel Appeals Board for a term to expire 12/31/2020.

Moved by Councilor Billings and seconded by Councilor Logiodice that Resolution 20-100 be adopted.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

7. DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- A. Financial Reports as of 06/30/2020
 - Budget Expenditure Report
 - Revenue Collections Report
 - Excise Tax Collections Comparison Report
 - State Revenue Sharing Comparison Report
 - Economic Development Accounts Update
 - Housing Revolving Loan Update
 - Tax Increment Financing Update
 - Pittsfield Future Account Update
 - Transfer Station/Recycling Monthly Report
 - Theatre Monthly Report
 - Building and Plumbing Permit Reports

The Town Manager advised of the following:

Budget Expenditure Report: 50.0% of period; 38.7% of municipal; 34.7% municipal, water & sewer (depreciation and transfers done by Auditor so percentage will increase)

Revenue Collections Report: 50.0% of period; 32.5% municipal; 31.9% municipal, water & sewer

Excise Tax Collections Comparison Report: For this period, we are -\$6,312.63 behind 2019 collections at this period of time.

State Revenue Sharing Comparison Report: For this period, +\$68,976.40 ahead of 2019 collections.

This account needs to be watched closely in case it falls behind. It worked out well this year.

The remainder of the Financial Reports are self-explanatory.

8. REPORTS:

Audience:

Michael Gray: Having services online, even though it is a revenue loss for agent fees is a very good service for the citizens.

Council:

Mayor Donahue: Thanked people for attending. Asked for an update on the facilities at Hathorn Park (TM: Advised that she had asked the Code Enforcement Officer and the Public Works Foreman to look at the facilities and since they have been very busy the inspection has not yet taken place. The TM advised that if we need any major repairs, we would need to put it into the budget so we really need to know now. She will remind them of the timeframe). Inquired as to where we are at with the Theatre and the gift certificates that we sold (TM: The Theatre Manager took care of the gift certificates. The Request for Proposals are due on 8/11/2020 with 2 realtors touring the building). Asked about the Annual Report (TM: We have had the on-

line version available and are working on the printed ones). The Maine Cheese Festival has been cancelled for this year because of COVID. We are planning the 2021 Festival.

Deputy Mayor Bolster: Are the arrows and crosswalks on Main Street our responsibility? (TM: The State is responsible for 2 places, and the town is responsible for the rest.)

Councilor Nichols: Will bring up the Trash to Treasure idea at the next Recycling meeting. He was at the Transfer Station during the last hour on Saturday and everything seemed to be going well. Hopes that we can sell the Tax Acquired properties. The Puritan project looks like it is coming along quite well. Glad to see a business going into the little bank at the Plaza.

Councilor Collamore: Thanked the audience for attending. Did a walk around the building and it looks wonderful. They did a great job. Really liked watching the Puritan project come together and the building looks so good. Glad that we were able to negotiate the Sewer Treatment contract down. Congratulated all of the new board members for stepping up to do service for the Town. Noted that something needs to be done about the arrows at the lights near the gas station. Some cars go straight when they are in the left lane and advised she has almost been hit 4 times in the last few weeks. Heard a lot of people are angry about the new Transfer Station stickers and she has been advising them that this was advertised extensively. Wanted to make sure that we are counting the revenue loss from the on-line services in the 2021 budget. (TM: Advised definitely). Asked about the valve on Library Street. She is watching the MCI Traffic and is concerned about it. (TM: Stated she spoke with the Department Head again and he noted it is very expensive to have a contractor come out for one item as it is \$300/hour for the truck. He has a list of areas to fix and will have the truck come out to fix everything at once. In the meantime, he was asked to cover it over which he has done).

Councilor Logiodice: No report.

Councilor Billings: Glad that Olver is helping out with Water and Sewer. They are good at what they do and they gave us a good price. Advised that we need to return to electronic form for our Warrants and Financials. The signatures that we need for Warrants are not getting in fast enough for Kathryn to pay the bills. Believes the Financials should be available for people to see and knows we are moving into the digital age as fast as we can. Requested we look at having people pay property taxes quarterly. It would be easier if residents do not have to come up with the entire amount at once. (TM: In the meantime, until there is a change in accordance with the State law, we can put together a promotion for the Tax Club).

9. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Councilor Billings and seconded by Deputy Mayor Bolster to adjourn at 8:20 PM.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

Respectfully Submitted by:

Michael Feole, Deputy Town Clerk

Kathryn Ruth, Deputy Town Clerk