

MINUTES

for a regular meeting of the Pittsfield Town Council, to be held on Tuesday, October 1, 2019 at 6:30 PM in the Council Chambers.

PRESENT: COUNCILORS: Mayor Timothy Nichols, Deputy Mayor Heather Donahue, Councilor Matthew Bolster, Councilor Howard Margolskee and Councilor Robert Stackhouse.

ABSENT: Councilor Caleb Curtis and Councilor Debra Billings

Also, present: Town Manager Kathryn Ruth, Assistant Michael Feole

AUDIENCE: Joe Sanborn, Jennifer Watson, Jaime Jensen, Michael Gray, Amber Quint, Jan Laux, Pete Logiodice, Ann Mathews, Molly Sherry, Annaleis Hafford, Amanda Collomore, Jim Cianchette and Michael Leblanc.

1. Mayor Nichols 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 SEPTEMBER 17, 2019.**

Moved by Councilor Stackhouse and seconded by Councilor Bolster that the Minutes of the regular meeting held on September 17, 2019 be adopted.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

4. PRESENTATIONS, CONGRATULATIONS AND INTRODUCTIONS

A. Presentation by Annaleis Hafford, Vice-President of Olver Associates, regarding Water Operations Enhancements and Recommendations for the Future: Annaleis provided an update on operations assistance, water quality, system improvements and future budgetary considerations. To date, Olver Associates Inc. has assisted the Town with (1) an initial onsite evaluation of the water treatment system and daily operations; (2) review of water quality concerns regarding iron and manganese in the distribution system; (3) guidance on issues as they occur; (4) assistance when needed on site; (5) coordination of repairs to the water treatment plant; (6) assistance with routine reporting; and (7) assistance with compliance sampling. Annaleis discussed manganese which occurs naturally in the groundwater aquifer and iron which also occurs naturally in the groundwater aquifer and can occur from precipitation from older cast iron or galvanized piping. Annaleis explained that both of these minerals would typically not be required to be removed at the levels found in Pittsfield. She noted that a concentrated flushing program should assist in addressing these concerns.

B. Community and Economic Development Activities and Events

Report on:

Kennebec Valley Council of Governments 52nd Annual Meeting on Monday, September 30, 2019 at 4:00 pm in Waterville. The Town Manager represented the Town at the meeting and reported on the agenda.

Events:

Somerset County Spirit of America Award Ceremony on Wednesday, October 16, 2019 at 6:00 pm in The Superior Court Room: The Town of Pittsfield will receive a 2019 Spirit of America Award and Tom Brown, the recipient of the Pittsfield Spirit of America Award, will receive his 2019 Spirit of America Award.

PEEC will be meeting next Tuesday, 10/08/2019 to discuss a full agenda of items including minor building improvements at a facility owned by the 501c3 organization; how to assist in marketing a building that a Trust appears interested in now selling; business plans, town video update and publishing a promotional map for the downtown.

Small Business Saturday will be held on Saturday, November 30, 2019. This is another project for the Town to work on and one that the Heart of Pittsfield might also be engaged in so we will check prior to starting to see if we can coordinate if there is interest.

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS/OLD BUSINESS:

ORDINANCE 19-12 (Public Hearing) That the Town Council hereby ordains that Chapter 2B General Assistance Ordinance, Appendices A-D, and Appendix H be rescinded and the new Appendices A-D and Appendix H be adopted to reflect the revised maximums for the period of October 01, 2019 – September 30, 2020. And to continue to use Appendices E-F set forth and filed with the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) until any new appendices are approved.

Public Hearing opened by Mayor Nichols

For: None

Against: None

Public Hearing closed by Mayor Nichols

Moved by Councilor Stackhouse and seconded by Councilor Bolster that Ordinance 19-12 be adopted.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

6. REPORTS:

A. COUNCIL COMMITTEES:

FINANCE: The Finance Committee reported that it has a meeting last Thursday and reviewed several budgets including the Theatre Budget for 2020.

ORDINANCE: No report.

RECYCLING: No report, rescheduled the meeting for 10/2/2019 due to people being out of town and having other commitments.

B. BOARD AND COMMITTEE UPDATES BY TOWN COUNCILORS AND MANAGER:

Presentation by the Theatre Committee: Jennifer Watson detailed the steps taken to bring the budget in line with the revenues that are being brought in this year including reorganizing the management structure, raising ticket and concession prices and closing on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. The budget for 2020 is proposed at \$96,370 for expenses and \$62,325 is anticipated as revenues leaving a gap of \$34,045. Ann Duncombe and Jennifer Watson has started the process of applying for 501c3 status so that the Theatre can move away from being a part of the town.

Bicentennial Committee: We still have a few events planned for the rest of the year including sponsoring the showing of the Rocky Horror Picture Show at the Theatre; Trunk or Treat on Halloween; the Tree Lighting in December; and the Time Capsule closing in January.

C. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

1. Residential Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Disposal on Saturday, October 12, 2019 from 9:00 am – Noon. In conjunction with the Kennebec Valley Council of Governments, & other communities, the Town of Pittsfield will host a Residential Household Hazardous Waste Disposal Event at the Pittsfield Recycling/Transfer Station located at 601 Peltoma Avenue. Pittsfield residents contact Recycling/Transfer Station at 487-3361 to pre-register. Non-residents who wish to participate must pre-register with the town they reside in. HHW includes old oil and latex based paint, gas, motor oil, pesticides, cleaners, pool chemicals, TVs, computers and other difficult to get rid of materials that could potentially harm people and pets. We will not be holding an annual unwanted prescription drug collection as the Town Office does have the great secure disposal box acquired through a grant from HealthySV (now known as Northern Lights) several years ago and HealthySV holds collection days. There is no reason for duplication.
2. Prescription Drug Take Back Day on Saturday, October 26th in the Pittsfield Municipal Parking Lot. Northern Lights (HealthySV) will be collecting E-waste items from 8:00 am until noon. Items to be collected include cellphones, computer towers, printers, televisions and monitors. The Pittsfield Police Department will be collecting unwanted or unused prescription drugs from 10 am until 2 pm.
3. The Husky Howl: Wheels and Coffee will take place on Saturday, October 26th from 11:00 am – 4:00 pm. This is a wheel show for the community to raise funds for JMG's Annual Giving Tree Charity. READ
3. The Pittsfield Community Trunk or Treat Event which was the long-standing highly anticipated Fire Department Halloween Party with the best doughboys in the world expanded last year to include additional partners - and has expanded further to have 3 locations this year: READ
4. The Waverly Street Bridge continues to be closed to through traffic as the State of Maine needed to work on the bridge.
5. The Town Council Chambers: Will be closed to meetings for Wednesday, October 23 and Thursday, October 24, 2019 as the new tiling will be installed along with the small area of carpet for the podium.
6. Digital Warrants: MMA has advised that the Town will not be able to have Councilors sign warrants digitally as the Legislature has continually turned down bills that would allow the Councilors and Selectmen to phone, dial, teleconference or utilize the computer to call in from a remote location and have their vote counted. So, a great idea, but still not legal yet.
7. Our 2020 Proposed State Valuation has arrived: The proposed valuation for Pittsfield is \$252,050,000 which is an increase of \$2,300,000 or .9%. Our 2019 valuation was \$249,750,000. An increase in the state valuation is what we want each year. This does not include Pittsfield Solar which was a massive increase of over \$20 million. If we had not captured that value, we would have had a large increase in our county and school assessments as well as a decrease in our state revenue sharing and educational subsidy that is reflected in the school assessment. When our next TIF opportunity arrives, we will review all of the scenarios to determine whether the value should be captured or not. One of our residents, Mr. Salley, who works for the State, is quite knowledgeable in this area and has volunteered to assist. If there is a huge valuation change, it would need to be captured to avoid large changes that would affect the items listed, however, if the change is smaller, there are pros and cons to capturing all the value. This has been utilized as an economic development tool to attract businesses, which it has, and we need to look at the tax rate too.
8. TAP Notice: We had received a request to redeem taxes after the redemption period expired as well as all of the tax liens notices, tax notices and many other contacts. The Councilors were interested in doing this if it could legally be done. The Town Attorney advised that it could not be and that the prior owner needed to bid as all other parties would bid. The Town Council would then review all the bids and determine the "best

use” for the property in accordance with the TAP Policy. There has been a lot of interest in the properties. Everyone should remember that yes, you can pick up a bargain and yes, anyone looking at a property needs to research this and understand that if he/she/it is the successful bidder, that a quit claim deed will be issued which means that the Town is quit claiming the interest that it has in the property. READ

9. Great News on the New Office Project at the Transfer Station. Our Transfer Station/Recycling Coordinator Don Chute stopped by the vendor chosen, Hill View Mini Barns. The unit is being built as we speak with an anticipated completion date of the end of the month. The price was much less than other vendors contacted. Updates will be provided so you will know when the unit will arrive and then we will need public notice just in case everything does not get done in the tiny window available. They will have two days to get the electrical and all controls changed over and everything hooked up.

10. Mil Rate Comparison of Pittsfield vs. Communities in the State of Maine: Councilors had asked for information regarding how the Town of Pittsfield’s tax rate matches up with other towns. While we always talk about how high our taxes are vs. other towns in the region and similar sized communities, we had not looked over the data for a few years. Many of us hear from the citizens about how our taxes are higher than other communities in the area, which is true, and how they do not want the taxes to increase. This has led to the Town having a lean budget and everything that goes along with that including having part-time department heads, relying on part-timers and community members work on items, lots of volunteers and committees and perhaps an overreliance on grants and special revenues. This was reported to the Town Council in September 2018. The prior data was from the State of Maine for 2016. *The Town of Pittsfield had the 58th highest tax rate in the State. Therefore, our tax rate was higher than 435 towns and plantations or higher than 88.2% of the plantations and towns.* This is why we have been told to hold the line over the years and have not added staff, built new buildings or had lots of capital expenditures beyond grants and special revenue. In the 2017 Municipal Valuation Return, the Town’s tax rate was the 83rd highest tax rate in the State so we went from being the 58th highest tax rate in the State to the 83rd so that was good.

11. Budget Calendar for 2020: READ. The meeting schedule was discussed.

12. The 2020-2021 Maine Department of Transportation Capital Plan includes the following: Safety and infrastructure improvements at the airport for design, permitting and construction of an 8 bay nested T-Hangar estimated at \$1,442,000; paving on Route #2, a lot of Bridge Rehabilitation on the I-95 overpasses; crack sealing at the Runway/Taxiway; and still includes the Main Street Rehabilitation at \$617,500.

13. Grant opportunities for the arts, recreation and possibly the skating rink are underway. Contact has been made regarding the possibilities for the skating rink.

14. Report on our largest grants:

CDBG for Innovative Specialties, LLC. at long last, we received the close out paperwork and have completed it, sending it to the Town Auditor to verify and then off to DECD. \$260,000

CDBG for Main Street, which we have successfully applied for an amendment as we are waiting for the MDOT Survey for the project, which was to arrive yesterday and we have asked for an update.

As soon as we can get the survey, CES, Inc. stated they would start immediately on the design, we will convene the CDBG Advisory Committee who were people who signed up from our other committees. We would tour the area, get ideas, set a timetable and then have a public session, etc. \$250,000

Northern Border Regional Commission: I have been working on this for several weeks and am now waiting for the Engineering component that we need to tie this out. The federal government has been very good about filing as it would have been ideal to have filed yesterday, however, we do not have the information needed from the engineer on the project. Up to \$250,000.

7. NEW BUSINESS:

RESOLUTION 19-97: Resolved that the Town Council approve and authorize the Town Manager to sign the Application/Agreement for the Grant-in-Aid Program for the Department of Conservation, Bureau of Parks and Lands Snowmobile Program for an estimated project of \$41,781.00 to improve the snowmobile trails for the Driftbusters Snowmobile Club.

Moved by Councilor Bolster and seconded by Councilor Margolskee that Resolution 19-97 be adopted.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

RESOLUTION 19-98: Resolved that the Town Council waive the bid policy, Chapter 2, Administrative Code, Section 106, and approve the proposal for the preventive maintenance service contract for the energy management system and temperature controls of the HVAC system at the Pittsfield Public Library and authorize the Town Manager to execute the contract with Mechanical Services, Inc/Maine Controls for a three-year period beginning January 1, 2020 (1/1/20-12/31/22) for services not to exceed \$4,050.00 with \$675.00 to be invoiced in six (6) semi-annual amounts.

Moved by Councilor Stackhouse and seconded by Deputy Mayor Donahue that Resolution 19-98 be adopted.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

RESOLUTION 19-99: Resolved that the Town Council authorize the Town Manager and Deputy Treasurer to advertise the Town of Pittsfield Surplus Property Sale and accept bids after consultation with the Department Heads/Supervisors which are felt to be appropriate for the surplus property in question in accordance with the amounts depicted in the bid policy.

Moved by Deputy Mayor Donahue and seconded by Councilor Stackhouse that Resolution 19-99 be adopted.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

RESOLUTION 19-100: Resolved that the Town Council Appoint Anne Goodblood as Addressing Officer for the Town of Pittsfield.

Moved by Councilor Stackhouse and seconded by Councilor Bolster that Resolution 19-100 be adopted.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

RESOLUTION 19-101: Resolved that the Town Council Appoint Nicole Nickolan as Warden and Anne Goodblood, Michelle Hopkins, Michael Feole and Emmalee Reed as Deputy Wardens for the November 5, 2019 State Referendum Election, Municipal Election and MSAD #53 Budget Referendum.

Moved by Councilor Bolster and seconded by Deputy Mayor Donahue that Resolution 19-101 be adopted.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

RESOLUTION 19-102: Resolved that the Town Council approve the opening of absentee ballots on November 5, 2019 at 10:00 AM and 3:00 PM for the November 5, 2019 State Referendum Election, Municipal Election and the MSAD#53 Budget Referendum.

Moved by Deputy Mayor Donahue and seconded by Councilor Margolskee that Resolution 19-102 be adopted.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

RESOLUTION 19-103: Resolved that the Town Council move the regularly scheduled Town Council Meeting of Tuesday, November 5, 2019 to Wednesday, November 6, 2019 due to the election.

Moved by Councilor Stackhouse and seconded by Councilor Bolster that Resolution 19-103 be adopted.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

8. DISCUSSION ITEMS: None.

9. REPORTS:

Audience:

John Chadwick: Lives on Peltoma and understands it is going to be paved. The plants close in two weeks and it has not been started. Will it get done this year? (TM: Yes, the plants usually close in November and the paving is scheduled to start this week weather dependent.)

Jim Cianchette: Indicated that the ladies on the Theatre Committee have done a tremendous amount of work and have been very successful.

Council:

Councilor Bolster: Thanked the Theatre Committee for the report. I am with the Mayor to support you with the new budget. The Town should hand over responsibility a little bit at a time as we move forward.

Deputy Mayor Donahue: Thanked the Theatre Committee. Thanked Annaleis for the Water/Sewer presentation. Open Creamery day is Columbus Day, 10/14/2019 from 11:00 to 4:00. Farm to Farm is coming up at the Northport Conference Center, on November 3 and November 4, and is being put on by MOFGA. Snakeroot Farm will be having a pre-conference tour on Saturday, November 2 at 1:00 pm and Balfour Farm will have a tour at 3:00 pm to kick off the event. The tours are free and open to the public.

Councilor Margolskee: Thanked the Theatre Committee for the presentation and hard work. I hope this isn't too little, too late with all of the building repairs needed. Thanked those who worked on the Bicentennial.

Mayor Nichols: Thanked Annaleis and the Theatre Committee for their presentations. With the figures presented tonight, I will support the Theatre for the next year. My Condolences to the Jones Family. Thanks to Tom Roberts. Looking forward to the PEEC meeting. Snow is coming, so look out for the elderly neighbors.

Councilor Curtis: Absent

Councilor Stackhouse: At the last meeting we heard about the problem with the horses, has anything been done? (TM: We need to determine who owns the horses and then the appropriate person would approach them about the issue). Thanks to Annaleis for the presentation and to Chris Pelletier for stepping up. Thanks to Jen for her presentation. My condolences to the family of Barbara Jones. Thanked the Town Manager for her hard work and the staff in the Town Office.

Councilor Billings: Absent

10. **ADJOURNMENT**

Moved by Councilor Stackhouse and seconded by Councilor Margolskee to adjourn at 8:20 PM.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

Michael Feole, Deputy Town Clerk

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