

MINUTES

for a regular meeting of the Pittsfield Town Council, held on *Tuesday, January 03, 2023* 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 Howard Margolskee; Councilor Brent Frost; Councilor Jason Hall; Councilor Eric Saucier; and Councilor Heather Donahue.

Councilors Present by ZOOM: Councilor Ronald Jester

Councilors Absent: None

Also Present: Town Manager Kathryn Ruth; Police Chief Vicente Morris; Peter Logiodice IV, Michael Smith; Scott Therrien and Jan Laux.

Also Present by ZOOM: None

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.

Council members elected at the November 2022 Election take the oath of office and are seated:
Councilor at Large: Heather Donahue
Councilor District 3: Howard Margolskee

Heather Donahue and Howard Margolskee were sworn into their Council positions by Deputy Clerk Ruth. Councilors Donahue and Margolskee were then officially seated.

ORDER 23-01: Ordered that the Town Council elect from among its members a Mayor to serve for the 2023 year.

Councilor Hall made a motion to elect Michael Cianchette as Mayor, seconded by Councilor Margolskee.

Being no further nominations, the Councilors voted to elect Councilor Cianchette as Mayor for the 2023 year.

Motion passed with all votes in favor.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

ORDER 23-02: Ordered that the Town Council elect from among its members a Deputy Mayor to serve for the 2023 year.

Moved by Councilor Hall and seconded by Councilor Saucier to elect Councilor Margolskee as Deputy Mayor.

Being no further nominations, the Councilors voted to elect Councilor Margolskee as Deputy Mayor for the 2023 year.

Motion passed with all votes in favor.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

2. ADOPTION OF MINUTES OF:
Regular Meeting held on January 03, 2023

Moved by Councilor Hall and seconded by Councilor Donahue to adopt the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held on December 20, 2022.

Motion passed with all votes in favor.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

3. PRESENTATIONS, CONGRATULATIONS AND INTRODUCTIONS:

A. Community and Economic Development Activities and Events

1. Projects and Grants:

- A. Planning Partnership Initiative Program Update (Main Street Project)
- B. Freedom of Access Training

A. Planning Partnership Initiative Program Update:

The Town Manager advised that the MaineDOT has called a meeting for Friday, January 06, 2023 for the parties to meet on the Planning Partnership Initiative Program regarding the proposal chosen by MaineDOT, state officials, our Public Works Director, Committee member Peter G. Vigue and myself as Town Manager. We ranked and then chose the #1 firm. MaineDOT and I will be going over their proposal with the Request for Qualifications issued, discuss the proposal, how it matches the State's requirements and then will have a recommendation for the Town Council. We are planning for the next Town Council Meeting if at all possible, but if not, then the first meeting in February 2023. The Town Manager advised that MaineDOT's rules do not allow the information to be shared at this point, however, once the process is completed, the information will be available. It is very good news though that everyone who attended the meeting agreed on the firm.

B. Freedom of Access Training

The Town Manager reviewed the handout from the State of Maine in the Councilor's package titled "Training for Elected Officials on Maine's Freedom of Access Law" regarding public records and public proceedings. Ms. Ruth explained that the State law requirements need to be met for the training for newly elected Councilors and this would also serve as a refresher course for the returning Councilors. The training would provide instruction on (1) the general legal requirements regarding public records and public proceedings; (2) the procedure and requirements regarding complying with a request for a public record; and (3) the penalties and other consequences for failure to comply with the law. The Town Manager reviewed the General Questions and Answers contained in the training materials; public records and public proceedings. At the close of the training, the Town Councilors signed the certification of training and turned those in to the Town Manager for the official record.

4. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

5. REPORTS:

- A. Council Committees: Finance, Ordinance and Recycling
- B. Board/Committee Updates by Town Councilors and Manager

C. Town Manager's Report

A. Council Committees: Finance, Ordinance and Recycling

Finance Committee – No Report; Ordinance Committee – No Report; and Recycling Committee – The Town Manager reported that the committee will begin meeting in January 2023.

B. Board/Committee Updates by Town Councilors and Manager

Due to the holidays, no meetings were scheduled since the last Council Meeting. There will be an informational session for the Planning Board to include Freedom of Access training in the near future.

B. Town Manager's Report

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT FOR 01/03/2023: A FORMAL REPORT WAS NOT AVAILABLE DUE TO END OF YEAR AND HOLIDAYS

The Town Manager advised there is no official Town Manager's Report as we have been working non-stop on the end of the year processes since the last Council meeting. The fiscal year was closed for 12/31/2022 and confirmation was received that the backup was created and that the successful closing of the control accounts for the budget and revenue and subsidiary accounts took place. The fiscal year turned over to 2023 and all looked good. Unfortunately, when we went back into the financial program, we were denied access and the drop down menu disappeared. The computer screen went to computer language. The vendors are working with us. So far it has taken a day to get to the right people at Logically to gain access to the server for Harris.

At this point, we can process vehicle registration although there are malfunctions with uploading the files to the state. We do not have access to the budget or financial data. We can assist customers at the counter for auto registrations and regular cash receipting. I did make copies as I processed the end of the year postings so if we have to re-create items, I do have them but the backup to the server should work.

We had been able to issue the water and sewer bills for all books. The Town Manager advised that the tax issue continues with numerous accounts posting payment to interest in years in which interest is not due. We have a record of these and are working on them.

The vast majority of the vendor bills were processed but we were unable to complete the last several warrants when the budgetary system went down so there will be more bills to review. These bills will need to be reviewed next week with the Town Councilors coming to the Town Office in between the meetings to sign the warrants. I am available all the time as many Councilors know from coming in the evening and on the weekends in the past.

6. OLD BUSINESS:

7. NEW BUSINESS:

ORDER 23-03: Ordered that the Mayor appoint from among the Councilors a Finance Committee, an Ordinance Committee and a Fair Hearing Authority consisting of three (3) members each and a Police Labor Negotiating Committee consisting of two (2) Councilors and the Town Manager.

Moved by Councilor Hall and seconded by Councilor Donahue to set Order 23-03 to discussion.

For Finance Committee, the following Councilors showed interest and a Roll call was taken to determine the three Councilors to be appointed to the Committee:

Councilor Jester: 6 votes in favor, 0 opposed, Jester abstained.

Councilor Donahue: 2 voted in favor (Frost and Margolskee), 4 votes nay (Hall, Saucier, Jester and Cianchette), Donahue abstained.

Councilor Hall: 5 voted in favor (Saucier, Jester, Cianchette, Frost and Margolskee), 1 vote nay (Donahue), Hall abstained.

Councilor Saucier: 5 votes in favor (Jester, Cianchette, Frost, Margolskee, Cianchette), 1 vote nay (Donahue), Saucier abstained.

The Mayor declared Councilors Hall, Saucier and Jester appointed to the Finance Committee.

The other Committees did not have additional people interested beyond the number needed, therefore they were not contested.

After roll calls, the Mayor declared the 2023 Council Committees as follows:

Finance Committee: Councilor Hall, Councilor Saucier and Councilor Jester.

Ordinance Committee: Councilor Frost, Deputy Mayor Margolskee and Mayor Cianchette

Fair Hearing Committee: Councilor Jester, Councilor Donahue and Deputy Mayor Margolskee

Labor Negotiating Committee: Deputy Mayor Margolskee, Councilor Donahue and Town Manager Ruth

The Mayor took a question from the audience. Jan Laux wanted to know if people from the public can serve on these Committees in addition to the Council. The Mayor explained that these were Council Committees so no, however, that there were other committees that people can serve on.

RESOLUTION 23-01: Resolved that the Town Council appoint Kathryn Ruth as Official Representative, Councilor _____ as Official Representative and Councilor _____ as Alternate to the General Assembly for the Kennebec Valley Council of Governments (KVCOG).

Moved by Councilor Donahue and seconded by Deputy Mayor Margolskee to set Resolution 23-01 to discussion.

The Mayor volunteered to serve as the Official Representative and Councilor Donahue volunteered to serve as Alternate Representative for KVCOG.

Motion passed with all votes in favor by roll call.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

RESOLUTION 23-02: Resolved that the Town Council appoint _____ as the Alternate Representative to the General Assembly for the Kennebec Regional Development Authority (KRDA) also known as FirstPark.

Moved by Councilor Donahue and seconded by Deputy Mayor Margolskee to set Resolution 23-02 to discussion.

The Mayor volunteered to serve as the Alternate for the KRDA General Assembly.

Motion passed with all votes in favor by roll call.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

RESOLUTION 23-03: Resolved that the Town Council appoint _____ as an Alternate to the Maine Services Center Coalition in addition to the Town Manager.

Moved by Deputy Mayor Margolskee and seconded by Councilor Hall to set Resolution 23-03 to discussion.

Councilor Hall volunteered to serve as the Alternate to the Maine Services Center Coalition.

Upon a roll call vote, the motion passed 6-1-0.

VOTE: AYE by Cianchette, Margolskee, Saucier,
Donahue, Frost and Jester.

VOTE: NAY by Hall

RESOLUTION 23-04: Resolved that the Town Council sign the expense warrants upon recommendation of the Finance Committee for the year 2023.

Moved by Councilor Donahue and seconded by Deputy Mayor Margolskee to adopt Resolution 23-04.

The Town Manager advised that the Town was fortunate that under the Town Charter and the Administrative Code that the Town Council is able to approve expense warrants at meetings and in between meetings with the recommendation of the Finance Committee by two members signing the expense warrant. Four signatures are required for approval of the expense warrants. This allows approval between meetings so that payment can be made.

Motion passed with all votes in favor by roll call.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

RESOLUTION 23-05: Resolved that the Town Council sign the Certificate of Commitment for Sewer User Rates and Water User Rates during the year 2023.

The Town Manager advised that this does not address setting rates. It allows the Certificate of Commitment to be signed at the meeting and in between the meetings and allows the Town to place liens if necessary under the State Law for non-payment.

Moved by Deputy Mayor Margolskee and seconded by Councilor Hall to adopt Resolution 23-05.

Motion passed with all votes in favor by roll call.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

RESOLUTION 23-06: Resolved that the Town Council authorize the Town Manager to hire Independent Review(s) and execute all paperwork for Airport Grants for the Year 2023 as necessary in accordance with the Town's Bid Policy, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulations and the Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT) regulations.

Moved by Councilor Hall and seconded by Councilor Frost to adopt Resolution 23-06

It was discussed that this protects the Town in case MaineDOT is unable to provide an Independent Review when a grant opportunity arises quickly. It can be viewed as insurance in case needed.

Motion passed with all votes in favor by roll call.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

RESOLUTION 23-07: Resolved that the Town Council sign the Earth Day Proclamation supporting community-wide activities (Earth Day is Saturday, April 22, 2023).

Moved by Deputy Mayor Margolskee and seconded by Councilor Hall to adopt Resolution 23-07.

Motion passed with all votes in favor by roll call.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

RESOLUTION 23-08: Resolved that the Town Council sign the Arbor Day Proclamation supporting community-wide activities (National Arbor Day is the last Friday in April: Friday, April 28, 2023) and Maine's Arbor Day Week is the 3rd full week in May: Sunday, May 21 – Saturday, May 27, 2023.

Moved by Councilor Hall and seconded by Deputy Mayor Margolskee to adopt Resolution 23-08.

Motion passed with all votes in favor by roll call.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

8. REPORTS: DEPARTMENTS AND FINANCIAL: N/A

9. REPORTS: Audience, Council

Audience: No comments.

Councilors:

Councilor Donahue: Glad to be back. Stated she plans to be an active participant. Glad to be on the warm side of the room so she does not need a blanket.

Councilor Frost: Heard from some of the citizens who are concerned about the magnitude of the Library Budget, there is concern with this in Town. Asked if the airport project was being built to federal specs. Wanted to know when the Airport Hangar project will be shutting down (TM advised federal specifications were being followed and the airport project is shutting down now due to the weather. It was an open winter so projects in Town have continued longer than usual.

Councilor Hall: Hopes it will be another year of positive movement.

Councilor Jester: Welcomed new Councilors. Would like to continue the momentum built last year.

Councilor Saucier: Welcome to the new Councilors. Would like to thank Donnie and the Public Works crew for being responsive patching the side of the Higgins Road in the rain. The department was protecting the Town's asset.

Deputy Mayor Margolskee: Inquired of the PFAS test results which if it does not meet the standards, the results must be provided to the citizens. Asked if all open positions are listed on the website. Inquired whether we had a Health Officer. Happy that the Main Street project is on again. Glad to be back (TM advised she thought the testing was fine but will contact Olver Associates for a copy of the results; advised that all open positions that she can advertise are on the website. Noted that we do not have a Health Officer, however, Donnie continues to assist and the CEO has been addressing items).

Mayor Cianchette: Thanked Mr. Smith and Mr. Therrien for coming to the meeting as he would like to continue the discussions on the theatre. Plans to work on the Charter Review. Reminded the Town Councilors that they were to create a budget spreadsheet to provide the Town Manager assistance in addressing the departments on what the Council wants for budget information.

10. ADJOURNMENT:

Moved by Councilor Hall and seconded by Deputy Mayor Margolskee to adjourn the meeting at 7:41 pm.

Motion passed with all votes in favor.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

Respectfully submitted,

Kathryn Ruth, 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.

