

# MINUTES

for a regular meeting of the Pittsfield Town Council, held on *Tuesday, November 01, 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 Jason Hall; Councilor Eric Saucier; Councilor Ronald Jester and Councilor Lindsay Holmstrom

Councilors Present by ZOOM: None

Councilors Absent: Councilor Brent Frost

Also Present: Town Manager Kathryn Ruth; Librarian Holly Williams, Public Works Director Don Chute; Representative Amanda Collamore; Pittsfield Economic Expansion Corporation President Timothy Nichols; Pittsfield Economic Expansion Corporation Vice-President Michael Gray; Jan Laux, Donna Laux, Howard Margolskee, Anna Brockis; Heather Donahue; Eric Glencross; Alan Dunphy; Alicia Nichols; Andi Vigue; Paul Faria; Ben Hall; Sylvia and Blake Kennedy; Emma Dorman; Peter Snow; Jennifer Watson; John Dow; Ray Berthelette; Don Woodruff; Jane Woodruff; Breanna Norris; Joel Greenwood; J. Michael LeBlanc; Ann Miller; and others.

Also Present by ZOOM: Denise Baker; Lyn Smith; Natalie Hall; Bangor Daily News; Michael Lynch; Brenda Russell; Gary and Bev Rollins; Heather Holland; and others.

## **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 October 18, 2022 and Budget Workshop held on October 18, 2022.

**Moved** by Deputy Mayor Logiodice and seconded by Councilor Hall to adopt the Minutes of the Regular Meeting on October 04, 2022 and Budget Workshop held on October 18, 2022.

Motion passed with all votes in favor.

**VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE**

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

### **A. Certificates and Ceremonies**

Presentation for Retirement of Harold "Pete" Bickmore

Representative Collamore read the Legislative Sentiment that she requested, wishes that she could have presented this in person, thanked Pete on his service to the Town and noted she will miss him.

**B. Discussion of Pittsfield Economic Expansion Corporation (PEEC), PEEC Financials/Funds; Board Member terms/Skills Matrix; Last 5 year accomplishments toward PEEC mission statement PEEC Bylaws requested by Councilor Hall; *TABLED to November 01, 2022***

Both PEEC President Timothy Nichols and Vice-President Michael Gray provided a brief comprehensive review of the Town's 501c3 economic development entity created by the Town to assist businesses to advance, to re-locate to Pittsfield and to help the community with economic and community development. The mission of PEEC was read. The group has worked on many projects over the years to include selling the former Tech Center that had been leased to Edwards and its successors to Cianbro; providing gap financing; endorsing projects for grants; selling land to Nitro which is in the process of expanding as well as other expansions. PEEC has identified large tracks of land that could be future subdivisions if people wished to sell; worked on the Cianbro Pittsfield Solar Project, Dunkin Donuts, Walgreens Store, Pittsfield Video, Cheese Festival and countless other projects. New projects are Welcome Signing to Town and put in charge of selling the theatre. They recently vetted a project for the theatre and recommended approval to the Town Council. The Council chose to go another direction which is their prerogative. Since all the lots in the Industrial Park and Park expansion have been sold, they are now working on some new projects. A particular important one is getting the video out to the world with obtaining pricing for television ads. Looking forward to seeing the former Land Air Building filled which is in progress. Nitro is using the former GE Building in the Industrial Park. It takes time for projects to come to fruition and the Directors are here to help the community and businesses.

Councilor Holmstrom questioned the bylaws and how they are interpreted. She wants to know how the directors are appointed. Mr. Gray explained that initial appointments are made by the Town Council and the Board also votes in the Directors. This is not required as PEEC can appoint their own members, however, it is done so that everyone works together. Basically, former Councilors are appointed to PEEC as they are familiar with how the Council works and how to bring projects forward having the knowledge and background.

Howard Margolskee questioned the impetus for founding PEEC. He advised that at least one economic development committee has not met for years. Vice-President Gray explained that the Pittsfield Development Corporation has been in existence for years and it was commented that it is separate from the Town. PEEC is connected to the Town as it is the Town's economic development entity. It was explained that the economic development team is on the books of the Town as are other groups such as the Theatre Committee. There may need to be a review and cleanup of the committee listing.

Heather Donahue clarified with more information that the economic development group being referred to is a team, it is not a committee of the Town and not a Council committee. PEEC is in the Town's Economic Development Plan. It is separate from the Town as it is a 5013 entity that is eligible for separate funding that the Town is not eligible for.

Jane Woodruff wanted to know the qualifications for the Directors. Vice-President Gray stated that the Town Manager put together a listing of the directors' qualifications which was available this evening as a handout. The Town Manager advised that it is also on the Town website.

A. Community and Economic Development Activities and Events

1. Projects and Grants:

- a. Planning Initiative Program Update
- b. Main Street Sidewalk Project
- c. Route #11/10 (Route 100) and Main Street Highway Construction/Rehabilitation
- d. Main Street Sidewalk Project Community Development Block Grant Funding; Northern Border Regional Commission Grant; Project Canopy Grants; and multiple smaller grant projects

- e. Main Street Sewer Main Rehabilitation Project including DEP American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Grant Funding
- f. Airport Grants
- g. Many other smaller Grant Opportunities

The Town Manager updated the Town Council on the Planning Initiative Program as the Request for Proposals had been issued on various websites which focused on qualifications. A copy of the RFP has been made available to over 90 consultants from a list of authorized consultants to work on MaineDOT funded projects. There have been questions and answers for details on the RFP from a couple of consultants as well as standard questions about the Main Street project. The due date for the proposals is next week. At that point, the materials will be packaged up and there will be a kick off meeting for the project with the Committee to be discussed later this evening on the agenda. She advised that the grant projects are doing well with multiple reimbursement requests in process.

#### **4. PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

**ORDINANCE 22-10:** That the Town Council hereby Ordains that Chapter 2B General Assistance Ordinance and Appendices A-I be rescinded and the new Chapter 2B General Assistance Ordinance be adopted and further that Appendices A-I be adopted to reflect the revised maximums for the period of October 1, 2022 – September 30, 2023.

**Moved** by Deputy Mayor Logiodice and seconded by Councilor Hall to approve Ordinance 22-10.

Motion passed with all votes in favor.

**VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE**

#### **5. REPORTS:**

- A. Council Committees: Finance, Ordinance and Recycling
- B. Board/Committee Updates by Town Councilors and Manager
- C. Town Manager's Report plus:
  - Encumbrance of Funds under Town Charter
- D. Councilor Requests:
  - 1. Suspending the Town Charter requested by Councilor Hall
  - 2. Town Library budget follow up first thing due to numerous emails received regarding closing the library and community responses by Councilor Holmstrom
  - 3. CEO update on each property from the spreadsheet by Councilor Holmstrom
  - 4. Discuss Fixed asset list and any opportunities to liquidate items owned by the town to help offset costs for 2023 by Councilor Holmstrom
  - 5. PPI & Main street project committee kick off plan by Councilor Holmstrom
  - 6. Overtime rates by dept on payroll as of the last pay period by Councilor Holmstrom
  - 7. Grant information of the town including Library and other depts that may have received 2021/2022 grants and amounts by Councilor Holmstrom

#### **A. Council Committees:**

The Finance Committee and Ordinance Committee reported that they had not met. The Town Manager advised that the Recycling Committee will be starting up meetings in January of 2023.

B. Committee Updates by Town Councilors and Manager:

The Town Manager reported that the Planning Board and Recreation Committee had been moved to the Departments Monthly Achievement Reports. Neither committee has met so a report was not needed. The Planning Board has received two cell tower applications, therefore, will be meeting in late November – December when a meeting can be scheduled.

C. Town Manager’s Report

**TOWN MANAGER’S REPORT FOR 11/01/2022:**

**STREAMLINED VERSION FOR TOWN COUNCIL**

As we are now entering the budget period at the Council Meetings, the TM Reports will target only the most important information and be quite short!

1. Request for Proposals for Consultant Services: The Town did not receive any bids or proposals for this project. KVCOG is interested, however, staff just did not have enough time to put together a proposal. The project will be re-bid.

2. Request for Proposals for Document Scanning and Record Management System: Two proposals were received with pricing from \$147,707.75 up. This was an exploratory bid only for information.

3. Request for Proposals for a Town-wide Reappraisal: The Town did not receive any bids. Our assessing consultant did have one but was just too busy given that similar to many companies, the assessing consultant has lost staff.

4. Open Positions Recruitment:

Updated for Week of 11/01/2022:

Position	Vacancy	Status
Police Chief	1	First interviews held; second to be scheduled when applicants are available.
Police Officers	2	Multiple avenues pursued; extensive competition in the State for positions.

Just hired and/or gave offers pending background checks for 3 positions in Highway and Recycling; revamped the jobs in the office with the current direction.

5. Swimming Pool Cover: The cover arrived in mid-October, 2022. Rain and scheduling have precluded putting it on the pool. The cover is scheduled to be placed on the pool on November 3, 2022 now that the rain is hopefully over with and the pool is drawn down to the proper level.

6. 2022 Paving Program: Northeast Paving continues to place binder after reclaim and grading. The majority of the Spring Road was paved over the weekend. The company is working on Mount Road to then head to the Webb Road and then to finish up with Bean’s Corner and Powers Road.

7. Code Enforcement Status:

Al Tempesta is now serving as our Code Enforcement Officer with office hours on Tuesday and Friday afternoons from 12:30 pm – 5:00 pm, When he can, he drops by on Mondays after work if there are items. So this is basically up to 10 hours a week. We are watching the time to try to help people but also work on priorities

### 8. Purchasing Requirements:

The Town's regulations and how purchasing takes place within those requirements was placed in the Town Council Package. I spoke with the Town Attorney again to find that the opinion remains the same as that which has been received over the years. The Town passed a strict charter years ago to protect the Town's funds and was enacted back when most people did not have a credit card. I understand that this is a pain but it is the current regulation. I have looked around Town and found that the gift cards look to be readily available at a local store so I can purchase those again.

The Town Manager reviewed the Codes Violations listing update put together through 11/01/2022. She advised that Al Tempesta is back with the Town taking over building, plumbing and code enforcement on an interim basis. We have basically 9-10 hours a week for everything. Several properties have had positive steps forward in October with the Town Manager mentioning the Webb Road, Peltoma Avenue, corner of Lancey/Peltoma, Mill Court, Main Street by the back entrance of the Industrial Park, Quonset Hut front exterior and North Main Street Former Redemption Center. Next projects now that Al Tempesta, a certified and qualified Code Enforcement Officer is back, is to proceed forward to court with the Washington Street property as well as review and issue appropriate letters for the garage on Main/Easy Street and Carriage Estates; and inspect Somerset Avenue to determine if enough corrections have been completed to negate any further action by the Town.

Councilor Holmstrom asked that we move forward on the Library and table her other requests to the next meeting.

1. Suspending the Town Charter requested by Councilor Hall
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5. PPI & Main street project committee kick off plan by Councilor Holmstrom
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The Mayor moved forward to the discussion on the Town Library and invited everyone to stay for the budget session later in the evening. Mayor Cianchette asked everyone to keep their comments to under 1.5 minutes.

Mayor Cianchette asked Librarian Williams to review the materials she provided to the Town Manager which were placed in the Council package they received for this meeting. Mrs. Williams responded that she does not think she should be talking, it should be the citizens of the Town who came out tonight to speak in favor of their library.

Ben Hall asked for clarification as he was not at the last meeting. He understood and would like to verify that there have not been any official proposals made. The Council is just reviewing each budget as they do each year, looking for avenues to save money if the funds are not being used effectively. He asked if his understanding was correct that no decisions have been made.

The Mayor verified that all of his comments were correct. There will be little if any tax increase from the budget as is. He stated that the Library is not being singled out.

Members of the audience spoke including the following individuals: Howard Margolskee, Sylvia and Blake Kennedy, Emma Dorman, Peter Snow, Jennifer Watson, John Dow, Ray Berthelette, Heather Donahue, Andi Vigue; Don Woodruff, Ann Miller, and Breanna Norris. Comments included the following:

- that the Librarian does an amazing job with the budget and programming;
- this is one of the best turnouts for a meeting;
- each budget needs to be reviewed;
- the amount of money for books is the same as in 2002, 20 years later at \$16,500 while everything has gone up;
- supports not cutting hours and staff as Saturdays are important;
- more hours on Saturday are needed;
- library is a safe place;
- students learn reading and the Dewey decimal system at the library so it is educational;
- library is a wonderful neighbor;
- the library got a grant for culture to supplement the budget;
- loves budgets as they tell you what you value;
- advised what a former community of residency was doing with cuts which resulted in many people leaving so please learn from this and do not cut the library funding; community health is affected by Fire, Police, Library and Schools; the library is a building block of the community;
- uses the library and it is comfortable being similar to the library where she grew up;
- advised to look at who uses the library – many walks of life and it has many functions;
- need to extend the hours; get more audio books; if the internet is down, goes to the library; it is a warming center for the community which will be important given what is coming this winter with high heating costs;
- Remembered 25 years ago when it was thought that with the digital age that libraries would become irrelevant however, that is not the case – libraries have maintained services while adapting to the digital world;
- Optics of closing the library are bad; need to keep it open.
- add funds to the library so it can grow.

**6. OLD BUSINESS: N/A**

**7. NEW BUSINESS:**

**RESOLUTION 22-102:** Resolved that the Town Council waive the Bid Policy, Chapter 2, Administrative Code, Section 106, to accept the bid from Harmony Home Décor for \$11,749.17 for new flooring and stair runners for the Police Station, such cost to be paid for from the 2022 Capital Budget Allocation - Police Floors.

**Moved** by Deputy Mayor Logiodice and seconded by Councilor Hall to adopt Resolution 22-102.

Motion passed with all votes in favor.

**VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE**

**RESOLUTION 22-103:** Resolved that the Town Council approve a renewal application for a liquor license for the Seabasticook Valley Lodge of Elks at 140 Middle Street, Pittsfield Maine 04967.

**Moved** by Deputy Mayor Logiodice and seconded by Councilor Hall to adopt Resolution 22-103.

Motion passed with all votes in favor.

**VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE**

**RESOLUTION 22-104:** Resolved that the Town Council approve a renewal application for a Special Amusement Permit for the Seabasticook Valley Lodge of Elks at 140 Middle Street, Pittsfield, Maine 04967.

**Moved** by Deputy Mayor Logiodice and seconded by Councilor Hall to adopt Resolution 22-104.

Motion passed with all votes in favor.

**VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE**

**RESOLUTION 22-105:** Resolved that the Town Council appoint Kate Russell to fill the vacancy on the Library Trustees.

**Moved** by Deputy Mayor Logiodice and seconded by Councilor Hall to adopt Resolution 22-105.

Librarian Holly Williams explained that this appointment will fill a vacancy created when a former Trustee moved out of Town.

Motion passed with all votes in favor.

**VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE**

## **8. DISCUSSION ITEMS: N/A**

## **9. REPORTS:**

Audience:

Eric Glencross: Requested that Seabasticook Street be paved (TM noted that due to its condition it was a priority, however, there are reported sewer problems so we do not want to grind and pave the road only to dig up the sewer later on, likely it will be on a future paving list after the sewer is looked at. Noted this is the same situation with the section of Lancey Street by the school. There is an issue under the road which looks wet but we are told it is not the water system so it needs to be addressed before we pave it).

Andi Vigue: Supports the effort to reclaim that is taking place for the country roads. This is the only way to fix them properly. Inquired as to the shoulders on the side of the road that are higher than the road surface which need to be graded (TM advised that the Public Works Director is working on options. There was a discussion on whether the work was in the contract or not which is under review. There had been no issues in the past when the specs were used. This will be resolved). Recommended that if the Town does have any fixed assets such as property that can be sold that it happens. (TM noted that the Council has looked at this four times now and decided to not to go forward in having a legal review of two properties that could be sold however do not have a right of way. There is a legal issue with the Town selling properties this way. It was suggested to

just offer it to the neighbors. TM will check further on the requirements for selling these lots. The Mayor noted that there may be a law involved with what the Town can do in these cases).

Alan Dunphy: Stated he likes his quarterly tax bills and asked when we will be back on schedule (TM advised that we are now back on schedule and briefly explained the two issues that had happened – the water meters moved between properties which were identified mostly in Book 6 which shut down the system and was a problem in issuing bills for that area. Then the Town went through a software conversion as we would not have any support without moving to the new version of the municipal software. The Town is starting the quarterly schedule this month. Noted that like taxes, the Town has been emphasizing that anyone can make a payment that will go toward their account during the year).

Anna Brokis: Would like to know why the Town has taxes due at the end of the year when there are so many other costs? Why not earlier? (TM stated this was a good question. The Town is on the calendar year so expenses take place all year and then the taxes are paid at the end of the year. It would be good to have part of the funds earlier, however, to do this everyone will have to pay ½ of the bill 6 months earlier. So in this type of economy, it would be a hardship for many people to pay their taxes early in order to go to 2 payments a year. This should be done in good economic times. Encouraged people to join the tax club and explained it. Also noted that everyone can make payments on their taxes during the year so that they can spread out their payments).

Amanda Collamore: Thanked all the businesses and people, Amy from the PD and Jeff from Northern Light for the donations received for the Trunk or Treat event.

Heather Donahue: Encouraged everyone to stay for the Budget workshop on the Library. She conducted some research on the issue of the Town Charter and encouraged the Councilors to follow the guidance of the Town Attorney who should rely on the law. Her review showed that there are two ways to change the Town Charter and that there is no quick process to do so. She then briefly reviewed the process and indicated that after all the steps are followed which are designed to take a long period of time, the revisions have to be approved by the State of Maine. She noted that the community needs to be involved and that this is a process that needs to be thoughtfully done. It is not a process that would take place in the Council Chambers.

Councilors:

Councilor Hall: Thanked everyone for coming out. Believes this is the fullest the room has been since he came on the Town Council. Indicated that what was in the newspaper he pretty much said, the comments were fairly accurate. He was throwing out ideas to make sure items were the right size. He doesn't want to spend wrong. Advised they are looking at everything and want to hold every department accountable. The library was just number one on the Budget Workshop list. Probably should put more money in the budget for the library and increase the hours. Hopes they stay for the budget process.

Councilor Saucier: Wish it was this full every meeting, wish we had a bigger chamber. When something matters, people turned out. He struggles in his own life, must be consistent, wants to put constant pressure on this to be right. Stated they put out fires. He doesn't want to lose track of what is important. He wants people to come, wants to make a budget that is valuable, a budget that can actually hold its weight. Wants to make the budget be what is important and matters to the community. Will not put his name on a budget that is wrong with bad information. The numbers need to be right. Need to use every dollar in the budget. The police department, the fire department, the recreation department and the library are valuable.



Need the right money in the right bucket. Advised that his town e-mail address does not work and provided his council e-mail address.

Councilor Jester: Noted it is amazing to be part of a community in which people show up when something matters to them. Looking forward to the budget session as that is his favorite part of the meeting. Thanked everyone for attending.

Deputy Mayor Logiodice: Congratulated the Chief on his retirement. Thanked everyone who came. Noted that during the previous budget session his comments were misinterpreted or misrepresented by the Bangor Daily News. He stated that he did not state that the hours should be cut on Saturdays.

Councilor Frost: Absent.

Councilor Holmstrom: Thanked Representative Collamore for the presentation for the chief. Thanked everyone who came. Stated it is powerful to have everyone here. Will be discussing the budget later this evening and looking forward to discussing the library. There are not always discussions on adding money but this is a good thing to do and can provide an opportunity for the Library to grow.

Mayor Cianchette: Thanked everyone for showing up, whether it is polarizing or not, he wants everyone to show up. Means a lot that Representative Collamore got the legislative sentiment for the chief and thanked her. Hopes that he can attend to receive it. Saw the Quonset hut being worked on. Happy to see all of the road work which he advised is the product of the nights that we are here discussing items. Explained the budget process. Stated that we do not pick out favorites, Holly's was the first budget that came up. The Library is a jewel in the crown. Nothing is personal in the budget process, we do not pick apart any department. He encouraged everyone to stay. One week from today we vote, and asked everyone to do so.

In reference to a question asked about the last day for early voting, the Town Manager advised that there will be a statement placed on the front page of the website.

## **10. ADJOURNMENT:**

**Moved** by Deputy Mayor Logiodice and seconded by Councilor Hall to adjourn the meeting at 8:32 pm.

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.*

