

MINUTES

for a regular meeting of the Pittsfield Town Council, held on Tuesday, August 18, 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 Gray and Town Auditor Bill Hall from RHR Smith & Company

ZOOM: Librarian Holly Williams

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

2. **ADOPTION OF MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING HELD ON August 4, 2020.**

Moved by Councilor Billings and seconded by Deputy Mayor Bolster that the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held on August 4, 2020 and the Budget Workshop held on August 11, 2020 be adopted.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

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

A. Presentation by the Town Auditor Bill Hall of RHR Smith & Company on the Audit for the period ending 12/31/2019

Town Auditor Bill Hall indicated the Town has received an unqualified opinion again this year which is the one that you would want. This is on Pages 2-3 which are the most important pages of the audit where the Auditor forms and states their opinion. He then referred to the MD&A which is the only place where the Town can put information into the audit. This is the management discussion with information from the administrator on pages 4-19. The Auditor reviewed the more important parts of the Audit which are Statement C on Page 23 for the Balance Sheet; the Revenue and Expenses for the year in Statement E on Page 25; and the Committed Fund Balance for projects and improvements on Page 50. He noted that the Town has a healthy fund balance. The Fund Balance was \$3.85 million with \$2.5 committed and \$150,000 assigned which leaves an Unassigned Fund Balance of approximately \$1,184,285. In 2018 it was \$3.4 million so the fund balance increased \$450,000 mostly due to increased revenues and less spending. Pages 27-29 show the Proprietary Funds which are the two Enterprise funds – Water and Sewer. Sewer's Net Position was \$3.4 million and Water's was \$3.1 million, up from last year with Sewer at \$3.1 million and Water was approximately the same. These are operated like a business. The Notes to the Financial Statements were mentioned including a discussion on Infrastructure, Depreciation, Long-term Outstanding Debt, Non-Major Funds, Special Revenue and the five Permanent Funds. The Auditor noted that the Town has many Special Revenues. Although we received a lot of funding, the Town was not required to have a federal audit this year. Much of the funding that the Town receives are state funds, water and USDA funds. He stated that the Town is very healthy and is looking good. The Auditor advised that it is great to receive all of these funds and that Kathryn does well with the paperwork and it is always in order. There was a brief management letter that noted two minor items. Kathryn explained that when the staff sent the reconciliations

to the Auditor that the individual took his extra copies that were not signed and forwarded them resulting in the Management letter noting that a few reconciliations were not signed. The Town Manager verified that all of the bank reconciliations are signed by a second party and can be verified in the official books in the office. Bill noted that this is very important. The Auditor concluded that the Town had a really good year.

B. Community and Economic Development Activities and Events

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

Business Activity:

Please remember to frequent all of our businesses in Town including our many new businesses with more to come. There seem to be some interesting items going on in Town so hopefully we will hear some good news on a project soon.

Town Website:

The Town Manager spoke with Gary Jordan, Jr. our prior webmaster who created the original Town website. He noted that it is hard to find items on the current website and pointed out that we need to clean up the front page. The Committee recommended that we have fewer tabs and less material on the website, however, now people state that they cannot find items. Everyone has different ideas which is fine. There seems to be a misconception that we do not have a good platform as that information was given to committee members. We have a great platform which is not being fully utilized by those who work on it. Our only limitation is how the pictures go on the site. The website can do a lot more than its current use. Looking at the different viewpoints on this, we will first update information and archive the older information that is needed. To streamline and update items, I am having the staff print off the pages of the website, we will mark them up and then make changes. We will start with Economic Development and then go through the entire website and update it. I had requested information be archived last year.

Main Street Sidewalk and MDOT Road Reconstruction Project:

A MaineDOT ZOOM meeting in the process of being scheduled

The State is looking to see if the Town wants or needs:

An esplanade which is the strip of grass between the roadway and sidewalk for safety and traffic calming. It does require maintenance. If it does not cause a problem with the road project, do you want one or not or does it matter?

Bump outs – are they needed? These are the areas where people can stand on the brick or concrete which also provide a landing pad cross roads.

There was a lengthy discussion about the project with the following preliminary recommendations:

The Town Council does not want an esplanade unless it will cause problems and undue hardship.

The Town Council would like the bump outs taken out if we are able to obtain more parking spaces.

The Town Manager will provide this information to the State to see how it will fit into the project and report back after the MaineDOT ZOOM monthly meeting.

Upcoming Events

The traditional Egg Festival Window Contest will be held in Downtown Pittsfield on Friday, August 21, 2020 from 8:00 am – 2:00 pm with judging from 2:00 pm – 3:00 pm. The rain date will be Friday, August 28, 2020 at the same time. Age groups are 5-9; 10-14; and 15-18. The theme will be: *Earth's Natural Wonders*.

4. PUBLIC HEARINGS/OLD BUSINESS: NONE

5. REPORTS:

A. COUNCIL COMMITTEES:

FINANCE: The Committee will meet on Tuesday, 08/25/2020.

ORDINANCE: The next meeting will be Tuesday, 09/08/2020.

RECYCLING: The next meeting is on Wednesday, 09/16/2020.

B. BOARD AND COMMITTEE UPDATES BY TOWN COUNCILORS AND MANAGER
Parks and Recreation Committee: The Committee met last Friday, August 14, 2020 at 5:00 pm. The group briefly discussing the Town website and placing information on it gathered by the Committee as recommended by the Town Manager as a first step in enhancing communication. The Committee then reviewed the Recreation Director's plan for Fall Sports and met with contact individuals from the sports leagues and schools. The Committee will provide options for sports activities for Fall from no sports to full sports activities for all schools. There was a discussion on how the information just released from the State basically has shut down most sports activities due to COVID-19.

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. We thank everyone for their ingenuity and support of not only the community, our businesses, our organizations and the Town, but also of each other. We have had great compliance here with the distancing. We appreciate the fact that so many people wear masks when coming to the offices.

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. Today, MCI has indicated that we cannot use their location which makes sense as we would be having over 2,000 people go to the school campus on one day when the students are there. We are now looking the Elks Lodge, which if available and meets state requirements for a polling location which would have extensive parking, be close to the Town Office if we needed items and if people went to the Town Office to vote not having seen a notice and extensive publicity that we would be conducting, may be able to walk over. There are requirements for the ballot boxes and early processing that are now under review. We are also looking at the Fire Station to see if that would be do-able. If the Elks Lodge and Fire Station are not do-able for a balloting location for November 3rd, then the polling location will be the Council Chambers. There are no other buildings in Town large enough with handicap accessibility that are not being used. The Town Clerk, EMA Director and anyone else needed to evaluate the sites 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. Once we have the location determined, this will then determine the staffing needed and whether we need to close down for Tuesday, November 03. The Town Office is closed regularly for Wednesday, November 04. There was a lengthy discussion with the conclusion that the Town will do what is necessary to have the most accessible location and to provide for staffing at the polls which may mean shutting down many Town Office functions on Election Day. Absentee balloting options will be highly publicized as people can mail or drop off their ballot or vote here in the Town Office easily.

3. Nomination Papers Available: READ Notice

4. Town Office RE-opening: Town Offices across the state fit under the Governor's Phase II opening of June 1, 2020. After the June 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 and 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.

As noted at the last Council Meeting, I had recommended after seeing another town's webpage that we create an on-line page. That has been done and it has its own button on the left side of the home 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 was pushed back to August 1, 2020 due to COVID-19. As of today, we have sold 1,013 transfer station stickers.

In order to obtain a resident's transfer station sticker, one obviously has to be a resident of the Town as noted on the approved transfer station fee schedule. We had been utilizing registrations to show one lives in Pittsfield, a license to show one lives in Pittsfield and if a resident does not have either, a bill or mail addressed to that individual at the address he/she lives at. We simply cannot issue a resident's transfer station sticker to non-residents who live in other towns and own land here without a dwelling on the property. This then allows those who live in other towns generating garbage in other towns to come to the Transfer Station bringing non-resident trash here. If someone owns just land and he/she wants to haul brush and clean up their property, they should be able to do so and that is why we issue a one day or week pass and have done so for over 2 decades. The data base that we are creating will be helpful as we will be able to renew stickers in November when we plan to start selling the 2021 stickers. We will be checking that data base for inconsistencies such as non-existent E911 numbers that are on licenses but do not exist on the road or are in another town with the residence listed as Pittsfield. The staff plan to bring a list of recommendations to the Council prior to selling the 2021 stickers to clarify situations that have developed.

8. Code Enforcement Violations: As the Town Council knows, those cases agreed upon earlier this year were forwarded to the Town Attorney who has prepared them to file when the courts open up. Cases like 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. One has ignored all attempts to resolve the issue after the first two agreements which were not met.

We received a letter from the attorney for the property owner at Map 28, Lot 51, Somerset Avenue which states that the property is being worked on and that the property owner has hired a contractor to finish the work to be completed within the next couple of months.

9. Pittsfield Summer Recreation Program: Swimming Lessons are officially over at the Paul E. Bertrand Community Swimming Pool. The last day for Open Swim is Friday, 08/28/2020. There is a little bit less than 2 weeks left to enjoy the pool!

10. Porta Potties: Worked well to date after the one incident 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. A good item with this setup is that the location can be open all the time for children playing and adults enjoying the park.

11. KVCOG Textile Recycling: The bins were dropped off last week labeled with the words Clothing and Shoes for the Textile Recycling. Items will be picked up by employees of Apparel Impact and either recycled or donated which removes the materials from the waste stream. After pickup, the materials will be sorted with those that are good enough being donated. Currently we have a Recycling Committee team

member driving up to the shelters in Bangor with donated clothing and efforts in the past to give bedding to Animal Shelters). Items to be recycled or re-used are: Clothing, bedding, towels, bags, purses, shoes and hats. We will be advertising this as well as the fact that the Recycling Trailer arrives back to the Municipal Parking Lot on Monday, August 24, 2020 at 8:00 am.

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. The cost was lower than the budget in total so this will leave funds for another project on the 2019 list which are Public Works orientated. The project was inspected by Public Works and meets the specs, so payment is on the warrant this evening.

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 was worked on and they will be back in the near future to work on the Town Offices after leaving for some emergency work.

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 for oversight and work. The official DEP forms were filed for Olver to be appointed the operator. Reports were filed for July 2020. The operations are being reviewed as well as updates to plans.

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. Olver Associates will then make a recommendation.

15. Highway/Water/Sewer/Transfer Station/Recycling Department Projects:

Paving & Preliminary Work:

Orders for culverts and materials were placed with the intent of Public Works to replace the necessary cross culverts on Higgins Road along with necessary ditching.

I issued the Letter of Work, Notice of Award and Contract to Pike Industries this week and was advised this morning that the company has ordered their bond and insurance certificate for the Town. Informal discussions between Public Works and Pike Industries was that the paving would start in September, likely the second week of September with the entire month of August for preliminary work on Higgins Road.

Hydrant Replacement

The hydrant on North Main Street will be replaced in September. There are four directions of traffic coming in by the area so we will be filing a plan for a detour on North Main Street to get this work done. Olver Associates will have a staff member available to assist with the project and other staff will assist.

The Main Street hydrants to be completed ahead of the Main Street Project will need to be planned. Olver Associates recommends doing the work next year to hire a contractor. Staff are looking at whether they would be able to hold another hydrant installation day. We are on busier streets.

Flushing of Hydrants will take place this Fall having been missed due to COVID-19. Flushing will be done in the same systematic process as last year with 2 flushings planned in 2021.

Bid Specs that Public Works will be working on include:

(a) Airport Cracksealing; (b) Manhole Cover/Device Replacement for Detroit Avenue so that the roadway can have its overlay Coat; and (c) Pintle Trailer. I will work on the Engineering for the Cost Estimates for Road Projects to assist the staff.

Transfer Station New Office: Meeting tomorrow regarding the scheduling of this project for the electricity to be disconnected hopefully this weekend or next weekend. Everything has been completed including a new box and as much wiring as possible.

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.

20 sides of vehicle and equipment needed to date for the new logo excluding the Transfer Station Waste Hauler that was just lettered and the 2 trucks for Water for their 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 climbs, we will execute the contracts for a multi-year contract. Signed the contract for the 23 electricity accounts last week for a reduction in supply cost of 11.2%. Best we have had for many years so this was really good.

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. This is being checked out as this is more than we applied for. We are also waiting for verification again if we can use the CARES funds for crack sealing as we were advised absolutely not and then when we went to our State CIP meeting, we were told that we could do so. With our reimbursement for the last Airport Grant for the engineering, the Town has over \$453,000 coming in for funding for the airport,

19. All Financial Projects: All financial projects on-going since we shut down for the pandemic with the many Requests for Proposals and all financial documents for the loan paperwork for the Capital Improvement Program Loan, Water/Sewer Truck, the Tax Anticipation Note, the 2019 Audit, several grant close-outs and the reconciliation for the on-line services can be boxed up. I need to get off financial projects for a while and work on regular business and a department's issues and then head to the budget.

6. NEW BUSINESS:

RESOLUTION 20-101: Resolved that the Town Council Waive the Bid Policy, Chapter 2. Administrative Code, Section 106. Regulation of Bids and Contracts to Authorize the Town Manager and Librarian to execute all paperwork and agreements for the 12 months of Annual Membership for Minerva-software and operational support for Minerva Library Management System at a cost of \$4,000.00.

Moved by Councilor Collamore to amend Resolution 20-101 to add "to be approved every year by the Librarian and the Town Manager as long as the cost does not increase by more than 10%."

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

Moved by Deputy Mayor Bolster and seconded by Councilor Billings that Resolution 20-101 be adopted as amended.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

RESOLUTION 20-102: Resolved that the Town Council Accept the bid of Snowman's Construction of St. Albans in the amount not to exceed \$14.00 per cubic yard for Winter Sand.

Moved by Councilor Collamore and seconded by Councilor Billings that Resolution 20-102 be adopted.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

RESOLUTION 20-103: Resolved that the Town Council accept the proposal of Realty of Maine (Michael Cole and Emma Cole) of Bangor in response to the Request For Proposals for Commercial Realtor Proposal dated July 22, 2020 as recommended by the Pittsfield Economic Expansion Corporation (PEEC).

Moved by Councilor Nichols and seconded by Councilor Collamore that Resolution 20-103 be adopted.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

7. DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- A. Department Reports for 07/31/2020
Accomplishments/ Achievements
- B. Financial Reports as of 07/31/2020
 - 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

The Town Manager advised of the following:

Budget Expenditure Report: 58.3% of period; 46.1% of municipal; 41.3% municipal, water & sewer (depreciation and transfers done by Auditor so percentage will increase)

Revenue Collections Report: 58.3% of period; 44.7% municipal; 43.0% municipal, water & sewer

Excise Tax Collections Comparison Report: For this period, we are +\$23,680.31 ahead of 2019 collections at this period of time.

State Revenue Sharing Comparison Report: For this period, +\$79,758.66 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: None

Council:

Mayor Donahue: We are going in a good direction with the Theatre and the Realtor will do a good job marketing it. Has talked with realtors and they are indicating that people want to get out of the urban areas and move to rural areas to find a hometown. After our budget workshop last week believes we need do some community planning and discussed some options. Glad to see the recycling bin coming back to the Municipal Building parking lot. Asked if we can use the Theatre Marque for messages such as "For Sale" and "Welcome Puritan", etc.? (TM: Once we have the realtor on board, we will obtain proposed advertising and have it put up. TM recommended business messages on the sides and the Theatre promotion on the front). On behalf of the Maine Cheese Guild I want to thank Kathryn and the Council for the letter to the Office of Tourism in support of the grant.

Deputy Mayor Bolster: Nothing further to add beyond all the comments tonight.

Councilor Nichols: Thanked Mike for coming in and giving us an update on having a realtor. Believes someone may come in from out of state to put the building to good use. Likes the idea of using the Fire Station for the election as it is going to be huge. COVID-19 throws a monkey wrench in it. The staff will do a good job with the Election. Believes people will be fine with having the office closed on Tuesday. Congratulated the Town Manager on the audit, considering that a lot of towns are really struggling and we are not. Thank you to Kathryn and all of the employees for doing that. We have the textile recycling box at the Transfer Station now. Glad they are making headway at the house on Somerset Ave. Commented that we have a lot of people in Town now. Confident once we get past the election cycle there will be a vaccine and things will get back to a semblance of normal. Thanks for all of the hard work folks and noted that the town is in good shape.

Councilor Collamore: Thanks to our auditor for coming and giving us an overview of the Town Audit. Thank you to Holly for being available to answer questions about Minerva. Thanked Mike for attending to give PEEC's recommendation for the realtor. Inquired how the paving will affect people coming into the Town Office (TM: We can have people come in and out another way for a short period of time if necessary. People can walk on gravel if needed. Pike can pave on a Wednesday when we are closed or Saturday).

Councilor Logiodice: No report.

Councilor Billings: Thank you to Auditor Bill Hall for his report. Thanks to Don Chute for all of his extra duties during the COVID. Thanks to the Recreation Department for making all of the right choices.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Councilor Billings and seconded by Councilor Nichols to adjourn at 8:32 PM.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

Kathryn Ruth, Deputy Town Clerk

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.