

GARDINER CITY COUNCIL MEETING
Wednesday December 16, 2015
Gardiner City Hall

Mayor Thom Harnett called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

Executive Session Pursuant to 1 MRSA 405(6)(C) – Real Estate (Libby Hill Business Park):

Motion Councilor Heath to enter into executive session; motion seconded by Councilor Berry. Motion carried 8-0.

Executive Session ended at 6:25 p.m. Mayor Harnett said that in executive session no decisions were reached and no motions made.

Roll Call:

Mayor Thomas Harnett, Councilors Terry Berry, Scott Williams, Richard Heath, Phil Hart, Maureen Blanchard, Patricia Hart, Jon Ault & Scott Williams. Also present were City Manager Scott Morelli and City Clerk Lisa Gilliam.

Consideration of CDBG Grant Amendment – Central Maine Meats:

City Manager Morelli gave a brief update on this agenda item. He said that Central Maine Meats has been working with the Maine Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) to acquire supplemental grant funding in order to complete employee training. If approved this would require an amendemndment to the CDBG Grant. Jennifer Wade from Central Maine Meats spoke briefly on the success of the business since it opened in Gardiner. Andrea Smith from DECD was also present to answer any questions the Council had; she stated that once the amendment is approved by the City the DECD will move forward with their grant for Central Maine Meats. A brief discussion followed. The Mayor said he was very pleased to have Central Maine Meats in Gardiner. Motion by Councilor Berry to approve the CDBG Grant Amendment; motion seconded by Councilor Patricia Hart. Motion carried by unanimous vote 8-0.

Ms. Smith also gave a brief update on the Lost Orchard Brewery. She said they have been following up with this business to make sure they have followed the agreement and as of this time they are in compliance.

PETITIONS, PUBLIC HEARINGS (Public comment for anything not on agenda):

Mayor Harnett opened up the meeting to public discussion. Dennis Doiran spoke briefly about tax credits that area available for residents which in turn would be helpful for property owners who have difficulty paying their real estate taxes. These tax credits are also available to those who don't have to file a tax return due to their low income. Mr. Doran would like to make this information available to the public by hosting a class sometime in January. He also encouraged a promotion of the Homestead Exemption which will increase over the next two years, this would also be of great assistance to struggling homeowners. Mayor Harnett suggested this topic be addressed by the City Manager to see if this could be promoted to the community.

Consent Agenda:

None.

New Business:

Second Read of Land Use Ordinance Changes:

Mayor Harnett opened the public hearing for this discussion. Planning Board Chair Debby Willis and CEO Barb Skelton were present to review the second read of the proposed changes. Mayor Harnett closed the public hearing. A brief discussion followed. Motion by Councilor Patricia Hart to approve the second read of the Land Use Ordinance changes; motion seconded by Councilor Phil Hart. Motion carried by unanimous vote 8-0.

Before leaving, Ms. Willis express her support for the TW Dick discussion that would be addressed towards the end of tonight's meeting.

Consideration of Sale of Lots at Libby Hill Business Park:

Manager Morelli reviewed this item with the City Council. Also present for the discussion was Patrick Wright from Gardiner Main Street. Discussion followed. Motion by Councilor Patricia Hart to authorize the City Manager to sign the purchase and sale agreement with Gardiner Transfer Company, LLC and with one condition being no per capita access fee for the City of Gardiner; motion seconded by Councilor Ault. Councilor Heath said he would not be voting on this item due to a personal conflict. Discussion followed. Mayor Harnett addressed some concerns that business owners within the park have in regards to these lots being sold to certain types of businesses. Motion carried 7-0, with Councilor Heath abstaining.

Public Hearing and Consideration of Applying for EPA Brownfield Clean-Up Grants:

Manager Morelli briefly reviewed the financial aspect of this item with the City Council. Mayor Harnett opened the Public Hearing. Nick Sabatine spoke about the clean-up grants that would have to be submitted. Mayor Harnett asked if there were any comments on this item from the public; with no further comments, Mayor Harnett closed the public hearing. Mayor Harnett said the City had received the grant amount that had been requested and said this project will be a wonderful addition to the City of Gardiner. Motion by Councilor Patricia Hart to authorize the City Manager to apply for the clean-up grants from Brownsfield; motion seconded by Councilor Heath. Motion carried by unanimous vote 8-0.

Consideration of Library Reorganization Proposal:

Manager Morelli gave a review of the three scenarios that he and Librarian Ann Davis came up with during these discussions. Manager Morelli and Librarian Davis recommend scenario #1 which would save \$25,394 in the current library budget; the Library Board would also recommend this scenario. Mayor Harnett thanked Manager Morelli, Librarian Davis and Finance Director Denise Brown who worked together on this reorganization proposal. Discussion followed. Librarian Davis gave a brief review on how scenario #1 will affect the daily library operations. Ms. Davis said they would also be able to have an intern available to them through the University of Maine Augusta, which will be a benefit to the library. Discussion continued. Dennis Doiran, from the Library Board, spoke on the changes that will be implemented. He said he feels it is a minimal amount of savings and although he understands the concerns of the Council, he feels that the library is already limited in their budget. Councilor Blanchard had questions about the use of different rooms and services at the Library and how many people use their services; she also expressed concern with the fees paid by neighboring communities as opposed to the cost to Gardiner residents. Discussion continued. Mayor Harnett called for a motion and said that the budget discussion is not part of this agenda item. Motion by Councilor Patricia Hart to approve scenario #1 as presented by the City Manager and Librarian Davis; motion seconded by Councilor Berry. Motion carried by unanimous vote 8-0. Librarian Davis extended an invitation to all of the City Council to spend time at the Library and see the benefits and services provided by the Gardiner Library on a daily basis. Councilor Patricia Hart asked to have Librarian Davis come back to the Council in a few months and brief them on how the reorganization is doing. Mayor Harnett also thanked the City Manager, Librarian and the Finance Director for working together to come up with a solution to the Council's request.

Consideration of Library Partner Community Fees:

Motion by Councilor Patricia Hart to table this item to the next City Council meeting; motion seconded by Councilor Phil Hart. Motion carried by unanimous vote 8-0.

*Meeting was adjourned for a break at 8:00 p.m.
Meeting called back to order at 8:05 p.m.*

Consideration of Applying for Fire Truck Grant and Determination of City's Match:

Manager Morelli and Fire Chief Al Nelson reviewed this item with the Council. Fire Chief Nelson said the vehicle in question did not pass the most recent tests that are required for this equipment. Chief Nelson then reviewed the process in applying for this type of grant. Discussion followed. Manager Morelli review the timeline and costs for this purchase. Fire Chief Nelson also note the safety concerns. Motion by Councilor Ault to authorize the Fire Chief and City Manager to apply for the grant for a new fire engine to include a \$200,000 match from the City; motion seconded by Councilor Berry. Motion carried by unanimous vote 8-0.

Update on Code Complaints and Consideration of Action:

CEO Barb Skelton reviewed the various properties which she has been actively pursuing so they will be in compliance with the city ordinance. Fire Chief Nelson, who has been working with the CEO on some of these properties, spoke on the original safety concerns that have since been addressed by the property owners. CEO is asking the City Council to allow her to continue working with these property owners to ensure the clean up process continues. Discussion followed. Robbie Chadwick, who lives adjacent to one of the properties being discussed addressed his concerns with the condition of that said property and he stated that he would like to see it cleaned up due to the impact it has on his property. Manager Morelli said that legal council may be needed to pursue the clean up of some of these properties and if that were to happen it would require action from the City Council. Discussion followed. Motion by Councilor Phil Hart to authorize the City Manager to retain legal council to resolve the property issues as presented, motion seconded by Councilor Patricia Hart. Motion carried by unanimous vote 8-0.

Consideration of an Automobile Graveyard, Automobile Recycling Business and/or Junkyard Permit for Brown's Exit 27 Salvage, Inc:

Manager Morelli reviewed the report from the CEO and Fire Chief, who both are pleased with the condition of the property and said they will maintain inspections of the property. Mr. Brown was present and spoke briefly on the progress he is making with the property. A brief discussion followed. Motion by Councilor Berry to issue the Junkyard Permit to Brown's Exit 27 Salvage; motion seconded by Councilor Ault. Motion carried by unanimous vote 8-0.

Consideration of Use of Fund Balance to Purchase New Truck:

Manager Morelli and Public Works Director Tony LaPlante were present and reviewed their recommendation of purchasing a new vehicle not to exceed \$41,000. Discussion followed. Motion by Councilor Patricia Hart to approve the purchase of a new vehicle; motion seconded by Councilor Williams. Motion carried by unanimous vote 8-0.

Consideration of Extending Contract for Economic Development Coordinator Duties Through June 30, 2016:

Manager Morelli is asking for an extension to the contract with Patrick Wright as the Economic Development Coordinator, this contract will take us to the end of the fiscal year. Motion by Councilor Patricia Hart to extend the contract through June 30, 2016; motion seconded by Councilor Berry. Discussion followed. Councilor Patricia Hart wanted to leave the desion of forming a committee be left up to the City Manager. Motion carried by unanimous vote 8-0.

Consideration of Appointment to Boards & Committees:

Manager Morelli presented this item to the Council, he said that Nathan Grant would be willing to join one of three committees. Discussion followed. Manager Morelli felt it would be best for Mr. Grant to be appointed to the Economic Development Committee. Motion by Councilor Patricia Hart to appoint Mr. Grant to the EDC; motion seconded by Councilor Hart. Motion carried 8-0.

The Mayor and Council discussed and agreed to combin the next four items into one motion.

Public Hearing and Consideration of a Liquor License Renewal for Gardiner Lodge of Elks:

Public Hearing opened for these items to be discussed; hearing no request for pubic discussion, the Mayor closed the Public Hearing.

Consideration of Game of Chance License Renewal for Cobbossee Aerie #1640:

Consideration of Bottle Club License Renewal for Gardiner Sportsmen's Club:

Public Hearing and Consideration of a Liquor License Renewal for Gardiner Lodge of Elks:

Motion by Councilor Ault to approve all four licenses as presented; motion seconded by Councilor Williams. Motion carried by unanimous decision 8-0.

Executive Session Pursuant to 1 MRSA 405(6)(C) – Real Estate (TW Dick):

Councilor Heath made a motion to enter executive session to discuss this item; motion seconded by Councilor Phil Hart. Motion carried by unanimous vote 8-0. Executive Session began at 9:35 p.m.

Executive session ended at 9:57p.m.

Councilor Heath made a motion to enter executive session to discuss this item; motion seconded by Councilor Phil Hart. Motion carried by unanimous vote 8-0.

Consideration of Entering into an Agreement with the Gardiner Board of Trade Regarding the TW Dick Project:

Councilor Berry moved to direct City Manger to move forward with the direction given during the executive session; motion seconded by Patricia Hart. Motion carried by unanimous vote 7-0.

CITY MANAGER UPDATE:

- In the next few weeks the City Staff will be gathering information for the upcoming 2017 FY Budget. Next meeting the council will vote on the meeting schedule for budget discussion. The Council agreed they would like to see the same level of services provided by the city departments.

CITY COUNCIL UPDATE:

Patricia Hart – The Days of Light events were a wonderful success. She also thanked Richard Heath for serving on the Council.

Ault – None

Blanchard – Received calls wondering if the city should review the school budget or if there was a committee to look over the school budget before it's put out to vote in June. Phil Hart said where the school board members are elected they are the ones to oversee that budget.

Phil Hart – South Gardiner is looking good!

Richard Heath – It's been a pleasure to be a part of the City Council. Great people are working in the City and that should be noted too.

Williams – Last week was in DC for a conference. Gardiner was ranked high with cities that have populations of 100 to 200 thousand. Conference for mayors.

Berry – Lot looks good. Merry Christmas to all.

Mayor – Encourages all to go downtown and enjoy all that it has to offer. Lots of people at all of the events, lots of great shopping to be done and things are busy and there is a lot to be proud of. Planning retreat in 2017 where goals can be discussed, start working with Roberts Rules to bring formality to the meeting process.

Motion to adjourn made by Councilor Heath; motion seconded by Councilor Phil Hart. Motion carried by unanimous vote 8-0.

Meeting ended at 10:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,
Lisa Gilliam, City Clerk