

GARDINER CITY COUNCIL MEETING
Wednesday, January 6, 2016
Gardiner City Hall

Mayor Thom Harnett called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Roll Call:

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

Presentation of Resolution to Richard Heath:

Mayor Harnett spoke briefly and read a Resolution that was presented to outgoing City Councilor Richard Heath. Mayor Harnett said that Councilor Heath had served a 1 year term and was then elected to a 2 year term; he was a wonderful addition to the City Council and will be missed by his fellow Councilors. Councilor Heath spoke briefly and thanked the City Council and the City Employees for their hard work. He said Gardiner is a wonderful community and that he enjoyed being a member of the Council, he then extended his best wishes to newly elected City Councilor Shawn Dolley.

Inauguration:

City Clerk Lisa Gilliam swore in newly elected Councilor Shawn Dolley and the Councilors who were re-elected Phil Hart, Patricia Hart & Terry Berry. Mayor Harnett then spoke briefly on the duties of the City Council and how he is hopeful that the City of Gardiner will have another positive year of growth.

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

Mayor Harnett opened up the meeting to public discussion. City resident Ann Cough thanked the city for how beautiful the park and gazebo area has looked especially through the holiday season. She also thanked the city and other organizations for their contribution of Christmas wreaths to the Wreaths Across America program.

Councilors Phil Hart, Patricia Hart and Terry Berry all stated their appreciation to the residents of Gardiner for re-electing them to the City Council. Newly elected Councilor Shawn Dolley then introduced himself and said he was very happy to be a part of the City Council and that he looks forward to serving for the next two years.

Consent Agenda:

None.

New Business:

FY15 Annual Finance Report/Audit Presentation:

Runyon Kersteen & Ouellette's Senior Accountant Josh Kochis and Principal Hank Farrar gave an in depth presentation on the FY15 Annual Financial Report/Audit. Finance Director Denise Brown was also a part of the presentation and available for any questions presented. No motions were made by the City Council on this item.

Quarterly Finance Update:

Finance Director Denise Brown gave a presentation on revenues and expenditures through the end of November for the General Fund and the Enterprise Funds (Ambulance & Wastewater). A brief discussion followed. No motions were made or necessary.

Consideration of Request from Upstream to Place Artwork on City Property:

Manager Morelli presented this item to the Council. He said the fish-passage advocacy group Upstream has requested that the City Council allow them to place informational artwork on City property in various locations. The code enforcement officer has determined these pieces do not qualify as signs and therefore do not require permitting through her office. Manager Morelli recommends approval of Upstream's request to place informational artwork at various locations on City property, subject to review by the Police Chief, PW Director, and City Manager to ensure public safety is not compromised by the locations. Tina Wood was present and gave a brief summary of Upstream and this item; Ms. Wood said this artwork is for educational purposes. Motion by Councilor Patricia Hart to approve the placement of artwork on city property by Upstream with all required City Department approvals; motion seconded by Councilor Ault. Councilor Patricia Hart thanked Ms. Wood for all of the work she has done over the years in the community. Motion carried by unanimous vote 8-0.

Consideration of Library Partner Community Fees:

Librarian Anne Davis gave a presentation on this item. Librarian Davis said she is looking to increase the library fees for partnering communities by 3%. The partnering communities are Litchfield, Pittston, Randolph and West Gardiner. Discussion followed. Motion by Councilor Ault to approve the 3% increase in fees over a 5 year period; motion seconded by Councilor Patricia Hart. Discussion continued. Motion carried 8-0 by unanimous vote.

Councilor Patricia Hart made a motion to direct the Library Board to review a pricing scheme that is sustainable for the partnering towns; motion seconded by Councilor Ault. Discussion continued. Motion carried by unanimous vote 8-0.

At 8:10 p.m. Mayor Harnett announced a brief recess would be taken.

At 8:17 p.m. Mayor Harnett called the meeting back to order.

Discussion of Sewer Ordinance Amendment for Abatements:

Manager Morelli reviewed this item with the Council. Several months ago Council asked the City Manager and Wastewater Director to review the sewer bill abatement ordinance and to propose changes to help ensure that the process and decisions were more consistent. This is not a public hearing or first read/vote on an ordinance amendment; he said this is an opportunity for Council to review staff's suggested changes and either move them to a first read as is, or to make tweaks and then have it moved to a first read. Discussion followed. Waste Water Director Doug Clark said that he and the Sewer Clerk are able to create informational language to the sewer bills to remind property owners to check their plumbing for any leaks. A brief discussion followed. No motions were made or necessary at this time.

Consideration of Submitting a Letter of Intent for the Maine Department of Transportation's Municipal Partnership Initiative:

Manager Morelli reviewed this item with the City Council to help fund future paving projects. The Maine Department of Transportation (DOT) has asked the City if it wishes to utilize the Municipal Partnership Initiative (MPI) program to help fund repair work to State-owned/City-maintained roads within the Urban Compact area. Under the MPI program, communities can pay half (or more) of a project cost and have the other half funded by DOT, similar to what was done for the recently-completed Highland Avenue project. Letters of intent are due for this program on January 7, though the City can still opt out of the program. The DOT has suggested work be done on Water Street (\$75,000), Maine Ave (\$100,000), Rt. 24 from the downtown intersection to Kingsbury Street (\$500,000), and Mechanic Street (\$50,000). The \$725,000 project total means the City would need to eventually commit \$375,000 to this project, which would occur during the 2017 construction season (a year before the bridge work commences). As a reminder, the City Manager and PW Director are working on a paving capital plan that will be presented and discussed this winter/spring. Discussion followed. Manager Morelli said this would not include work on sidewalks; this also doesn't include storm water drains. Motion by Councilor Phil Hart to allow the

letter of intent to be submitted; motion seconded by Councilor Ault. Motion carried by unanimous vote 8-0.

Consideration of Amendments to Order 10-23 Regarding Changes to Various Committees:

Based on feedback from several board/committee/commission chairs over the past several months, the City Manager said he has crafted several amendments to Order 12-53, which dealt with changes to various committees. The proposed changes include: 1) Allowing non-residents to serve as voting members with a 3/4ths vote of Council (so long as the number of non-residents never outnumbers the amount of residents), 2) creates a process by which committee members can be removed, 3) expressly authorizes committee members whose terms have expired to continuing serving/voting until their are either removed, reappointed, or someone else is appointed in their place. Discussion followed. Motion by Councilor Ault to approve the changes, seconded by Councilor Phil Hart. Motion carried by unanimous vote 8-0.

Consideration of 2016 Council Meeting Schedule:

The City Manager is requesting the Council approve its meeting schedule for the entirety of 2016, as proposed. This schedule continues the twice-per-month schedule that Council has been operating under, except for August when there is only one proposed meeting. Meetings will occur at 6 pm on the second and fourth Wednesdays in February, March, April, June, and October. Meetings will occur at 6 pm on the first and third Wednesdays in July, September, November, and December. Meetings are proposed for each week in May to allow for two additional meetings so that individual department budgets can be discussed more in depth as part of the FY17 budget process. The proposed meeting dates are: Jan. 27; Feb. 10 & 24; Mar. 9 & 23; Apr. 13 & 27; May 4*, 11, 18*, & 25; Jun. 8 & 22; Jul. 6 & 20; Aug. 24; Sep. 7 & 21; Oct. 12 & 26; Nov. 2 & 16; Dec. 7 & 21; and Jan. 4, 2017 (inauguration). (* indicates budget workshop only). Discussion followed. Motion by Councilor Berry to accept the list of proposed dates with the ability to add or subtract a meeting; motion seconded by Councilor Blanchard. Motion carried by unanimous vote 8-0.

Consideration of Council Retreat (Goals & Council Meeting Procedures):

The Mayor and City Manager are proposing that City Council hold a retreat in early 2016 to set goals and establish meeting procedures. The manager is proposing that up to \$1,500 in already-budgeted funds be used for this purpose, including to hire a facilitator, and that the meeting occur outside of City Hall, where it would still be public but not live-streamed. Mayor Harnett said this retreat is standard practice by Councils around the State of Maine and he along with Manager Morelli see this as a positive way to make meetings more productive and efficient. Discussion followed. Councilor Berry stated his support for this retreat based on the feedback he has received from other municipal officials. Councilors Patricia Hart and Jon Ault also expressed their support to move forward with this retreat. Councilor Ault said this would benefit the Council and the City. Councilor Williams also expressed his support for this retreat. Councilor Ault made a motion to move forward with the retreat and to make sure the results are made open to the public and have the City Manger present proposed dates for the retreat; motion seconded by Councilor Patricia Hart. Discussion followed. Councilor Phil Hart does not support the hiring of a facilitator but does support the retreat. Motion carried 7-1 with Councilor Phil Hart opposed.

City Manager Update:

- Fire Chief Al Nelson notified the City Manager that today's house fire in South Gardiner is out and that the home is a total loss.
- The Police Departments Safety Officer has given her notice and will be taking a position with the Brunswick Library. Manager Morelli is going to look into this being a part-time position which will save about \$29,000 per year. This position also includes animal control and harbormaster.
- Manager Morelli gave a brief presentation on Executive Sessions; this was done as a reminder to the Council and the newest member of the Council as well that these discussions are to remain private.

CITY COUNCIL UPDATE:

- Councilor Berry – Old Fort Western would like to do a presentation on having an encampment; he will bring this item to a future City Council Meeting..
- Councilor Williams – Congratulated all re-elected City Council members and newly elected member.
- Councilor Phil Hart – Thanked the Mayor for his patience with the process of overseeing Council Meetings. He also thanked the Manger for his honesty and the detail he puts into his work to make the city a better functioning place.
- Councilor Blanchard – She had a request to have the Maine Service Center Coallition come for a presentation. She feels it would be a benefit to the Council and the voters. Manager Morelli will look into scheduling this. She also thanked the City Manager and Patrick Wright for their work and to Councilor Phil Hart for his work.
- Councilor Ault – Congratulated all re-elected Councilors and newly elected Councilor. He also thanked Richard Heath for his service.
- Councilor Patricia Hart – Also congratulated the returning Councilors and newly elected Councilor Dolley. She also thanked the City Manager and Librarian for their hard work at saving funds. Councilor Hart also wanted to know about regionalization of firefighting and can this be brought to the Council for a future discussion; Manager Morelli said this is something that will definitely be brought before the Council.
- Mayor Harnett – Expressed his thanks Tony LaPlante and the members of the Public Works Department who made the city look so beautiful through the holidays.

Executive Session Per 1 MRSA 405 (6)(C) (Real Estate):

Motion by Councilor Ault at 9:40 pm to begin Executive Session; motion seconded by Councilor Berry. Motion carried 8-0.

Meeting back in open session at 10:28 pm

Mayor Harnett said that the real estate matter was discussed in Executive Session. Councilor Berry moved to instruct city staff to continue discussion with area leasing; motion seconded by Councilor Ault. Motion carried 8-0.

Motion by Councilor Patricia Hart to adjorn the meeting; motion seconded by Councilor Phil Hart. Motion carried 8-0.

Meeting adjourned at 10:29 pm.

Respectfully submitted by,
Lisa Gilliam, City Clerk