

GARDINER CITY COUNCIL MEETING
Wednesday, April 1, 2015
Gardiner City Hall

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

Roll Call:

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

***Mayor Harnett informed the Councilors and those in attendance that this meeting would not be streamed online due to technical difficulties.**

Petitions, Public Hearings (Public comment for anything not on agenda):

Mayor Harnett opened the meeting to public comment; hearing none, the Mayor then announced this portion of the meeting was closed.

Consent Agenda:

There were no Consent Agenda items up for consideration.

New Business:

There were no New Business items up for consideration.

Consideration of Amendment to Comprehensive Plan:

City Manager Morelli briefed the Council on this item and introduced Planning Consultant Mark Eyerman who was present to speak on this topic. Manager Morelli said the City needed to amend its recently submitted comprehensive plan in order to be consistent with the State's Growth Management Act. Mr. Eyerman said the Council would only need to adopt and amend the appendix of the comprehensive plan, which would make it an "easy fix" for the City of Gardiner. A brief discussion followed. Motion by Councilor Patricia Hart to approve the amendment to the Comprehensive Plan; motion seconded by Councilor Williams. Motion carried by unanimous vote 8-0.

Consultant's Update on Ambulance Fund Revenues & Recommendations:

Manager Morelli briefed the Councilors on this item. He said in April, 2014 the City Council had received a report and recommendations from Municipal Resources Inc. (MRI) regarding the ambulance fund. In specific, MRI was tasked with looking into the fund's finances as they relate to billed amounts, collected amounts and revenue projections within the fund. Their report also included recommendations, which were fully implemented by the City on June 1, 2014. Last December, after the recommended changes had been in place for six months, the City tasked MRI with reviewing how well the implemented changes had worked and to create a model for projecting future ambulance billing revenues. The Ambulance Advisory Board has been presented with a partial report from MRI and this past week the final report was completed. Consultant Justin Van Etten spoke by phone with the Council and gave a brief summary of the report. Fire Chief Al Nelson was also present and gave an overview on how the different medical insurances affect the services of the Ambulance Department. Discussion followed. Unpaid ambulance bills were discussed and it was suggested that credit report agencies could be notified of outstanding bills; another option would be to lien their real estate property. Discussion followed concerning ambulance rates. At the conclusion of the discussion with the consultant, Manager Morelli commented on how beneficial it was to have this report done. A brief discussion followed. There were no motions made.

Consideration of Approval for RD Loan/Grant Application for CSO Project/1st Read of Bonding for Project:

Manager Morelli said a public hearing must be held for the City to apply for federal funding assistance from USDA, Rural Development for the purpose of financing a new Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) underground tank, screens and re-lining of sewer mains on Highland Avenue. He said staff would be requesting consideration of a General Obligation Tax Exempt Bond Authorization for a sum not to exceed \$3,632,800 (80% of total project cost) for the interim financing on this project. Interim interest estimates are anticipated to be less than \$62,000 at approx. 2% interest. This interest is included in the total project costs.

Present for this discussion were Wastewater Director Doug Clark, Finance Director Denise Brown and the project engineer Dan Marks from Hoyle, Tanner & Associates. Mr. Marks gave a brief presentation on the project plans and said construction would begin in the late summer months. Manager Morelli said the City Charter requires two votes for bonding purposes, the first reading would be this meeting and the second reading would be at the upcoming City Council Meeting on April 15, 2015. Discussion followed with questions on the affect construction would have on the city's waterfront area. Mr. Marks said timing of the construction can be managed for less impact on those who use the waterfront. Mr. Marks also said that the waterfront park would not be available for public use in 2016, but they would make sure the boat launch area would remain open to the public. It was also noted that this project will have no impact on this year's budget and that the environmental benefits to this project would be significant. Motion by Councilor Patricia Hart to authorize the City Manager to apply to USDA, Rural Development for this project; as well as acquire interim financing with a General Obligation Tax Exempt Bond, motion seconded by Councilor Heath. Mayor Harnett stated he would not be voting on this bond issue; motion carried by unanimous vote 7-0.

City Manager Update:

- Manager Morelli said he was pleased to receive a bulletin from MMA that said the Governor's recommendation to cut municipal revenue sharing and the homestead property tax exemption had been voted down; he felt this would be a positive sign moving forward with upcoming legislation that affects municipalities and their budgets.
- Manager Morelli said the City Council would be presented with the FY 16 Municipal Budget for Gardiner at the April 15 meeting.

City Council Update:

- **Councilor Williams** said he had been working with school age children and he said they would like to have a slide to use at the Gardiner Common. Mayor Harnett said he would mention this at the upcoming Parks & Recreation Meeting.
- **Councilor Phil Hart** said he had some concern with the safety of the docks as the Coast Guard cutter passes through on the Kennebec River.
- **Mayor Harnett** remarked on the volunteer work that Councilor Phil Hart had been doing at the Gardiner Food Co-op as it prepares to open. Mayor Harnett thanked Councilor Hart for all of his hard work there. Mayor Harnett said that students would be doing Easter painting on storefront windows on April 9th. Mayor Harnett also commented on the victims of the fire at Mattson's apartments on Highland Avenue; he said that all of the victims needs had been meet and thanked those involved for their hard work to help these members of the community.

Executive Session Per 1 MRA 405(6)(D) to Discuss City Manager's Annual Evaluation:

Motion by Councilor Ault to enter into executive session to discuss the City Manager's Annual Evaluation, motion seconded by Councilor Phil Hart. Motion carried by unanimous vote 8-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Gilliam, City Clerk

Adjourn:

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Gilliam
City Clerk