

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

Mayor Thom Harnett called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m. At 6:05 p.m. Mayor Harnett stated the City Council would begin Executive Session.

Executive Session Per 1 MRA 405(6)(C)(E) to Consult with Legal Counsel (Apostolic Church):

After the Executive Session ended, Mayor Harnett called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m. The Mayor stated that during the Executive Session there was a motion made by Councilor Berry, motion seconded by Councilor Williams. There no vote made in open session.

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.

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

Mayor Harnett opened up the meeting to public discussion.

- Neal Desoto spoke to the Council about her concerns with tick prevention. She said she would like to establish a Tick Hygiene Community to encourage tick awareness. Mayor Harnett suggested Ms. Desoto pass on her information concerning a Tick Hygiene Community to City Hall.
- Ms. Desoto then then spoke about establishing a small shelter similar to the one located in Brunswick that would help people with housing issues. She stated that federal funds are available to cover the cost for these types of programs and that it would benefit those who need assistance to recover from difficult times in their lives. Mayor Harnett suggested that Ms. Desoto speak with the Housing Committee about this issue. Councilor Phil Hart said that she should also express interest in joining this committee.
- Gardiner resident George Trask addressed several concerns he had with items the City needs to take care of:
 - The rails at the Gardiner Common need to be painted.
 - There were three properties the Code Enforcement Officer needs to review, they include the property on Brunswick Avenue owned by Scott Daniels and two properties that are located on the Old Brunswick Road. His concern is that these three properties are in such poor condition they are a hazard and should be condemned. He said he had mentioned these properties before to the City and nothing has been done.

Manager Morelli said he would ask the Code Enforcement Officer to review these properties and provide more information to the City Council at an upcoming meeting.

Consent Agenda:

No items.

New Business:

Special Event Permit – Day of Play 5K:

Motion by Councilor Patricia Hart to approve the Special Event Permit for the Day of Play 5K; motion seconded by Councilor Berry. Motion carried by unanimous vote 8-0.

Liquor License Renewal – Canton Village:

Motion by Councilor Phil Hart to approve the Liquor License Renewal for Canton Village; motion seconded by Councilor Heath. Motion carried by unanimous vote 8-0.

Request Council Approval for Change in Waterfront Restrooms:

Manager Morelli briefed the City Council on this project. He said the current restrooms at the Waterfront Park would be torn down and new bathrooms would be built. Manager Morelli said this project was recommended by the Parks & Recreation Committee.

Project Manager Dan Marks from Hoyle, Tanner & Associates was present and gave a brief update on this item. He said that construction was scheduled to begin in October and would continue into next year. The project includes new bathrooms, showers and a holding tank to be used by boaters. A brief discussion followed.

Motion by Councilor Patricia Hart to approve the concept and design of the new facilities; motion seconded by Councilor Phil Hart. Motion carried by unanimous vote 8-0.

Consideration of Whether to Join as an Intervener in FERC Relicensing of American Tissue Dam:

Manager Morelli briefed the Council on this item. He said that at a previous meeting it was recommended for the City to join as an intervener in the FERC relicensing process for the American Tissue Dam owned by KEI. Bill Monagle from the Cobbossee Watershed District was present along with Tina Wood; both informed the City Council that they recommend this and the City of Gardiner should act on it now. Discussion followed. Motion by Councilor Heath for the City of Gardiner to join as an intervener in the FERC relicensing process for the American Tissue Dam owned by KEI; motion seconded by Councilor Ault. Motion carried by unanimous vote 8-0.

Consideration of Addendum to the Carryforward Requests:

Manager Morelli gave a brief review of this item. With the final report from Municipal Resources Inc. being late, he is requesting a carryforward to this vendor in the amount of \$8,225. Motion by Councilor Berry to approve the carryforward request in the amount of \$8,225; motion seconded by Councilor Heath. Motion carried by unanimous vote 8-0.

Consideration of FY16 General Fund & Enterprise Budgets – 1st Reading & Public Hearing:

City Manager Morelli reviewed the City Budget for Fiscal Year 2016 which if approved would be a 2.4% increase from the previous year budget. At the last meeting City Council directed staff to reduce the proposed property tax increase as a result of the City's budget from 3.4% (\$0.70 mils) to 2.4% (\$0.50 mils). This necessitated \$72,500 in additional cuts. Manager Morelli presented an outline and reviewed the changes recommended by staff to achieve the 2.4% increase. Discussion followed.

Councilor Phil Hart said he was not in favor of postponing budget items because that would put the City behind in the budget process. Councilor Ault was concerned about the positions that are vacant at the Library and Police Department; Manager Morelli said at this time the Police would be able to handle being short staffed and the Library is also working to keep their services open to the public as much as possible. Councilor Blanchard said she was concerned with the age of the public safety vehicles and does not want to see that need overlooked; she also commented on the need for continued training and the consideration of overtime earned by public safety employees.

Fire Chief Al Nelson and Police Chief James Toman were present to answer questions presented by City Council. Chief Toman said that he has made as many cuts as possible to his budget without cutting personnel. Chief Nelson noted the need for replacement for some of their older equipment. Discussion continued.

At this point Mayor Harnett opened the meeting up for public comments:

- Amy Reese spoke in support of Gardiner Main Street, saying it has brought many new businesses to Gardiner.

- Andrew McLain said the City of Gardiner's budget has been greatly impacted by the States cuts to Municipal Revenue Sharing. He also stated that he is in favor of the City supporting Johnson Hall, the Boys & Girls Club and Gardiner Main Street.
- Roger Gregoire asked the City Council to not make any cuts to the Boys & Girls Club. He said that organization has a very positive impact on the youth in this community.
- Sarah Rines spoke in favor of Johnson Hall, the Boys & Girls Club and Gardiner Main Street. She said all three provide wonderful benefits to the community.
- Robert Abbey said that as a senior citizen he is in favor of the increase to the budget and the impact on taxes knowing that the city services and non-profits would continue to be funded.
- Leon Emery, who owns Emery's Meats, said he is proud to be a business owner in this community and would want to see the City of Gardiner continue to support the city services and non-profits.
- Kate McFarland spoke in favor of the City continuing to fund the Boys & Girls Club. She said this organization had a very positive impact on her and her children's lives since 2002.
- Christy Gould spoke in favor of the City Council continuing to support public safety and the non-profits.
- Dale Staples, who is employed by the Boys & Girls Club, briefed the Council on the services they provide to the community and the benefits it has to the community. She said that she values the City of Gardiner and the services it provides and she encourages the City Council to continue with their support.
- Karen Tucker said she is in favor of the City continuing their support of city services and the non-profits.
- George Trask said he supports the Boys & Girls Club, but feels the funding they receive from the City is too much. He said the City needs to focus their attention on the roads that need repair.
- Dennis Dore spoke in favor of the Gardiner Library and Gardiner Main Street. He said he had concerns with the Library being understaffed and that it's a safety issue. He also said that if the City Council were to make any cuts to the City services then the non-profits should also take cuts.
- Helen Stevens, who is on the Gardiner Library Trustees, said that tax dollars are an investment in the community and she would not want to see any cuts made to the Library.
- Bob Moody spoke in support of the Library and the Boys & Girls Club. Mr. Moody said the Boys & Girls Club has proved great educational services to his grandchildren. He said they do an extraordinary job and encouraged the City Council not to make any cuts to them.
- Bill Perfetto praised the City Council for the good work they have done.
- Judy Dorsey said she would not be in support of the City Council signing an extended contract with Hatch Hill.
- Cheryl Clark said that Gardiner is a great community that has many things to offer including culture, good neighborhoods, wonderful neighbors and it's a walkable community.
- Marjorie Burgess is a teacher and resident in Gardiner. She said she would like the Council to continue their support of the non-profits and the public safety departments.
- Dawna Gregoire said she is employed by the Boys & Girl Club and their organization provides wonderful things for the children in the community. She asked the City Council to continue their support.

With no further comments, Mayor Harnett closed the public hearing at 9:19 p.m.

Ingrid Stanchfield, the Director of the Boys & Girls Club, gave a summary of the services that the Gardiner Boys & Girls Club provides to the children of Gardiner and the surrounding communities. Councilors Williams & Ault both stated they would not want to see any cuts made to the Boys & Girls Club. Councilor Phil Hart suggested that for this year the Council should leave the non-profits alone and address these issues and possible cuts during next years budget discussions; Councilor Heath also agreed with this suggestion. Discussion followed. Councilor Patricia Hart moved to direct the City Manager to

work with the Boys & Girls Club to create a formula for their services that would be helpful to future budget discussions; motion seconded by Councilor Ault. Motion carried by unanimous vote 8-0.

At 9:45 p.m. the Council recessed for a break.

At 10:00 p.m. the Council Meeting was called back to order and continued with budget discussions.

Councilor Phil Hart suggested that the City Manager work with the Library Director to see if there could be some reorganization with the staffing issues at the Library. Fire Chief Al Nelson spoke briefly on the safety issues that his department has to deal with. Councilor Phil Hart suggested the City Manager look into finding a better use for the South Gardiner Fire Department. He also expressed his concern with property owners who struggle to pay their real estate taxes; Councilor Patricia Hart said that would be an issue that the Housing Committee should look into. Discussion followed. Motion by Councilor Berry to approve the 1st reading of the FY16 General Fund & Enterprise Budgets, which would include a TIF; motion seconded by Councilor Patricia Hart. Motion carried 6-2 with Councilors Phil Hart and Maureen Blanchard opposed. Councilor Blanchard also expressed that she felt the non-profits should meet the same criteria as city departments when budgets are discussed.

Consideration of Having Ordinance Review Committee Prioritize Jack Skehan's Signage Issue:

City Manager Morelli and Councilor Patricia Hart both spoke on the background of this agenda item. The current city ordinance prohibits internally-lit signs in most parts of the City, including our downtown. Any existing internally-lit signs were "grandfathered" and can be replaced, so long as they do not become more non-conforming than they already are. Jack Skehan owns the business Jack Skehan & Associates on 30 Bridge St. His current, grandfathered sign is internally-lit on the top portion. The bottom portion, which includes interchangeable lettering, is externally lit. Mr. Skehan wishes to replace his sign with one that is entirely internally-lit, which would make it more non-conforming and therefore prohibited under ordinance. Discussion followed. Motion by Councilor Heath to have the Ordinance Review Committee move this zoning issue forward to the next available slot on their agenda; motion seconded by Councilor Blanchard. Motion carried by unanimous vote 8-0.

CITY MANAGER UPDATE:

No new update.

CITY COUNCIL UPDATE:

- Councilor Berry – Remarkd on what a good job the City Manager and Department Heads did to prepare the budget.
- Councilor Heath – Agreed with Councilor Berry and made the same remarks.
- Councilor Williams – No update.
- Councilor Phil Hart – No update.
- Councilor Blanchard – No update.
- Councilor Ault – No update.
- Councilor Patricia Hart – Reminded everyone that the River Festival is this coming weekend.
- Mayor Harnett – Was pleased to hear that Johnson Hall has 40 shows scheduled for this season. The art show at Monkitree will be coming up soon and he was pleased to hear that the Gardiner Co-op had received their \$25,000 check from the State Farm grant.

ADJOURN:

Meeting adjourned at 11:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by,
Lisa J. Gilliam, City Clerk