

SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING

GARDINER CITY COUNCIL
Wednesday, February 6, 2008
City Council Room
6 p.m. Executive Session
7 p.m. Business Meeting

1. CALL TO ORDER 6:00pm

2. ROLL CALL

Martha Mentall, Andrew MacLean, Jeffrey Kobrock, Chuck LeBlanc, Michael Giberson, Brian Blanchard

3. EXECUTIVE SESSION Pursuant to 1 MRSA 405(6)(E), Legal Advice

Meeting start: 6:15pm

Meeting end: 6:45pm

4. PETITIONS, COMMUNICATIONS, RESOLUTIONS, & PUBLIC HEARINGS

4.1. Consideration of Comments from the Public on Issues that Do Not Appear Elsewhere on the Agenda (Please limit comments to five minutes.)

Judy from Johnson Hall spoke of the activities and accomplishments.

5. NEW BUSINESS

5.1. Update by Leonard Dow, CEO, First Park, Oakland (Maine's Premier Business & Technology Center)

Leonard Dow gave an update on First Park. Mr. Dow displayed a map of the project and passed out a 20 year projection of build-out. He spoke of the accomplishments – there have been 850 full time jobs created and 28 acres of land sold from this project. Questions were asked by council. Martha expressed her disappointment in this project. Brian Blanchard asked questions about revenues and budgets. He is also very disappointed in this project and would like to look into a way of getting out of this. A discussion in great length took place. The Mayor asked Jeff and Jason to put together an analysis and do some research to see what the city can do to exit the project.

5.2. Consideration of Head Start Community Garden

The Mayor mentioned a correspondence that Jeff has received. He asked why Council would need to approve the concept. Head Start is proposing to use the city owned property to start a Community Garden, and Jeff stated that it would be a good idea for the council to know about this. There would be 84 families participating in this project.

Councilor Hart said that someone should check if there will be an erosion problem. He would also like to find out if when the community is done they can make sure the land will return to its original state.

Councilor Leblanc made a motion to accept the Community Garden
Councilor Mentall seconded the motion.

There was unanimous vote to approve the Community Garden.

5.3. Discussion of Draft Budget Development/Adoption

Jeff Kobrock briefly went over the Budget schedule. See attachment.

Jeff also proposed to get the council out to review facilities. He suggested a City Open House on the weekend with facility tours for the public. Open house would include Police, Fire, Wastewater and Public Works in April. He would like this to happen prior to the budget being published. The city will be in its final stages of the re-evaluation. In June the City will be adjusting the tax assessed values for all taxpayers. He suggests changing the mill rate at the same time. In May he would like council to take a stab at coming up with an estimated Mill Rate to give taxpayers something to think about. The city would let taxpayers know that this number would be strictly an estimate. He would like council to start working on a goal statement.

The Mayor asked if anyone had any questions about Jeff's budget schedule. There were no questions.

6. CITY MANAGER REPORT

Jeff Kobrock said that council will meet next week the 13th and the 27th at 7:00pm.

7. COUNCIL DISCUSSION

Councilor Blanchard mentioned that he was glad that the First Park discussion happened. He learned a lot that he didn't know about the project. He really believes that we don't need to have a part in this project. Councilor Giberson said that snow removal on the Bridge Street sidewalk has not been very good. There are many times that this doesn't get taken care of by Public Works. He worries about the safety of people. Jeff Kobrock mentioned that sidewalks usually are not a priority. He mentioned that this should really be discussed with Chuck Applebee. He also mentioned the traffic coming out of Dunkin Donuts is very dangerous. Jeff mentioned that this is private property. We really don't have any authority, but we can go back and look to find out if there is anything in their permit that is not being enforced. He also mentioned we may be able to have a discussion with the property owner. Councilor LeBlanc asked if anyone had any insight on whether we are going to get any new restaurants in town. Councilor Giberson mentioned that there will be a wine bar going in downtown. Jason Simcock mentioned that there are some ideas being discussed, but there is nothing real solid to report right now. Councilor LeBlanc mentioned maybe there is some sort of culinary program that could use the Up the Creek building. Councilor Hart mentioned the account number error on the tax bill postcards that were sent out. Councilor Mentall had no comments.

Mayor MacLean mentioned the symphony and Johnson Hall. Jeff Kobrock mentioned he will get this on next week's agenda. Mayor MacLean also asked about the downtown festivities for this year. He said that he will discuss this with Jeff in detail.

There was a motion made by Councilor Giberson to go into executive session. Councilor Hart seconded the motion. All were in favor.

8. EXECUTIVE SESSION per MRSA, Title 1, Chapter 13, Section 405 (6) (C). Real Estate

Meeting start: 8:45pm

Meeting end: 9:15am

9. ADJOURNMENT

Respectfully submitted,
Lori Edwards, Council Clerk

DRAFT