

Town Council Meeting
8/29/2023

Open Town Council Meeting: Councilor Ketch opened the Town Council meeting; all members were present. Also present were Town Manager Melissa Doane and Fire Chief Eric Gifford

Review of Minutes: Councilor Ketch made a motion to accept the minutes of 8/1/2023, seconded by Councilor Hatch. Vote 5/0.

Citizens Request: None

Manager's Report: Melissa stated that Councilor Hatch has recommended that it would be helpful to have the Town Council schedule, agendas, and meeting recordings available on the Town Website as not everyone utilizes Facebook. Melissa has created a Town Council schedule area on the website at the Municipal Meeting page and will also attempt to add the recordings to this page. If there are any other suggestions, please let her know.

Melissa reported that tax billings had been mailed out. She is happy to report that there have not been any comments regarding the tax rate or bill amounts. Thus far only one abatement has been requested. She would like to have a motion to approve the abatement request for 120 High Point Place in Bradley as the homestead exemption was missing. The amount of the abatement is \$20,000 with a tax value of \$330.00. Councilor Wade made a motion to approve the abatement, seconded by Councilor Clemons. Vote 5/0.

The fall clean-up has been scheduled for September 23, 2023. The procedures will be the same as in the past; residents will pay \$15.00 for two loads of debris at the 686 Main Street site. April will be on-site to verify purchase and load amounts. The time will be from 7:30 to 1:00.

Melissa stated that John Hamer recommended that our licensed plumbing inspector, Phil Stevens, become involved with the situation of 114 Cram Street, as he has authority to require compliance of wastewater disposal. Melissa met with Phil as he works very little for the Town of Bradley, typically only issuing plumbing permits and receiving compensation from that service. Phil requested documentation that Mr. Wing had previously provided regarding his water and septic system. Phil has agreed to try to assist. Today he contacted Melissa as he had a conversation with Maine DEP and John Hamer. He will be sending a letter to Mr. Wing giving him 10 days to provide an inspection of the system. If he does not comply it will then move forward with the court proceeding as discussed in the past. There is still a pending court date of September 13 regarding the land use violation.

Melissa stated that the municipal road snow removal contract has been signed for the budgeted amount of \$51,000. Melissa has also spoken with Peter Currier and he has agreed to do the municipal and fire station parking lot snow removal for the budgeted amount of \$11,500. She has yet to receive the signed contract but is confident he will return it shortly. Councilor Ketch verified that the road plowing would still be done by Greg Harvey.

The nomination papers for one position on the RSU school board are now available. The papers are due back on October 3, 2023, for the November 7, 2023 election. The board seat available is that of Howard Jack.

Melissa stated she had provided the Town Council via email pictures of work she would like to have done this fall at Evergreen and Knapp Cemetery. At Evergreen there are 10 or more trees that are dead and should be removed before they fall and cause damage to stones. The cost to remove these trees is \$5,500.00. The Town has access to the Carter Trust, which was created in 1962 with a principal balance of \$5,000.00. The fund as of July 31 has \$26,732.06. Therefore, as stipulated by statute and the trust itself, \$21,732.06 is available for repairs to Evergreen Cemetery. At Knapp Cemetery she would like to have the Knapp family plot and the back tree line area cleaned up at a cost of \$675.00. Melissa did provide pictures of an area covered with bamboo which she would like to have dug up, loomed and seeded. She has not yet received an estimate for that. Melissa further stated that she was at Knapp with a contractor over the weekend and they discovered 4 stones that were in the bamboo area. Melissa would like the Town Council to consider spending funds that were appropriated in the 23-24 budget in the amount of \$5,000.00 for cemetery restoration for the clean-up and make further considerations on the bamboo work when the final estimates are received. Councilor Hatch mentioned that in the future perhaps the University of Maine Forestry Department could be contacted for tree work. Councilor Lugdon made a motion to approve the \$675.00 expenditure and up to \$2,500.00 for the work involving the bamboo, seconded by Councilor Wade. Councilor Hatch was concerned about a contractor getting a specific price and then doing poor work to meet the cost. Melissa stated that she was awaiting an estimate from John Milligan who does a lot of work for the Town and it is always high quality. Councilor Wade asked if the stones were on the map, and Melissa stated one was. Councilor Wade also mentioned that the contractor will have to be diligent about protecting the graves. Vote 5/0.

Melissa reported that the Town has met the requirements to receive the highest-tiered discount for the MMA Workers Compensation Safety Incentive Program. There is a need to have a few additional policies, which include a Safety Committee to establish a review of the policies and procedures regarding workplace safety, a Return-to-Work Policy, a Wellness Program, and adding the use of preferred providers for work-related injuries. Melissa provided the policies she created to the Town Council for review and approval for the September 12 meeting.

New Business: Councilor Ketch made a motion to approve the 2023 Municipal Valuation Return and the 2023 Penobscot County Assessors Return, seconded by Councilor Lugdon. Vote 5/0. Melissa noted that the payment for the County Tax was included in the municipal warrant.

Unfinished Business: Melissa asked for the Town Council's thoughts on the additional insurance benefits for employees. Detailed information had been provided at the last meeting. Councilor Clemons made a motion to move forward with the income protection plan with the Maine Municipal Association at the 50% rate, seconded by Councilor Lugdon. Vote 5/0.

Councilor Ketch asked if the use of the municipal parking lot for the bike race went well. Melissa reported she was on vacation, however did not have any complaints or issues. Councilor Wade stated that he had gone by several times and there was a good crowd.

Municipal Warrants: Councilor Ketch made a motion to accept the municipal warrants as presented, seconded by Councilor Wade. Vote 5/0.

Next Meeting: The next meeting was set for September 12, 2023

Adjourn: Councilor Ketch made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilor Wade. Vote 5/0.