

# Town Council Meeting

## September 26, 2023

**Open Public Hearing:** Councilor Lugdon, acting as Town Council chair, opened the Public Hearing.

**Public Comment:** Town Manager Doane stated that by State of Maine law, there is a need to have a General Assistance program, in which the maximum amount is set by the State of Maine, Department of Health and Human Services. General Assistance is meant to be a last resort and there are strict guidelines to qualify. Last year the Town of Bradley had seven applications processed, however, there was only one approval for 50 gallons of fuel.

**Close Public Hearing:** Councilor Lugdon closed the public hearing.

**Open Town Council Meeting:** Councilor Lugdon, acting as Town Council chair, opened the Town Council meeting. Councilor Hatch and Councilor Clemons were present as well as Councilor Wade via ZOOM. Town Manager Melissa Doane was also present.

**Review of Minutes:** Councilor Lugdon made a motion to accept the minutes of 09/12/2023, seconded by Councilor Hatch. Vote 4/0.

**Citizens Request:** Resident Ann Delaware announced that there is going to be a senior luncheon on 10/18/2023 @ 11:30. There will be 3 kinds of soups. She is also planning on having a Historical Committee gathering on 11/08/2023 @ 1:00. Delaware also wanted to know of any updates on 114 Cram Street as well as any information on the solar installations. Manager Doane stated that she has not heard any further information on the solar installation and is unable to report any details at this time.

**Managers' Report:** Melissa reported that the initial hearing regarding the land use violation for 114 Cram Street was on September 13, 2023. Mr. Wing was very agitated and would not communicate with the attorney to discuss a stipulated agreement. The case will therefore go in front of a judge at a later date which has not been determined. Mr. Wing had previously been appointed an attorney, Zachary Smith, due to a criminal matter. During the hearing the judge stated that she was going to reach out to Mr. Smith to see if he would be willing to do the case pro bono. Mr. Smith has agreed to do so and the judge issued an order appointing him "guardian ad litem." The duties assigned to Mr. Smith via the order are to "help Mr. Wing understand the matter before him and discuss resolution short of trial". This order was provided to us on Monday September 18<sup>th</sup>. The municipal attorney, Mr. Hamer, reached out to Mr. Smith immediately. As of today, there has not been any communication. Melissa was hopeful that the assistance provided to Mr. Wing would help remedy the situation.

At the last meeting there was discussion regarding engaging with different legal counsel. Melissa has contacted Eaton Peabody upon Dean Bennett's (CEO) suggestion. She has not had any luck with a

response. She has, however, set up a meeting with John Hamer and the Town Council for October 10, 2023 @ 6:30. This meeting will be held in executive session which is allowed by law for legal consultation and will provide the Town Council the opportunity to speak to him directly. The meeting, (held via zoom) will open up, then go into executive session, which will not be recorded. Councilor Lugdon asked if they would need to adjust the regular Town meeting time. Manager Doane indicated that they would not as once they are out of executive session, they will resume the regular meeting on zoom and begin recording again.

Melissa had previously reported that there is an interest in creating trail connectivity to the Bradley Conservation lands located across the Great Work Stream. This interest has come from residents that use ATV's and would like to connect to the Rocky Mountain Trail Riders trail system in Milford, Greenbush, Greenfield, and beyond. Originally, she was hopeful to be able to work with the State of Maine to build a bridge to create a multi-purpose trail. This bridge would be located at the Back Mills Road which is located behind Baker Lane and Ten Road. Upon further investigation, a small portion of that road is privately owned and for the State to approve bridge funding a permanent easement would be needed. Melissa has contacted the landowner to request that easement without success. Bradley residents who are also members of the Rocky Mountain Trail Riders asked about the option to have access via Route 178 from Bullen Street in Bradley to Pleasant Street in Milford, which is less than a tenth of a mile in Bradley, the rest in Milford, an estimated mile total. Melissa met with Maine DOT last week and received preliminary approval. The next step is to have municipal approval. Melissa has informed the ATV Club that this item will be placed on the 10/24/2023 Town Council meeting agenda. Councilor Lugdon stated that by opening the road access there would be no building of anything, to which Manager Doane agreed with but also added that it would be the ATV club's responsibility to put up the signage marking the road access and not the town's responsibility.

The paving has been completed to make the absentee ballot box more accessible. Melissa also stated that more pavement was added to the shoulders of the driveway entrance/exits as well as at the end of Elm Street where the plow truck turns around. At this point in time, road construction for 2023 is just about completed.

Melissa provided information highlighting the Maine Municipal Association Convention which is next week in Augusta. If any Town Council member is interested in attending, please see her and she will complete the registration. Melissa also noted she will be at the convention.

Melissa noted that Mark Gibson, the Towns Tax Assessor, will be attending the November 7, 2023 Town Council meeting to discuss re-evaluation.

April reported to Melissa that the fall clean up went well. The trucks did show up a little late, however they were able to process the material quickly. There were 54 passes sold and all but 3 were used.

Councilor Lugdon asked if a motion was needed for the executive session for the October 10th meeting. Manager Doane replied that it is not necessary. She will make the postings of the meeting so the public knows about it, and they will open the Town Council meeting as usual. A motion will be made to enter into the executive session, which is allowed at any posted meeting and with the

intent of seeking legal counsel from the municipal attorney. Once they are out of executive session they will go live, start recording the meeting, and continue on with the regular Town Meeting.

Councilor Lugdon spoke about an email that was received by Town Council from a community member regarding interactions this person has had at the municipal office. One particular incident was they were looking to have a bee's nest removed from their property and this community member was told the Town does not remove bee's nests. He was wondering if it was something that could be discussed under an executive session at the next meeting. Manager Doane responded by saying that they can, however they would first have to close out the first executive session and then enter into another executive session, Melissa stated the executive session would be about her performance; Town Council cannot discuss staff.

**New Business:** None

**Unfinished Business:** Councilor Clemons made motion to approve the General Assistance maximum as presented, seconded by Councilor Hatch. Vote 4/0.

Councilor Wade asked about the flags on the telephone poles that get installed in the Spring. As some of the flags are damaged, could they be replaced or repaired before reinstalling them. Manager Doane stated that she had spoken to Mark Gifford who hangs the flags for the Town of Bradley. She believes that there is \$1,000.00 available through the budget to purchase new flags and asked him to come see her in the Spring to purchase new flags to replace any damaged ones. Councilor Wade also asked if there was a time when we can start seeing the flags come down off the poles. Both Councilor Lugdon and Manager Doane said that the flags had already started being removed today.

**Municipal Warrants:** Councilor Lugdon made a motion to accept the municipal warrants as presented, seconded by Councilor Hatch. Vote 4/0.

**Next Meeting:** The next meeting is set for October 10, 2023 at 6:30

**Motion to adjourn:** Councilor Clemons made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilor Lugdon. Vote 4/0.