



Presque Isle City Council Meeting

March 1st, 2023
6:00 PM
Council Chamber

Call to Order - Roll Call

Present: Deputy Chairman K. Freeman, Councilors C. Green, M. Chasse, G. Nelson and J. Willette. Councilor D. Cyr arrived at 6:03 PM.

City Manager Martin Puckett and City Clerk Kimberly Finnemore were also present.

Absent: Chairman J. Shaw

Pledge of Allegiance

Deputy Chairman K. Freeman called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Proclamation

Deputy Chairman K. Freeman read a Proclamation for 2023 Presque Isle Historical Society.

WHEREAS, Presque Isle was incorporated as a township on April 4, 1859; and WHEREAS, Presque Isle Historical Society, an all-volunteer not-for-profit corporation, was established on March 23, 1963 serving the residents and visitors of Presque Isle for sixty (60) years; and WHEREAS, the mission of the Society is to study, promote, and preserve the history, culture, heritage and physical artifacts of Presque Isle; and WHEREAS, the study of local history is important in that it brings together people interested in history especially that of Presque Isle; the understanding of history is basic to the democratic way of life; it gives us a better understanding of our community, state, and nation; and it promotes a better appreciation of our heritage; and WHEREAS, since 1993 the Society has discovered, collected, and preserved materials that help illustrate the history of this community and our area, its exploration, settlement, development, activities in both peace and war, its progress in population, wealth, education, arts, science, agriculture, manufactures, trades, and transportation; and WHEREAS, the Society has operated the 1875 Vera Estey House Museum since 1994; and WHEREAS, the Society has operated Molly the Trolley since 2011; and WHEREAS, the Society has operated the Maysville Museum since 2017; and WHEREAS, the Society serves the community, its residents and visitors with eleven different types of regularly scheduled tours, over 80 presentations on topics of local history, over 40 virtual historic tours available on YouTube, and numerous other events throughout the year; and WHEREAS, the Society has brought visibility and encouraged tourism to the City of

Presque Isle having been recognized by the National Trust for Historic Places with two Distinctive Destinations. NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved that the City of Presque Isle Council, fully support and do hereby proclaim April 2023 as Presque Isle Historical Society Month throughout the City, and encourage all citizens of Presque Isle to support the mission of the Society.

Deputy Chairman K. Freeman read a Proclamation for 2023 Presque Isle Rotary Club.

WHEREAS, Presque Isle Rotary Club, founded on April 25, 1923, is celebrating its 100-year anniversary; and WHEREAS, the Rotary motto "Service Above Self" inspires members to provide humanitarian service, encourage high ethical standards, and promote good will and peace in the world; and WHEREAS, Rotary funds club projects and sponsors volunteers with community expertise to provide medical supplies, health care, clean water, food production, job training, and education to millions in need, particularly in developing countries; and WHEREAS, The Presque Isle Rotary Club supports Polio Plus and spearheaded efforts with the World Health Organization, U.S Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and UNICEF to immunize the children of the world against polio. Polio cases have dropped by 99 percent since 1988; and WHEREAS, in Presque Isle, there are more than 70 Rotary club members sponsoring service projects to address such critical issues as poverty, health, hunger, illiteracy, and the environment in their local communities, and abroad; and WHEREAS, Presque Isle Rotary club has partnered with and provided volunteer services to many initiatives, including: The Aroostook County Dialysis Center, Presque Isle Chamber of Commerce, Aroostook House of Comfort, Aroostook Agency on Aging, ACAP, Presque Isle Snowmobile Club, Mantle Lake and Riverside Playgrounds, Sargent Community Center, Forum hockey boards, Nordic Heritage Center, Presque Isle Historical Society, United Way of Aroostook, Hope & Justice Project, GIFT, AR Gould Hospital, Central Aroostook Association, Pregnancy Care Center, St. Apollonia Dental Clinic, Homeless Services of Aroostook, Central Aroostook Humane Society, Northern Maine Fair, Crown of Maine Balloon Fest, and annual academic scholarships to MSAD 1 students, to name a few. NOW, THEREFORE, the City Councilors of Presque Isle, do hereby proclaim the week beginning Monday, April 24th, 2023, as "Presque Isle Rotary Week" and encourage all citizens to join the Council in recognizing our local Rotary club for their service to improving the human condition in local communities here and around the world.

City Manager M. Puckett stated that on Monday, April 24th, 2023 at 12:00 pm there will be a formal flag raising ceremony with a band at City Hall where the Proclamation will be read.

Pictures were taken with each group after each Proclamation was read.

Public Hearing

1. Approval for a renewal application for Marijuana License for the Northern Maine Flower with location of 540 Main Street.

Deputy Chairman K. Freeman opened the public hearing at 6:10 PM;

City Manager M. Puckett recommended staff approval.

There were no citizens comments

Deputy Chairman K. Freeman closed the public hearing at 6:11 PM

BE IT RESOLVED by Councilor J. Willette seconded by Councilor M. Chasse to approve a renewal marijuana license for Northern Maine Flower, with location at 540 Main Street.

Vote: 6-0

2. Approval for a renewal application for an on-premise liquor license for Confectionately Yours with location of 2 Reach Road.

Deputy Chairman K. Freeman opened the public hearing at 6:12 PM

City Manager M. Puckett stated, there were no issues in the last year; and recommended Staff Approval.

There were no citizens comments

Deputy Chairman K. Freeman closed the public hearing at 6:12 PM

BE IT RESOLVED by Councilor M. Chasse, seconded by Councilor C. Green to approve renewal application for an on-premises liquor license to Kelly Mathes, d/b/a Confectionately Yours with location of 2 Reach Road.

Vote: 6-0

3. Approval to amend Presque Isle Development Fund By-Laws.

Deputy Chairman K. Freeman opened the public hearing at 6:13 PM

City Manager M. Puckett spoke on the great job Galen Weibley did summarizing the changes in seven bullet points.

Revisions to the By-Laws have been made as follows:

- Streamline approval process of loan requests lower than \$15,000 to be approved by the PIDF Trustees instead of second approval by the entire council
- Update the year terms for trustees
- Clarifies what indirect relationship means for City employees, Councilors and Trustees
- Provides the option for the City Council to recall the loan to be paid in full should business/ developer not be current on their property taxes owed to the City
- Allows for program funding and lending for housing development
- Clarifies WARM Program is capped at \$20,000 per unit instead of unclear amount cap
- Clarifies Downtown Façade Loans require a public hearing by the City Council regardless of loan amount

Galen Weibley spoke and did a slide show of the revisions.

There were no citizens comments

Deputy Chairman K. Freeman closed the public hearing at 6:17 PM

BE IT RESOLVED by Councilor J. Willette, seconded by Councilor C. Green to adopt the revisions that have been made to the Presque Isle Development Fund By-Laws as submitted.

Vote: 6-0

4. Amend Chapter 16 Land Use and Code Development Ordinance.

Deputy Chairman K. Freeman opened the public hearing at 6:18 PM

City Manager M. Puckett stated that the Planning Board has worked over a year with the public and staff regarding the proposed amendments.

Galen Weibley presented a slide show about how the Planning Board has tried to restructure the Ordinance. Galen Weibley went over the amount of animals and types of animals that a citizen can have based on the area the citizens live and the size of their property.

Summary of revisions to the Ordinance are as follows:

- Reorders the various chapters of the Land Use Code to “Articles”
- Permits Mobile homes in the URZ & AHZ and Special Exception in SRZ
- Combines former Chapters 2 (standards) & 3 (Site Plan Review) into Article 2
- Develops clear triggers of development that will be final approval by the Planning Board or internally with the PIDECD staff

- Establishes a clear process of Preliminary Approval by the PI Development Review staff and final approval schedule for the Planning Board. This increases the communication between departments and outside agencies that are impacted by development. The Planning Board will meet twice a month to help expedite approval of site plans which is a much-needed tool by developers given the unpredictable nature of when winter will approach.
- Establishes new standards for development to address, stormwater, solid waste and waste water management, light control, screening and buffering, land use standards
- Creates live links that aid developers in navigating the various cited sections and creates a table of contents that will automatically update as future changes are made to the document.
- New amendment to comply with Maine's Right to Food Constitutional Amendment that will allow Non-Commercial Keeping of Livestock in the AFFZ & AHZ but Special Exception in all other zones. This had much public discussion which can be read below.

How Non-Commercial Keeping of Livestock will be Administered/Enforced

- All residents wanting to keep livestock in residential zones will need to submit a Special Exception Application with the Code Officer. Application is submitted with a \$100 application fee and \$150 public hearing fee. Application will include odor plan, plan to manage manure, site layout of enclosed coop/hutch/structure & caged in runs, plan for food storage and operation plan to avoid vermin. Species prohibited in residential areas include by not limited to cows, swine, sheep, goats since they exceed Animal Density and Animal Unit calculations located in the standards section. Roosters, peacocks, guineafowl, geese, ducks are also prohibited because of concerns for the neighbors regarding noise. Number of animals limited to 12 chickens/acre, 7 rabbits/acre (ex: fractional acres mean reduced animals .25-acre lot=3 chickens). Animal Unit is a measure when calculating the total limit of mixture of different animals based on weight (ex: 72 lbs./acre limited in residential areas so a resident may have 1 chicken and 1 rabbit on a .25-acre lot (16 lbs.)) After a completed application is received, notice in the Star Herald is submitted to provide the public the opportunity to attend and offer comment on the application. All abutters of the applicant are also notified by certified mail regarding the application submission and details of when the meeting will be. At the Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting, an applicant will address the board with their application via the A-R form and additional supporting plans. After the Board offers questions and are satisfied by the plan, the burden of proof is shifted to the residents opposed to offer testimony and substantial evidence (not vague statements) as to why the submitted plans will cause public health concerns. It is this process which will allow for dialogue should alterations to the plan be made by the applicant to lessen the impact on the surrounding neighborhood.

Citizen Comments

James Lyford of Braden Street spoke about the issues of having chickens living next door, and if citizens don't take care of the animals.

Becky Martinez of Parson's Street spoke of the issues of having chickens living next door and if chickens/animals are running free range. Becky is against this Ordinance.

Racheal Murchison of Dyer Street spoke in favor of the Ordinance.

Deputy Chairman K. Freeman closed the public hearing at 7:23 PM

Galen Weibley returned to the podium to answer questions from the Council.

The Councilors were divided whether to amend this Ordinance.

City Attorney Richard Currier recommended the Councilors to adopt the changes to this Ordinance, so that the City has guidelines to enforce if a citizen is in violation.

Bruce Roope spoke on behalf of the Planning Board and all the work that went into amending this Ordinance.

BE IT RESOLVED by Councilor D. Cyr, seconded by Councilor C. Green to table the discussion until the next Council Meeting on April 5th, 2023.

Vote: 4-2

Citizen Comments

There were no citizens comments

Consent Agenda

5. Approve Minutes from February 1, 2023 meeting.
6. Approve 2023 Warrants #2-5 totaling \$1,510,593.80
7. Review of Boards and Committees
8. Approve Appointment to Development Fund Board
9. Approve Appointment for Alternate on Library Board of Trustees

BE IT RESOLVED by Councilor C. Green, seconded by Councilor J. Willette to approve Consent Agenda #5-#9 as presented.

Vote: 6-0

Old Business

10. 2023 Goal Setting

City Manager M. Puckett spoke about the highlights from 2022 and requested a meeting be set up for the 2023 goal setting meeting.

2022 Goals

1. Housing: Team members: Tom Powers, Galen Weibley, Tim St. Peter, Lewis Cousins, Martin Puckett

Goal: Create various housing opportunities within the city to address existing shortages and future growth

Action Items:

- Identify locations/available land for development- all types of housing with estimated number of units per lot, consider zoning, soil type, blighted areas, location to compact area and public/private water & sewer
- Cost estimates for development of road, utilities, sitework, permitting
- Funding sources: Federal/State, ME Housing, PIDF
- Identify partnerships
- Tax acquired properties- continue to turn into residential units

Report out initial findings in May

Council Action: Vote 6/1 to market City owned lots for development, have discussions with developers. DECD created list of various locations within City for developers to consider. Staff held meetings with various developers, state entities, legislative outreach to promote housing opportunities.

2. Recreation Programming: Team Members: Gene Cronin & Rec Advisory Committee

Goal: Create outdoor activities/programs for wide age groups & families

Action Items:

- Identify Programs and equipment needs
- Develop budget
- Explore NHC opportunities
- Funding sources- grants, annual budget, capital
Equipment for Outdoor Programming

Presentation in May

Signed agreement with NHC, offered addition programs for summer

Produced update of activities in June

3. Online presence: Team Members: Brad Turner, Kellie Chapman, Galen Weibley, Patty Jandreau

Goal: Create Website that is consumer centric that highlights services & activities

Action Items:

- Create RFP for website design
- Review RFPs, interview companies
- Select company, contract
- Establish timeline for bids, design meetings, progress updates and completion
- Funding sources- grants, annual budget, capital

Was on agenda for March council meeting, RFP for April council meeting

June council meeting, council supported committee's recommendation, Revize awarded contract.

Website design committee met in July to discuss design.

Design presented to council

4. Workforce: Team Members: Brad Turner, Kellie Chapman, Martin Puckett & department heads

Goal: Retention and attraction program for employees.

Action Items:

- Partnerships to develop training programs to obtain licenses: (NMCC & Grants) CDL, paramedics
- Use information gathered from exit interviews to focus on key elements
- Look at regional, state and national efforts to attract
- Compare benefits
- Meet with union to brainstorm

Report out in September

Meetings occurred May 11 &19. Memo created to overview union/non-union issues.

Meet with council team to review issues, implemented increases in 2022/2023 budget

5. Marketing & Promotion: Team Members: Kim Smith, Martin Puckett

Goal: Promote Regional Events to attract visitors, citizens, increase workforce

Action Items:

- Create a cohesive website
- Event calendar
- Integrate into website redesign
- Explore CVB

Incorporate into website

6. Downtown Planning/Façade Program: Team Members: Galen Weibley, TIF Advisory, Dana Fowler, PIDRC

Goal: Downtown redevelopment & beautification

- Main St MDOT future collaboration VPI program
- Design loan/funding program to spur private investment
- Identify funding sources for façade- PIDF funding through TIF
- Parking, traffic design & reduce large truck traffic
- Sidewalk repair, pedestrian improvements
- Signage

Council enacted Façade program & promoted door to door, Accepting applications

Applications received and vetted by PIDF, approved by Council was Mike and Sons, and Northeastland.

Warm program created, council approved Thor Enterprizes

7. Regional Services: Darrell White, Lewis Cousins, Brad Turner

Goal: Design sustainable, collaborative regional programs with other communities & entities

- EMS & Assessing rate formulas for 2023
- Explore other programs/partners

EMS planned for May, Assessing soon after.

Council created EMS rates in May, Assessing in June.

Meeting with managers in June to discuss EMS rates

Other topics:

Fleet Management program implementation is ongoing

Internet expansion in the city, Utilize anticipated funding

Completion of City Hall with façade improvements for front & interior design

City Manager M. Puckett will send an email with dates and times for a council workshop to decide what works best for the group.

New Business

11. MSAD #1 Broadband.

Galen Weibley spoke and did a slide show to show the map of where Broadband is needed.

Discussion only.

12. 2022 DECD Department Report

Galen Weibley reported on business and commercial growth from his 2022 DECD Report.

13. Land Bank.

City Manager M. Puckett talked about reaching out to other communities regarding legislation that was passed last April about Land Bank.

Galen Weibley explained what a Land Bank was and what it does.

As part of Maine legislatures efforts to address housing and tax acquired properties by municipalities, the legislature has authorized a unique economic redevelopment tool in the form of a Land Bank Authority to assist communities with bringing properties back into productive use.

Land Banks have been used across the country in various levels (State, County or local level) with various degrees of success depending on the location. The purpose of a land bank is to shelter tax-acquired properties from municipal liability while offering tax savings to developers in repurposing vacant or blighted properties into productive reuse. The additional benefit for property transferred into the authority is that it acts to clean the title for clear ownership which is needed by financial institutions who are exploring financing a residential or commercial property on previously held tax-acquired properties.

State law stipulates the creation of a Land Bank Authority is a quasi-public corporate body with 5 commissioners being appointed by the locally elected officials of a community for 5-year terms. Commissioners shall be residents of the community and should have experience in commercial finance or community and economic development.

Exploring the creation of a City Land Bank would be consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan in filling development within the urban compact area which will cause less strain on public services. The Presque Isle Development Team has discussed this tool and concept and recommend the following motion if there are no questions from the City Council.

After resolution adoption, operational by-laws and incorporation documents will be drafted with a working group of the Presque Isle Development Team (Assessing, PI Housing, PIIC, DECD, Code, City Engineer, Public Works, PIUD) and two councilors which meet on the third Thursday regularly and first Thursday for Site Plan reviews.

Sanford is the only town that has a Land Bank Authority in place.

BE IT RESOLVED by Councilor M. Chasse, seconded by Councilor J. Willette to schedule a public hearing to consider adopting a resolution to establish a Land Bank Authority on April 5, 2023.

Vote: 6-0

14. Aroostook Waste Solution.

Mark Draper of Aroostook Waste Solutions (AWS) spoke on the plans of only having one land fill at a time.

Is the landfill going to close?

Technically, the operation of the landfill will cease in 2023, however, a transfer station operation will replace the landfill operation.

Will I still be able to bring my trash to the facility?

Residents-only will still be able to deliver **their own bagged trash** to the facility.

Commercial/business entities will be required to deliver their waste to the Tri-Community Landfill in Fort Fairfield.

What wastes will I be able to bring to the facility?

Residents will be able to deliver their own household bagged trash, bulky items (furniture, mattresses, etc.), tires, wood, universal wastes (tv's, computer monitors, light bulbs, etc.), scrap metal, recyclables, and small quantities of household demolition debris to the facility.

How is it going to work?

Bagged household trash will be deposited into an enclosed stationary compactor with an attached enclosed roll-off container. The waste will be compacted into the container and hauled to the Tri-community Landfill when the container is full. Bulky items and demolition debris will be stored temporarily on site and then hauled to the Tri-Community Landfill. All other items will be managed as they are today.

Will I still need a permit?

Yes, an annual permit or a 3-trip pass will still be required to use the facility, just as it is today. The 2023 landfill permits and passes will be valid for the transfer station.

When is this going to happen?

While an exact date has not been determined, it will likely be in the second half of 2023.

Are the Hours of operation going to change?

Yes, slightly. The facility will be open from 7:30 am to 3:30 pm Tuesday through Friday; and 7:30 am to 2:30 pm on Saturday. It will be closed on Sunday and Monday.

Why not just expand the landfill?

Landfill capacity is exceptionally expensive to construct and to operate. For the sake of efficiency, AWS plans to operate one landfill at a time. The remaining licensed capacity of the Presque Isle Landfill may be utilized in the future.

15. 2022 Airport Department Review.

Scott Wardwell reported that boarding's have increased since 2020 due to the change in aircrafts used. Fuel sales have also increased.

Manager's Report

City Manager M. Puckett spoke about the correspondence from the Planning Board giving support to the Land Bank and Emergency Preparedness Plan.

Also, the Chamber of Commerce annual meeting is March 9, 2023 Please RSVP by March 3, 2023 if you are attending.

Announcements

SnowBowl will kick off on March 2nd and run through the 5th and take place at Spud Speedway. Winter Kids Family Fun Day will take place on March 4th at 9:00 am at Big Rock Mountain. There will be a Career Fair at the Aroostook Center Mall on Wednesday, March 15th (tentatively). Northeastland Hotel will host Spring Basket FEZtival on March 16th -19th. NMCC Job Fair will be held on March 23 from 9am to 1pm. Sportsman Show will be held on March 25-26 at UMPI. The City has the following employment vacancies: Firefighter/Paramedic, Police Officer. We have the following vacancies for Boards/Committees: Assessment Review, 2-one-year alternates. Audit committee, 1- four-year member. Planning Board, 1-one-year alternate. Zoning Board, 1-three -year member and 1-one-year alternate. Please see the City Clerk for an application or apply online.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Presque Isle City Council will be on Wednesday, April 5, 2023, at 6:00 PM in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

Adjournment

BE IT RESOLVED by Councilor J. Willette seconded by Deputy Chairman K. Freeman to enter into Executive Session at 8:41 PM pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. § 405(6)(D) to discuss Negotiations matter.

Vote: 6-0

Out of executive session at 9:00 PM.

No action taken.

BE IT RESOLVED to adjourn by Deputy Chairman K. Freeman, second by Deputy Councilor J. Willette at 9:00 PM.

Vote 5-0

Councilor M. Chasse left during executive session

Attested by: _____
Kimberly A Finnemore, City Clerk