

October 26, 2009

09-22

A regular meeting of the Caribou City Council was held at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, October 26, 2009 in Council Chambers with the following members present: Mayor Kenneth G. Murchison, Jr., Christopher A.R. Bell, R. Mark Goughan, Karla M. Bell, David Martin, Mary Kate Barbosa, and Miles R. Williams.

Steven R. Buck, City Manager, and Michael Shrewsbury, Director of Community Development, were present.

Also attending the meeting were Joseph Sleeper II, Wendy Landes, Jim Cyr, Tracy Heald, Eulalia Martin, Doug Morrell, Paul and Joan Theriault, James Cerrato, Wilfred Martin, Jr., and several others.

Barbara Scott, representing the Aroostook Republican; and Time Warner covered the meeting.

Council Agenda item #1: Public input – No public input

Council Agenda item #2: Sesquicentennial Update

Jim Cyr reminded those interested in attending the wrap up meeting of the Sesquicentennial Committee to be held Wednesday, October 27<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m. in the Caribou Library. He said anyone still interested in placing bids for the large photos that were on display throughout Caribou during the summer may do so at the Celebrate Central office, which will be open Fridays and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. To learn more about upcoming events and purchasing other memorabilia go to [www.celebratecaribou.com](http://www.celebratecaribou.com).

Council Agenda item #3: Public Hearing to receive written and verbal input on the proposed changes to the State Revised General Assistance Overall Rental Maximums.

7:03 p.m. Public Hearing opened.

The City Manager outlined the State mandated ordinance that provides for maximum levels of general assistance and that is to be adopted yearly by the municipal officers. The State will base the reimbursement amounts on these maximums, which are increased by 1% overall.

The Mayor invited public comments.

Wilfred Martin asked what the comparisons were between the federally funded HUD programs and the rates under the General Assistance programs. The City Manager surmised that the rates under General assistance would most likely be lower.

7:10 p.m. Public Hearing opened.

Council Agenda item #4: Consider acting upon the adoption of the adjustments to the State Revised General Assistance Overall and Rental Maximums and any actions relating thereto.

Motion made by C. Bell, seconded by D. Martin, to authorize the 2009-2010 General Assistance Maximums as presented and to submit the same to the Department of Health and Human Resources. (7 yes) So voted.

Council Agenda item #5: Consider authorizing the Minutes of the October 13, 2009 Council Meeting.

Motion made by C. Bell, seconded by M K Barbosa, to accept the minutes of the October 13, 2009 Council Meeting as printed. (6 yes, 1 abstention, K. Bell) So voted.

Council Agenda item #6: Consider a Quarterly Update by the Caribou Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Joe Sleeper, President of the CC&I, began the presentation by referring to the matrix that had been introduced to the Council earlier in the year. He outlined some of the ongoing work to attract business to the area that is being done in collaboration with Aroostook Partnership for Progress and the Mobilize Maine effort, as well as NMDC and the LDA. As part of the effort to promote business retention, Mr. Sleeper noted that the CCC&I staff have been spending time out in the business community. He spoke on the positive feedback as a result of work to promote Caribou via the website and web cam and the co-operative efforts that are ongoing with the Downtown Revitalization Committee.

Secretary Troy Heald reported on the work of the Development Committee, which has included several road trips to UMPI and to the Orono campus of the U of M in the composite lab, to learn more potential opportunities to expand business in Caribou.

Jim Cyr, Director, spoke on the Sesquicentennial events and the role that the Chamber played in many events including acting as a clearing house, sponsoring many of the events, and generally keeping everything running smoothly behind the scenes. Noting that the Chamber assisted in the Presque Isle Light Parade last year, invited anyone interested in participating the parade December 5<sup>th</sup> are asked to contact the Chamber.

Mr. Sleeper wanted to point out the many thank you notes that were received by the Chamber for their work in the 150<sup>th</sup> celebration.

Mayor Murchison said he was pleased with the matrix format and thought it was a good gauge for measuring progress.

Councilor Goughan also thanked the board for the volunteer time put into the celebration efforts and noted the positive spin off his business realized. He encouraged the continued efforts of the CCC&I to reach out to business and noted the importance of their work to retain business through the loan program, etc. He suggested possibly contacting the State Economic Development office and other state agencies as well.

Councilor K. Bell asked about the brochure that was part of the packet received by the Council. Wendy Landes said it was actually developed after a suggestion from Councilor K. Bell and was designed similar to one that Houlton has used as a moneymaker for several years. She noted that this one was meant to inform the public of upcoming events and encourage attendance, but was not to be a moneymaker.

The City Manager wanted to encourage everyone to participate in the Mobilize Maine Initiative, adding, "We only get out what we put in." In particular, the Asset Mapping sessions held in Presque Isle, Houlton and St. Agatha have identified parking lot issues. Important information is anticipated to be gained from those sessions. The Initiative has also recognized the importance of trying to reduce the out migration of youths from the area by salvaging the age groups of twenty-five to forty-five.

Council Agenda item #7: Consider authorizing the Financial Statements for the period ending September 30, 2009.

The City Manager reported the month of September ended with Revenues closing at 81.76%, or 6.76% ahead of projections, and Expenses closing at 71.46%, or 3.54% under budget. The City Budget was shown to be in a positive position. Information on the major factors contributing to the final figures was presented.

Motion made by D. Martin, seconded by K. Bell, to authorize the Financial Statements for the period ending September 30, 2009 as presented. (6 yes, 1 no, M. Goughan) So voted.

Council Agenda item #8: Consider actions pertaining to a recently donated parcel of land, Tax Map 35 Lot 103, North Main Street.

Since there was no response from the abutting property owners, it was the consensus of the Council to have the City Manager proceed with placing the property for bid for the amount of \$4,500.

Council Agenda item #9: Consider an amendment to the City of Caribou Tax Acquired Property Policy to provide for allocations to the Tax Acquired Property Remediation Reserve.

The City Manager presented the proposed amendment that would allow a portion of net receipts (20%) from the sale of properties to be set aside to secure or remediate tax acquired properties in preparation for future sale and return to the tax roles. Deposits made to the reserve account for this purpose G-1-490-00 could be waived or amended by the Council at anytime.

Motion made by M. Williams, seconded by D. Martin, to adopt the amendment to the City of Caribou Tax Acquired Property Policy to provide for allocations to the Tax Acquired Property Remediation Reserve account G-1-490-00. (7 yes) So voted.

Council Agenda item #10: Consider setting a Legislative Meeting date to review the pending Segment 4 design and construction for the exchange of information and views.

The City Manager said he had contacted Representative Edgecomb and Senator Jackson and learned that a breakfast meeting would not fit into Senator Jackson's schedule. It was suggested that an evening session would be more favorable. The idea of including Madawaska Representative Charles Theriault, the only legislator from Aroostook on the Transportation Committee, was suggested. The consensus was to have the City Manager contact all three legislators to set up an agreeable dinner meeting date by mid November.

Councilor K. Bell also suggested possibly providing the City Manger with points to discuss during the telephone conference meetings with legislators when the new session begins, as was done in the past.

Council Agenda item #11: Consider the renewal of a Bingo Game of Chance License for Caribou Senior Citizens Bingo, located at the American Legion Post #15, Sweden Street.

Motion made by D. Martin, seconded by K. Bell, to approve the renewal of a Bingo Game of Chance License for Caribou Senior Citizens Bingo, located at the American Legion Post #15, Sweden Street. (7 yes) So voted.

Council Agenda item #12: Consider Acting upon Property Bids for Tax Map 25 Lot 122 and Map23 Lot 10C.

One bid was received for each property, both from Bill Belanger and both were under specified minimum bid amounts.

Tax Map 25, Lot 122 - bid \$500.00 (specified minimum bid was \$2,500) (amount to satisfy tax lien \$350.00)

Tax Map 23, Lot 10C – bid \$800.00 (specified minimum bid was \$3,200) (amount to satisfy tax lien \$800.00)

The Council discussed the issue. Councilor Bell favored sending the properties back out to bid with the minimum amounts to satisfy the liens. He thought accepting either of the bids would be unfair to others who might have been interested in bidding but were reluctant when the minimum amount was as high as it was. He saw this as setting an unfair precedent. Councilor Goughan was in agreement.

Motion made by D. Martin, seconded by C. Bell, to reject both bids and re-bid the properties at the cost of recovering the debt. Minimum bid amounts to be \$350.00 instead of \$2,500 on Tax Map 25, Lot 122; and \$800.00 instead of \$3,200 on Map 23, Lot 10C. (5 yes, 2 no, M. Williams and K. Bell) So voted.

#### Council Agenda item #13: Updates

The City Manager provided information on several topics, including:

- Fairpoint Communications – Both Aroostook County applications have been moved forward – Positive step although Fairpoint is now in Chapter 11
- Dennis Brockway communication – Maine Ambulance Association has suspended the Rider A Program in Maine – There are concerns about MaineCare’s administration of the program – Long term loss of program would significantly affect Ambulance Department and City Budget
- Veteran’s Park Project – Carroll St. Peter, Chair, seeking non-profit status for newly formed Veteran’s Memorial Park Association – Group working on plans for a future memorial park in Caribou – Volunteers are being solicited – By-laws in process of being established – Group anticipates approaching the Council early in 2010 to discuss vision
- General Aviation Airport Meeting - Held on the 19<sup>th</sup> in Presque Isle – Steve Buck and Tim Doak of BRSA attended – Annual meeting when MDOT covers changes to prioritization plans, funding projections, etc. – It is time to update Caribou’s Master Plan – Group working to have FAA install, own and maintain navigational aids such as lighting system to assist pilots approaching airport – MDOT is looking to prioritize full reconstruction of Caribou’s main runway
- Mobilize Maine – Initiative is going well - Focus on what is here rather than what to bring in – Three leading clusters to be mapped – Goal is to have a set of tools to determine economic gain of business, etc. when developing TIF programs for example
- Community Development – Director is preparing to submit two grant applications – One is for the newly formed RSU to install a Bio-mass boiler at Caribou high School - The second grant would be for the purpose of converting the incandescent street lights to LED fixtures – Director is also working with Parks & Recreation Trustees to obtain a planning grant targeting the Aroostook River water frontage – 2010 CDBG program statement being studied

for possible applications – Welcome to Caribou sign renderings are being shown to the Rotary Club and other organizations for input.

- Awards Banquet – Council invited to annual gathering November 13<sup>th</sup> at Caribou Inn & Convention – 5:30 p.m. Social time followed by heavy hors d’oeuvres and awards at 6:00 p.m.– Event to be very informal - Entertainment by Dave Ouellette – RSVP to Corlene Singletary
- City Report for 2010 – Booklet should center around this year’s 150<sup>th</sup> Celebration – Research being done to find cost for 16 page full color insert covering all events – Assessment being done on how many additional copies of the report should be ordered

Council Agenda item #14: Other Business

- a. First Read: Correspondence from the Caribou Utilities District on a pending Rate Increase submitted to PUC and proposed Charter Amendments

The proposed rate increase for water rates would be effective January 1, 2010 and would increase Fire Protection by \$5,771 and other accounts by \$1,189. In addition, two CUD Charter amendments are being proposed. The Council was asked to review the information in preparation for submitting comments to the Legislature by early January.

- b. Next Meetings
  - i. Council Meeting, November 9, 2009 7:00PM Council Chambers
- c. Discussion of potential Committee meetings
- d. Other Business

Councilor Goughan, recognizing the volunteer work everyone has done throughout the process, thanked the Councilors who attended the Transportation meeting on Segment 4. He also asked about the status of the recently discussed sign that is in violation on the Presque Isle Road. The City Manager understood that MDOT would issue one last communication to the entity involved. The situation was seen as setting an unfair double standard.

9:24 p.m. Motion made by C. Bell, seconded by K. Bell, to adjourn the meeting.  
(7 yes) So voted.

Judy-Ann Corrow, Secretary

October 26, 2009