Town Council
MEETING MINUTES
May 21, 2024
LISBON TOWN OFFICE
7:00 PM - COUNCIL MEETING

Harry Moore, Jr., Chair
Raymond Robishaw, Vice Chair
Mark Lunt
Normand Albert
Jo-Jean Keller
Christine Cain
Fern Larochelle

CALL TO ORDER & PLEDGE TO FLAG

The Vice Chair, Raymond Robishaw, called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag at 6:30 PM.

ROLL CALL

Members present were Councilors Cain, Albert, Keller, Larochelle, Lunt, and Robishaw. Also present were Glenn Michalowski, Town Manager; Ross Cunningham, Economic & Community Development Director; Samantha Bryant, Finance Director; and approximately 20 citizens in the audience.

Excuse Absent Councilor

VOTE (2024-020) Council Member Larochelle, seconded by Vice Chair Robishaw, moved to Excuse Councilor Moore's absence..
Order Passed – Vote 6-0.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Executive Session for Personnel Matters per 1 M.R.S.A. § 405(6)(A) Board Interviews

VOTE (2024-091) Council Member Larochelle, seconded by Council Member Cain, moved to enter into Executive Session for Personnel Matters per 1 M.R.S.A. § 405(6)(A) Board Interviews for Public Safety Building Committee at 6:32 pm.
Order Passed – Vote 6-0.
VOTE (2024-091B) Council Member Larochelle, seconded by Council Member Albert, moved to return from Executive Sessionat 7:02 pm.
Order Passed – Vote 6-0.

GOOD NEWS & RECOGNITION

Ross Cunningham, Economic & Community Development Director, said the Tasty Tuesday food truck event tonight is going well and there are about 1,200 people there right now.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Food Truck Permit for Mr. Sea's Seafood

Vice Chair Ray Robishaw opened the Hearing. Seeing no comments, he closed the Hearing.

Food Truck Permit for Halo Sips

Vice Chair Ray Robishaw opened the Hearing. Seeing no comments, he closed the Hearing.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION & RESPONSE FOR AGENDA ITEMS

Becca Starbird from Nick's Recycling spoke on behalf of the commercial waste haulers in Lisbon in reference to the agenda item addressing Transfer Station Fees. She said the same amount of trash will be at the Transfer Station regardless of how it gets there. She said the commercial haulers, like Nick's, Plummer's and Higgins, perform a service for people in the community who cannot go to the Transfer Station for a variety of reasons.

Adam Jones of Willow Circle said he doesn't have time to go to the Transfer Station due to his work schedule. He asserted that the Finance Committee is trying to shut down small businesses, and asked where the tax dollars are going. He said without commercial haulers the town will need more hours and more staff. He said we should take the money we're spending on Main Street sidewalks

[DOT project] and spend it on this.

Jean Burkhardt said she is a retired nurse. She asked how the town is going to help people who are disabled or elderly to go to the Transfer Station. She asked the Council to think about the community--the disabled, the elderly and the poor. She stated that Lisbon is middle and lower class people who cannot afford more.

Jamie Schaedler said she uses Nick's and also buys a permit. She said no one will be able to afford permits or pickups.

Alan Seamans added to the comments of the other speakers regarding the report the Finance Director submitted. He said he was missing part of it and requested it. The Finance Director stated she would supply that for him.

Marcel Drouin asked why we're having this conversation. Some discussion followed.

Deanna Marine of 7 Blethen Street said said she's used Plummer's since about 2005-2006. She is by herself and it is very had to go to the transfer station. She said she supports those who are helping the elderly. She said she will be forced to move if she doesn't have someone to do pickup for her. She said disabled people need help.

Councilor Robishaw reminded the audience that Council is not voting tonight, they plan to discuss the Finance Committee's recommendations.

Former Councilor and current Finance Committee member Don Fellows said the changes are because we need users to cover the tipping fees. He said we're trying to get a handle on it, that we are not asking to get rid of commercial haulers, but to have them go to Lewiston to dump. Also, the cost of plastic is at $130 per ton, he recommends we stop recycling plastic to save money. He explained that the committee considered the best options.

Samantha Bryant, Finance Director, suggested the Chair move the Transfer Station Discussion item to the current discussion in the agenda in order to address the community's questions. The Chair concurred. Ms. Bryant said the Finance Committee's goal was to find a way for transfer station fees to pay for disposal costs, not other things. She said the only solution proposed, was that we examine all the fees and the tonnage, including fees and structures other municipalities do. She said other towns our size don't allow for commercial haulers, and explained the crux of the matter is that the commercial haulers' services are being subsidized by the rest of the taxpayers. She said a potential long term solution would be pa-as-you-throw, but this would be a bigger change. She added that, regarding supplemental materials, she will make sure they are made public. And regarding equity portions, as long as the fees aren't paying for it, taxes are subsidizing the commercial haulers. Councilor Larochelle said this comes up constantly because there's no sustainable solution right now. Mir. Fellows had suggested another working group and maybe it is time. He said there is a lot of different terminology that can be used. He added that we do need to look at how we can find the best way to pay. It is a challenge, he said, and maybe an ad hoc committee can be put together to look at these issues.

Councilor Albert thanked members of the community who called and emailed councilors, he said it was heard loud and clear.

Ms. Bryant asked if council would respond to anything on the Finance Committee's notes. Vice Chair Robishaw said we will table it for now.

CONSENT AGENDA

Consent Agenda Items

Consent Agenda Items are considered routine, and are considered for adoption by one motion with no separate discussion unless a Councilor requests an item be removed. Councilor Cain requested her business, Olive Pit, be removed from the Victualer's Permit approvals list for a separate vote.

VOTE (2024-92) Council Member Larochelle, seconded by Vice Chair Robishaw, moved to approve the Consent Agenda with the exception of Olive Pit Victualer's Permit.
Order Passed – Vote 6-0.
VOTE (2024-92A) Council Member Larochelle, seconded by Council Member Albert, moved to approve a Victualer's Permit renewal for Olive Pit Brewing.
Order Passed – Vote 5-0-1.

Set Hearing for Municipal Budget & Municipal CIP Budget for June 18, 2024

Municipal Accounts Payable Warrants $ 534,283.80

Municipal Payroll Warrants $ 202,052.99

School Accounts Payable Warrants $ 213,986.86

School Payroll Warrants $ 437,166.00

Approve the Itinerant Vendor License for the Maine Blues Festival

Approve Victualer's Licenses for Smiley's, Frank's and Angelo's

Liquor License, Special Entertainment Permit, and Extension of Liquor License for Sandra Harkins DBA Railroad Restaurant & Pub

Annual Approval of Victualer's Permits

Approval of Food Truck Permits

Set Public Hearings for June 18, 2024 for Food Truck permits for Jeff's Jamaican Cuisine and Sum'Battus BBQ

COUNCIL ORDERS, RESOLUTIONS, & ORDINANCES

Approve CDBG Application for 31 Canal Street
Item taken out of order after Good News and Recognition.

Ross Cunningham recommended, per the memos and documentation, approval to go to bid for the CDBG project for Eagle Creek Development.

VOTE (2024-93) Council Member Larochelle, seconded by Council Member Cain, moved to Approve CDBG project at Eagle Creek Development building and authorize putting the project out to bid.
Order Passed – Vote 6-0.

Ordinance Amendment - Chapter 70 - Article IV, Division 5A: Rural Open Space II Zoning District - *First Reading*
Councilor Larochelle, Council liaison to the Planning Board, said that the comprehensive plan had det aside rural land, and that ROS II si more restrictive. He explained that landowners are asking to change their property to allow building, that this ordinance change is a loosening up, so people can use their properties. He said it makes ROS II have similar rules to ROS I, that over time there may be more changes but it will be slowly.

Roll Call Vote: Yeas – Vice Chair Robishaw, Council Member Cain, Council Member Keller, Council Member Larochelle, Council Member Lunt, Council Member Albert. Nays – None.

Order Passed – Vote 6-0.

OTHER BUSINESS

Council Committee Reports:

School Committee

Councilor Albert reported that the School hosted Special Olympics events.

Planning Board

Councilor Larochelle mentioned we already talked about ROS II just now, we are working on changes due to the new state laws, so that any land that can have a house can have a mobile home. He said the Board is working on coming up with standards for trailers so the standards are fair & equitable. He added the Board has a full plate and is also working on driveway and road standards.

Lisbon Development Committee

Councilor Larochelle reported the Committee had a good meeting and talked about wood harvesting and deer harvesting. He stated the abutters to the town property thought it was a good idea.

Conservation Commission

Alan Seamans, a committee member, said they had a busy meeting. They took a tour of Beaver Park and saw the winter storm damage, that the Pinewoods property was discussed at length, received an update on the Beaver Park forestry plan, and were told that the property boundaries have mean marked.

Parks & Recreation Committee

No report.

County Budget Committee

No report.

Library Governing Board

Councilor Keller said reconstruction outside is due to the previous sidewalk construction at the fire station. She said the summer reading programs kick off on June 22nd during the 225th Birthday Celebration for Lisbon.

Water Commission

Councilor Albert said he was impressed with the savings on phone costs that the water department is realizing. He said they also put failsafes in place.

Finance Committee

Councilor Robishaw said there was nothing new other than the earlier discussion.

Town Manager's Report

Mr. Michalowski said there will be a Public Hearing at the next meeting for the Budget and we are looking at a small decrease in taxes. He said the internship program starts again on May 28th, the Intern will work with the manager and some other departments. He pointed out that there will be ergonomic upgrades started tomorrow Wednesday at the tax collector's office so the office will be closed and there will be staff trainings. He said there will be temporary changes and inconveniences, also on the 27th and the 28th, and apologized for that. The Town Manager also added that the hours for the Town Office will be adjusted per his memo. He said there have been issues with unhappy residents and we are trying to resolve those. He added we are looking at expanding hours, but will meet with staff to discuss first.

Transfer Station Fee Structure Discussion

Item taken up and tabled at Audience Participation at beginning of meeting.

APPOINTMENTS

Public Safety Committee Appointments

VOTE (2024-095) Council Member Albert, seconded by Vice Chair Robishaw, moved to Appoint Donald Philip Barter, Michael Robitaille, Liza Kimball, Chris Camire, and Scott Kelly to the Public Safety Building Committee.
Order Passed– Vote 6-0.

Annual Reappointment of Amy Scribner as Tax Collector
VOTE (2024-096) Council Member Larochelle, seconded by Vice Chair Robishaw, moved to reappoint Amy Scribner to Tax Collector for FY 2024-2025.
Order Passed – Vote 6-0.

COUNCIL COMMUNICATIONS

Councilor Larochelle thanked all the applicants for the Public Safety Building Committee, he said they are all good candidates. He added that, regarding the Transfer Station issue, in addition to the fee structure is plastics an issue for Council or staff? Mr. Michalowski said it may be contentions due to a lack of recycling. He added that Council can authorize staff to make the necessary changes, and pointed out that even though recycling was, at one time, profitable, only cardboard is profitable now. Councilor Larochelle agreed, stating that much of the plastic that is sent ot recycling is not recyclable and ends up in the landfills. Councilor Albert said we may be sorting it here only to have it dumped into landfills down the line. Councilor Larochelle asked for staff input on how we should deal with plastics moving forward, as well, keeping in mind what is still recyclable. Councilor Lunt asked for clarification for the public on whether we will stop plastic recycling altogether or still recycle certain kinds.

VOTE (2024-096A) Council Member Larochelle, seconded by Vice Chair Robishaw, moved to authorize Town staff to make the necessary changes to remove plastics from recycling to get the lower cost tipping fees.
Order Passed – Vote 6-0.

Vice Chair Robishaw asked how the budget will move forward since the item was tabled. Mr. Michalowski said the Finance Director will work with current budget numbers for the fee structure and will factor in the difference in tipping costs.

Councilor Keller read the memo from Sarah Bennett, Assistant Town Manager, regarding the Historical Society Preservation Committee. She said the Committee is seeking new volunteers, those who are interested should see the Town Manager.

Councilor Larochelle said the Council met with LACO on Saturday, there was a lot of uncertainty. He requested the Town Manager write a letter to stakeholders to get feedback. He said there may be communities around us who have resources or opportunities that would be helpful.

VOTE (2024-096B) Council Member Larochelle, seconded by Council Member Keller, moved to direct Town staff and the Management team to prepare a correspondence on office letterhead to reach out to Bowdoin, Sabattus,Durham and Lewiston to inquire regarding intent to pledge support and to invite to join additional discussions regarding the Food Pantry.
Order Passed – Vote 6-0.

Councilor Larochelle also said there were misunderstandings about time frames, and LACO is looking for a more solid time. Also, how much they are required to do. He asked if anyone in town has space, and said we should put it out to the community.

Mr. Michalowski said the LACO Board is putting together a working group to work with Council and Staff.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION & RESPONSE TO NEW ITEMS

Roger Bickford of Lisbon Falls thanked the Council for the ATV work they have done.

EXECUTIVE SESSION II

Executive Session for Labor Negotiations per 1 M.R.S.A. § 405(6)(D)

VOTE (2024-097) Council Member Larochelle, seconded by Council Member Albert, moved to enter into Executive Session for Labor Negotiations per 1 M.R.S.A. § 405(6)(D) for the Fire Department at 8:18 PM.

Order Passed – Vote 6-0.

ADJOURNMENT

To Adjourn

VOTE (2024-098) Council Member Larochelle, seconded by Council Member Albert, moved to Adjourn at 8:41 PM.

Order Passed– Vote 6-0.

Lisa M. Ward, Council Secretary

Date Approved: July 16, 2024