



**COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**  
**GARDINER CITY COUNCIL**  
**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 20, 2020**  
**6:00 PM**

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Hart at 6:06 p.m.

**1. ROLL CALL/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

City Council Present: Mayor Hart, Councilor Cusick, Councilor White, Councilor Berry, Councilor Rees, Councilor Rines and Councilor Sergeant.

City Council Absent: Councilor Frey.

Also present: City Manager Christine Landes, City Clerk Alisha Ballard, Officer Samuel Quintana, Jim Dinkle, Steve Monsulick, Executive Director of Gardiner Main Street Melissa Lindley, Ingrid Stanchfield, Raye-Ann Desoto Michael Miclon, Richard Heath, Tom Reeves, Dean Martin, Meaghan Carlson, Cullen McGough, Jo Roderick, Roland Pinette and Fire Chief Richard Sieberg.

**2. PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

**3. PETITIONS/PUBLIC HEARINGS**

None

**4. NEW BUSINESS**

**a) Recognize January 2021 Employee of the Month/ Officer Samuel Quintana**

All councilors congratulated Officer Quintana.

**Action:** Councilor White moved to recognize and offer congratulations to Officer Samuel Quintana as the first ever City of Gardiner Employee of the Month for January 2021.

Councilor Sergent seconded.

Mayor Hart asked for any discussion. None. All those in favor. Unanimous.

**b) Update from Non-Profits, Johnson Hall, and First Park**

1. First Park/ Jim Dinkle

Jim gave a brief overview of the financial status at First Park.

2. Gardiner Main Street/ Melissa Lindley

Melissa gave a brief overview of Gardiner Main Street happenings.

3. Boys and Girls Club/ Ingrid Stanchfield

Ingrid gave a brief overview on program changes in 2020.

4. Johnson Hall/ Michael Miclon

Michael gave an overview on the challenges Johnson Hall faced and changes they made to move to livestream.

5. Tiger Food Pantry/ Raye Anne Desoto

Raye Anne gave an overview on the changes in 2020 due to COVID. They currently have twenty six Interact students and are growing.

**c) Update from Merrymeeting Trail (MMT) Board/ Richard Heath and Tom Reeves**

Richard Heath provided a brief update on Merrymeeting Trail Board.

**d) Interview Potential MSAD #11 School Board Candidates/ Cast Ballot**

Meaghan Carlson gave a brief overview of herself.

Councilor Rees stated she remembers working with Meaghan on the Heart & Soul project and that she is pleased to see her trying for the school board seat.

Dean Martin gave a brief overview of himself.

Cullen McGough gave a brief overview of himself.

**Action:** Mayor Hart called for a break while Councilors took a vote.

Mayor Hart called the meeting back to order at 8:01 p.m.

Mayor Hart announced Cullen McGough won the vote.

Councilor Rees said congratulations to Cullen.

**Action:** City Clerk Ballard swore in Cullen McGough.

**e) Review of Tax Acquired Properties Proposed to be Sent Out to Bid/16 Iron Mine Hill Road (Trailer Only) Catherine and Kenneth Buechler**

City Manager Landes spoke briefly.

Roland Pinette introduced himself and provided information on the trailer.



Councilor Berry asked if the mobile home is vacant.

Roland answered, "It has been abandoned."

Councilor Berry asked, "How long ago?"

Roland stated, "3 weeks ago."

Councilor Cusick stated he had the opportunity to go look at the trailer. Councilor Cusick agreed with Roland about the trailer; it is in disarray. Councilor Cusick felt it is a good idea that the city take this opportunity to sell the trailer and make it taxable.

**Action:** Councilor Berry moved to waive the tax acquired bid process for the mobile home located at 16 Iron Mine Hill Road and sell this property to Jo Roderick for the amount of \$1,000. The mobile home will be sold as-is and where-is with no warranty implied or given.

Councilor White seconded.

Mayor Hart asked for any discussion. None. All those in favor. Unanimous.

**f) Grant Permission for Fire Chief Sieberg to Submit Assistance to Firefighter's Grant (AFG) for a New Ambulance**

Fire Chief Sieberg spoke briefly in regards to the AFG grant.

Councilor Berry thanked Chief Sieberg and asked if an ambulance is up to \$320,000 dollars.

Fire Chief Sieberg stated the ambulance itself is less than that, but the lift and cot is more. Chief Sieberg stated the price they quote you for grants is top dollar. Grants can take up to a year to be given. The price might come out less.

Councilor Berry stated there is many ambulance companies out there that operate for profit. Grants are not always going to be available and is it time that we sit down and look at what we charge for the services that we provide.

Fire Chief Sieberg states in the last month they have been looking into making changes for billing.

Councilor Berry states that he remembers that about eight years ago we were digging out of a big hole with rebilling.

Chief Sieberg replied that we should not rely on grants. If we were to get the grant it will give us lots of breathing room.

Councilor Berry thanked the Chief for his efforts.

Mayor Hart asked if it was put as a priority due to COVID.

Chief Sieberg replied, "Yes, that did play into that."

Councilor White asked if he knew the time frame of knowing if we receive the grant in order to put it into this year's budget.

Chief Sieberg stated the grant process closes February 13 and when they award it would be late spring.

Mayor Hart asked if the SAFER grants are going to be granted any time soon.

Chief Sieberg stated they would be around March.

**Action:** Councilor Berry moved to allow the Fire Chief to submit an Assistance to Firefighters (AFG) Grant in the amount of \$320,500.00 to possibly fund the purchase of a new ambulance.

Councilor Cusick seconded.

Mayor Hart asked for any discussion. None. All those in favor. Unanimous.

**g) Consider Approval of a Victualer's License for Gardiner Food Co-op**

**Action:** Councilor Rines moved to approve the victualer's license for Gardiner Food Co-op.

Councilor Sergent seconded.

Mayor Hart asked for any discussion. None. All those in favor. Unanimous.

**h) Review and Accept Monthly Reports from City Manager and Department Heads**

Mayor Hart wanted to Congratulate Chief Sieberg for the Forestry grant.

Chief Sieberg explained the Forestry grant.

Councilor Berry asked how much the grant was for.

Mayor Hart stated the grant was for \$1,105.

**Action:** Councilor Sergent moved to accept the December 2020 monthly reports from the City Manager and Department Heads.

Councilor Rines seconded.

Mayor Hart asked for any discussion. None. All those in favor. Unanimous.

**i) Board and Committees Update from Mayor and City Councilors**

Councilor Rees stated there is a meeting coming up for the downtown master plan on January 27.

Councilor Berry states that First Park and Gardiner Board of Trade had scheduled meetings; today that were cancelled and for KVCOG there is no update.

Councilor White states she is on the audit committee and they meet once a year and states the dog committee has not met in a long time.

Councilor Cusick stated that the ambulance advisory held a meeting couple of weeks ago. They discussed moving forward with applying for the grant and talked about the budget. Councilor Cusick states he missed the sidewalk committee meeting.

Mayor Hart states the sidewalk committee met for the second time and the consensus was that this year will be a planning year. We have a new Public Works Director, and he will figure out what has been done and will relook at the conditions of the sidewalks. The committee discussed the maintenance now that we have new sidewalks. The ordinance review committee has been talking about the changes to the marijuana ordinances based



on the moratorium. Those should be working their way through soon along with tiny homes. The issue with the fences for dogs will be coming to council soon as it is working its way through planning board and ordinance review. We convened the first meeting of the Cobbossee trail committee, and they will meet again next week. It was a good meeting. There was a multi-community meeting to hear from state and federal representatives about the possibility for fish passage, and Upstream had hired a contractor to layout some options for getting the fish over all the dams. They brought all the committees together to give final input of the options. Mayor Hart also serves on a regional committee that talks about homelessness and housing and they will meet at the end of the month.

**j) Review and Accept Meeting Minutes from January 6, 2021 and January 13, 2021**

**Action:** Councilor Cusick moved to approve the minutes of January 6, 2021 and January 13, 2021 as presented.  
Councilor Rees seconded.  
Mayor Hart asked for any discussion. None. All those in favor. Unanimous.

**5. CITY MANAGER REPORT**

City hall continues to be closed. We are down seven employees at the moment. The City Manager gave permission to Library Director Davis to adjust hours at the library as they are short staffed. The marijuana moratorium does expire March 1<sup>st</sup>. This will be returning to council to ask for an extension. Manager Landes has secured March 15<sup>th</sup> for the boards and committees volunteer training, it will be via zoom. We have the city solicitor ready to review some material. She is talking to a company about adding a zoom etiquette section so people can be familiar with such. All the boards and committees will receive an update with a 'save the date.'

The City Manager was pleased that Chief Sieberg informed her that Damien Ross passed his written paramedic test. He only has his physical test to do. This should help with the stress of staffing issues.

Manager Landes asked for councilor permission to enter into an agreement with Farmingdale. As city hall is currently closed, they are working hard serving the citizens they still face and are worried what will happen if we all are sent home. Tax Collector Kathleen Cutler talked to Farmingdale, on her request, and the Selectmen approved a partnership that

if either one of us have to close that we help each other collect fees. We do need approval from council to enter into this agreement.

Mayor Hart asked what services would these be and we would need to take a formal vote. Manager Landes states it would be motor vehicle, collecting excise tax, possible marriage license and anything that would be done at the front counter. Farmingdale would keep the fees that we would charge for the services but the excise tax would be mailed to us.

Mayor Hart asked if taxes are coming up soon.

Manager Landes states this is only if the office is completely shut down and we can not process any transaction.

Mayor Hart states it would be helpful if we had a list of services that the town would be doing.

Councilor White asked if there is any type of operational changes that we could do. Is there something that we could do differently that we can prevent this?

Manager Landes states we have been very diligent to adhere to all safety protocols and wearing our masks within the office. Unfortunately, sometimes you do just get an exposure and we all work in the same vicinity. We made a very conscious contact tracing protocol that should that person be in close contact with another employee then they are best to be out and quarantine. The other departments have made plans to accommodate. Chief Toman has been working on a regional effort to pick up slack in another municipality or have them come to Gardiner. We have planned as much as we can and we may have overlooked some things but we will not know until we are there.

## **6. CITY COUNCIL REPORT**

Councilor Rees states she had the opportunity to tune into the inauguration. The part of her poem that read, "The new dawn blooms as we free it, for there is always light if we are only brave enough to see it, if we are only brave enough to be it." Just wanted to share this with everyone.

Councilor White states it was a hopeful day. Thank you to Councilor Berry.

Councilor Berry expressed gratitude to all the employees and stated that if any employees or anyone that needs something from a store to let him know.

Councilor Cusick offered congratulations to Officer Quintana for his employee of the month award and to Cullen McGough for being elected to the school board. Thank you to Councilor Berry for delivering goods to people throughout Covid.

Mayor Hart offered congratulations to Officer Quintana and Fire Fighter Damien Ross on their accomplishments, as well as Cullen McGough for being elected and all the people who stepped forward. Things are done in this community due to volunteers and we have wonderful city staff and school folks. Would like to congratulate the high school as they have broken ground on their turf field. The Kennebec River Rail Trail is looking for a member for their Board of Overseers.

## 7. **ADJOURN**

**Action:** Councilor Berry motioned to adjourn the meeting.

Councilor White seconded.

Mayor Hart asked for any discussion. Seeing none, a roll call was conducted. Unanimous. The City Council adjourned the meeting at 8:56 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:



Alisha Ballard

City Clerk