



COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
GARDINER CITY COUNCIL
WEDNESDAY, March 15, 2023
6:00 PM

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Hart at 6:00 p.m.

1) ROLL CALL / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

City Council Present: Councilor West, Councilor Cusick, Councilor Berry, Councilor Frey, Councilor Greenleaf, Councilor Brown

City Council Present Remotely: Councilor Rines

City Council Absent:

Also present: Andy Carlton, City Manager; Kathy Cutler, City Clerk / Tax Collector; Angelia Christopher, Administrative Assistant; Todd Pilsbury, Interim Police Chief; John Cameron, Public Works Deputy Director; Melissa Lindley, Economic Development Director / Public Information Officer; Doug Clark, Wastewater Superintendent; Rick Sieberg, Fire Chief; Robert Abbey

2) PUBLIC COMMENT

None

3) PETITIONS / PUBLIC HEARINGS / PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

a) Liquor License Renewal – The Blind Pig

Manager Carlton stated that the application will be considered for indoor use only at this time.

Mayor Hart opened the public hearing at 6:03 p.m., there being no comment, closed the public hearing at 6:03 p.m.

b) Liquor License Renewal - Gardiner Elks

Mayor Hart opened the public hearing at 6:04 p.m., there being none, closed the public hearing at 6:04 p.m.

4) NEW BUSINESS – Mayor Hart asked Council to take some items out of order: a,b,c,k. Councilors agreed.

a) Approval of Meeting Minutes

Councilor Berry moved to approve the minutes of February 15, 2023 and March 1, 2023. Councilor Greenleaf seconded the motion. A roll call vote was conducted: Councilor Brown – yes; Councilor Greenleaf – yes; Councilor Rines – yes; Councilor Frey – yes; Councilor Berry – yes; Councilor Cusick – yes; Councilor West – yes; Mayor Hart – yes. The motion passed 8-0.

- b) Liquor License Renewal – The Blind Pig
Councilor West moved to approve the liquor license (indoor) for The Blind Pig after an amendment adding Saturday evening hours, Councilor Frey seconded the motion. A roll call vote was conducted: Councilor West – yes; Councilor Cusick – yes; Councilor Berry – yes; Councilor Frey – yes; Councilor Rines – yes; Councilor Greenleaf – yes; Councilor Brown – yes; Mayor Hart – yes. The motion passed 8-0.
- c) Liquor License Renewal – Gardiner Elks Club
Councilor Brown moved to approve the liquor license renewal for the Gardiner Elks Club. Councilor Cusick seconded the motion. A roll call vote was conducted: Councilor Brown – yes; Councilor Greenleaf – yes; Councilor Rines – yes; Councilor Frey – yes; Councilor Berry – yes; Councilor Cusick – yes; Councilor West – yes; Mayor Hart – yes. The motion passed 8-0.
- k) Mayoral Proclamation – Gardiner’s Gardeners
Mayor Hart presented the 2023 Spirit of America award to a wonderful group of citizens who volunteer their time and care for the public parks around the City. Gardiner’s Gardeners beautify the area by building planters, planting and maintaining flowers, painting fences, planting trees in the Common, and much more. Mayor Hart read a Proclamation honoring this dedicated group of individuals and thanked them for devotion to the historic downtown for more than ten years. Therefore, Saturday, March 18 is hereby recognized as Gardiner’s Gardeners Appreciation Day. Thank you, Kala Ladenheim, Carol Cahill, Bill Pond, Jane Swain, Michael Swain, Robert Abbey, Ed Allen, MaryAnn Johnson, Dorothy Washburne, Margaret Barter, Phil Barter, Joan Vining, Liza O’dell, June Zellers, Clare Laflamme, Mike Gent, and Katherine Kollman.
Councilor Greenleaf moved to approve the resolution for Gardiner’s Gardeners, Councilor Brown seconded the motion. All those in favor. The motion passed 8-0.
- d) Approval of Council Meeting Guidelines
City Council met on Saturday, February 18, 2023 to create and discuss guidelines for City Council meetings. Councilor West commented that the guidelines are a good representation of what was discussed.
Councilor Cusick moved to approve the Council Meeting Guidelines as presented, Councilor West seconded the motion. A roll call vote was conducted: Councilor West – yes; Councilor Cusick – yes; Councilor Berry – yes; Councilor Frey – yes; Councilor Rines – yes; Councilor Greenleaf – yes; Councilor Brown – yes; Mayor Hart – yes. The motion passed 8-0.
- e) Approval of 2023 Council Goals
Mayor Hart reviewed the goals set by City Council at the February 18, 2023 workshop. She thanked all members for their participation.
Councilor West moved to approve the 2023 Council Goals as presented, Councilor Frey seconded the motion. A roll call vote was conducted: Councilor Brown – yes; Councilor Greenleaf – yes; Councilor Rines – yes; Councilor Frey – yes; Councilor Berry – yes; Councilor Cusick – yes; Councilor West – yes; Mayor Hart – yes. The motion passed 8-0.
- f) Review of District Voting Numbers
City Clerk, Kathy Cutler, stated that periodically municipalities are required to review voting districts. This usually occurs in tandem with a census. The threshold for change is 10%. Clerk Cutler and Tax Assessor Lebel reviewed the districts and conferred with the Secretary of State,

Division of Elections, and determined that Gardiner will not have to make any changes at this time as there is a disparity of less than 100 citizens.

- g) Consideration of Bids for Tax Acquired Properties
Clerk Cutler reported that Council had three tax acquired properties put out to bid:
1. **34 Harrison Avenue**
 - a. **Councilor Berry moved to accept the bid for 34 Harrison Avenue in the amount of \$26,000 from Val Bolduc. Councilor Cusick seconded the motion. A roll call vote was conducted: Councilor West – yes; Councilor Cusick – yes; Councilor Berry – yes; Councilor Frey – yes; Councilor Rines – yes; Councilor Greenleaf – yes; Councilor Brown – yes; Mayor Hart – yes. The motion passed 8-0.**
 2. **17 Butler Lane**
 - a. **Councilor West moved to accept the bid for 17 Butler Lane in the amount of \$36,000 from Chris Fox. Councilor Greenleaf seconded the motion. A roll call vote was conducted: Councilor West – yes; Councilor Cusick – yes; Councilor Berry – yes; Councilor Frey – yes; Councilor Rines – yes; Councilor Greenleaf – yes; Councilor Brown – yes; Mayor Hart – yes. The motion passed 8-0.**
 3. **25 Hundred Acre Wood**
 - a. **Councilor Berry moved to accept the bid for 25 Hundred Acre Wood in the amount of \$142,600 from Chris Fox. Councilor Cusick seconded the motion. A roll call vote was conducted: Councilor West – yes; Councilor Cusick – yes; Councilor Berry – yes; Councilor Frey – yes; Councilor Rines – yes; Councilor Greenleaf – yes; Councilor Brown – yes; Mayor Hart – yes. The motion passed 8-0.**
- h) Department Head Reports
Mayor Hart and Manager Carlton thanked all department heads, these reports are very helpful.
- i) Discussion of the process for replacing a member of the MSAD #11 School Board whom has resigned
Mayor Hart informed all that City Council appoints a person to the School Board. If that person resigns before the end of their term, their replacement assumes the rest of the term. Mayor stated that the process for appointing someone new will be: Council determines how long the position will be advertised, interested parties will submit a letter of interest, appear before Council, Council votes by secret ballot. Manager Carlton suggested to post the position for two weeks, review letters of interest, and invite selected parties to the April 5 meeting. Mayor Hart asked that the open positions be written up in the Kennebec Journal.
- j) Consent to apply for a Project Canopy Grant
Manager Carlton stated that the Project Canopy grant is a great program that we've successfully used in the past to plant trees throughout the City. There is a 50% match that is required; no cash, labor, materials, equipment costs, etc. Councilor Brown moved to apply for the Project Canopy Grant in the amount of \$10,000. Councilor West seconded the motion. A roll call vote was conducted: Councilor Brown – yes; Councilor Greenleaf – yes; Councilor Rines – yes; Councilor Frey – yes; Councilor Berry – yes; Councilor Cusick – yes; Councilor West – yes; Mayor Hart – yes. The motion passed 8-0. Councilor Greenleaf thanked citizen Dorothy Washburn for taking over the application process for the past few years – the Common looks beautiful.

5) CITY MANAGER REPORT

- Manager Carlton welcomed Cory Creamer to the City of Gardiner. Cory will serve as the Buildings and Grounds foreman.
- Manager Carlton stated that the holiday flags and wreaths will be taken down this week. It's been difficult with short staff, storms, and equipment availability. He and Melissa Lindley, Community and Economic Development Director, are looking into possibly purchasing seasonal decorations instead of holiday specific.
- City Manager Carlton mentioned that he, Melissa, and Mayor Hart will be hosting downtown business owners at City Hall on March 22 and March 31 for the purpose of providing an update on downtown happenings, and providing an opportunity for questions and answers.
- Manager Carlton reported that there is a court order mandating that 235 Water Street be demolished. The topic will go before the Historic Preservation Committee next week, then Manager Carlton will consult with an engineer and issue an RFP for engineering the demo.
- Manager Carlton reported that a few RFP's have been issued:
 - RFP for phone system. Current one is 11 years old and not able to be serviced anymore. City Manager Carlton is hoping to utilize ARPA funds for this purchase.
 - RFP for Summer '23 paving plan. John Cameron and Andy Carlton have begun working on a four-year major project / paving plan.
- Lastly, City Manager Andy Carlton and John Cameron met with DOT regarding sidewalks, specifically in the downtown area. As this will be a large project, Manager Carlton recommends revitalizing the Sidewalk Committee to address the downtown walks.

6) CITY COUNCIL REPORT

- Councilor Cusick asked about open police positions...Chief Pilsbury answered that they have adjusted the schedule to coordinate coverage and are actively advertising. Chief also mentioned that Officer Connor will serve as the SRO.
- Councilor Berry thanked City Clerk Cutler for all her great work on the Tax Acquired Properties. He inquired about when they would be back on the tax rolls. Clerk Cutler stated that when minimum bids were set, they tried to incorporate what the 2024 tax bill would be.
- Councilor Rines stated that due to personal reasons, he will be stepping down from his post as District 2 Councilor effective immediately. Mayor Hart thanked him for six years of service. Letters of interest for this position may be submitted to City Clerk Cutler.
- Councilor Greenleaf stated that he received a letter from a constituent regarding the wastewater sludge issue with concerns that it will be passed on to the rate payers. He asked the Board to keep this in mind while we work through this issue.
- Mayor Hart asked if there has been any movement about the lights downtown; Manager Carlton stated that he is hopeful. They continue to be tested weekly. There appears to be some moisture around the inner workings of the lights. The electrical infrastructure just isn't there, he said. He suggested that when the discussions regarding downtown sidewalks happens, the lights should be included.

COUNCILOR RINES LEFT THE MEETING AT 6:55 P.M.

7) EXECUTIVE SESSION

- a) Enter into Executive Session pursuant to 1M.R.S.A. §405(6)(D) – Labor Negotiations

Councilor Frey moved to enter into Executive Session at 6:56 p.m. pursuant to 1M.R.S.A. §405(6)(D) – Labor Negotiations. Councilor Greenleaf seconded the motion. A roll call vote was conducted: Councilor West – yes; Councilor Cusick – yes; Councilor Berry – yes; Councilor Frey – yes; Councilor Rines – yes; Councilor Greenleaf – yes; Councilor Brown – yes; Mayor Hart – yes. The motion passed 8-0.

Councilor Frey moved to exit Executive Session at 7:08 p.m. Councilor Greenleaf seconded the motion. A roll call vote was conducted: Councilor Brown – yes; Councilor Greenleaf – yes; Councilor Rines – yes; Councilor Frey – yes; Councilor Berry – yes; Councilor Cusick – yes; Councilor West – yes; Mayor Hart – yes. The motion passed 8-0.

- b) Enter into Executive Session pursuant to 1M.R.S.A. §405(6)(C) – Discussion of the Acquisition or Condition of Real Property

Councilor Cusick moved to enter into Executive Session at 7:09 p.m. pursuant to 1M.R.S.A. §405(6)(C) – Discussion of the Acquisition or Condition of Real Property. Councilor Frey seconded the motion. A roll call vote was conducted: Councilor West – yes; Councilor Cusick – yes; Councilor Berry – yes; Councilor Frey – yes; Councilor Rines – yes; Councilor Greenleaf – yes; Councilor Brown – yes; Mayor Hart – yes. The motion passed 8-0.

Councilor Cusick moved to exit Executive Session at 7:17 p.m. Councilor Frey seconded the motion. A roll call vote was conducted: Councilor Brown – yes; Councilor Greenleaf – yes; Councilor Rines – yes; Councilor Frey – yes; Councilor Berry – yes; Councilor Cusick – yes; Councilor West – yes; Mayor Hart – yes. The motion passed 8-0.

8) **ADJORN**

Councilor Brown moved to adjourn the City Council Meeting at 7:19 p.m. Councilor Berry seconded the motion. A roll call vote was conducted: Councilor West – yes; Councilor Cusick – yes; Councilor Berry – yes; Councilor Frey – yes; Councilor Rines – yes; Councilor Greenleaf – yes; Councilor Brown – yes; Mayor Hart – yes. The motion passed 8-0.

Respectfully Submitted:

Michelle Snowden, Deputy Clerk