

**COUNCIL MINUTES OF
JANUARY 12, 2017**

COUNCIL PRESENT: Marcia Delaware, Fred Sherburne, Mike Blake, Mark Robichaud, Sharon Grant, Chuck Ellms, Peter Haskell

STAFF PRESENT: Shelley Watson, Kim Hughes, Marilyn Curtis, Susan Page, Kevin Wintle, Alyshia Canwell, Warren Ackerman, Gary Morin, Jim Roy, Matt Connor, Everett Hibbard, Dan Grant, Steve Bailey, Richard Sawyer, Josh Smith, Chris Tilton

The Invocation was led by **Pastor Ronald Stevens** followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

DOGGIE DRAWING

The doggie drawing recognizes residents for licensing their dogs on time before the end of the calendar year with the winner receiving a \$25 check from the Town. Councilor **Peter Haskell** drew **Charlene McInnis** as the winner for the 2017 licensing year.

I. PUBLIC HEARING

None

II. MINUTES

1. Approve/Amend Council Minutes of December 8, 2016

Motion to approve: Mike Blake

Second: Fred Sherburne

Vote: Unanimous in favor, motion passes

III. NOMINATIONS, APPOINTMENTS, & ELECTIONS

None

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Manager's Report

Shelley Watson welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained that Facilities has a new worker through the Vocational Rehab Program which is a great program that places workers for training and to have something to put on resumes in the future for permanent employment. This is the Town's second worker and the program is working out very well. **Ms. Watson** thanked the Public Works, Facilities Departments, and the Police for all their hard work in dealing with Mother Nature and the difficult conditions and added that she hoped spring would be coming sooner rather than later. **Eric Campbell** had surgery last month and seems to be getting around nicely by using a cane and it is hoped that he will have a speedy recovery. **Steve Kimball** has stepped up and is doing a great job under very difficult conditions. **Ms. Watson** stated that the Town has received many calls and visits concerning the tax foreclosures and added that it is a difficult year with 16 properties on the list for the meeting. She asked everyone to mark their calendars for the second annual family skate night on January 27th from 4PM to 8PM. There will be free food, hot chocolate, coffee, raffles, and skating. She mentioned that hut volunteers were needed and to contact **Mike Martin** in the Rec Department if anyone is interested. She wanted to make sure everyone knew that the program was thanks to **Skowhegan Savings** who is sponsoring the event. She also thanked the **Fire Department Auxiliary** for making cookies and **Dunkin Donuts** for their support. **Ms. Watson** advised the Council that a meeting date has been set to meet with the Corinna selectmen on January 26 and asked if the Council wanted to meet at

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4PM or 5PM and it was decided that 5PM would work best. **Ms. Watson** concluded by pointing out the copy of the Golf Course lease that she gave to the Council since it is almost time for the renewal and asked for any suggestions or changes that might need to be made so that it can be put on the March Agenda.

2. Departmental Reports

No questions.

V. NEW BUSINESS

1. Order A2017-1 Transfer Money from Fire Truck Reserve Account

BE IT ORDERED, that the Dexter Town Council hereby authorizes the Finance Officer to transfer up to \$178,077 from Fire Truck Reserve Account # E130-05-511-11 to Municipal Vehicle Repairs Account # E104-03-505-01.

Filed January 12, 2017

CHUCK ELLMS

Second: Fred Sherburne

Marcia Delaware opened the discussion by explaining that there had been a meeting among the Highway/Equipment Committee, the Fire Department, and the Council to go over the list of repairs that needs to be done to the 1992 E-One pumper truck. She stated that the Council needed to decide if they wanted to go with Greenwood's recommendation to rebuild the truck which should give the truck a ten-year life span. **Chuck Ellms** stated that the Equipment Committee's recommendation was to do the whole package as it was presented by Greenwood. **Mike Blake** stated that the representative from Greenwood did a great job with the presentation but that he had a problem with spending \$36,000 to paint the truck when the truck would have basically no value in ten years. He added that he did understand doing the mechanical work on the truck. He thought that buying a new truck like the Freightliner for around \$225,000 might be the better way to go. **Matt Connor** stated that it was time to pursue hiring a grant writer to write grants for the Fire Department since there is money out there to assist with purchasing a new truck. **Peter Haskell** pointed out that there is about \$210,000 in the truck reserve account and look how many years it took to save that amount of money so there is no way in another 3 or 4 years the Town can come up with that amount again. **Dan Grant** pointed out that even if they buy a new truck there are still repairs that will need to be done for the second-line truck. If they refurbish the pumper truck as the first-line truck they still need to do repairs on the other truck but the repairs would not be as extensive. **Marcia Delaware** asked each Councilor's opinion and **Peter Haskell** stated that it was a lot of money to put into an old truck and that it is time to talk with other Towns to combine services.

Mark Robichaud thought combining services is a good idea and as far as the paint job thought it could be spotted in and partially painted to save money. **Richard Sawyer** pointed out that if the whole truck was not going to be painted than it was not worth doing the light package and some of the other repairs and the estimated ten-year life span would probably be a lot less.

Fred Sherburne stated that the Town should do whatever it takes to make the truck functional and safe and he said that he realized that there is a lot to be done to bring the truck up to par that the Town has no control over since a lot of it is mandated.

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Sharon Grant thought the best way to go is to purchase a new truck and work on the mechanical issues on the other truck.

Mike Blake went down through the list of items that needs to be done one at a time and removed approximately \$101,000 from the quote by leaving mostly items that would make the truck functional. He then suggested that the old tanker could be traded in and the \$110,000 left in the reserve account could be put towards a new truck provided that the Town of Corinna is not looking at purchasing the same truck.

Chuck Ellms stated that the paint job is a lot of money and that all that money could be knocked off the list but that would be throwing good money after bad. He did not feel that putting \$90,000 into a truck that would still have issues and possibly not getting another ten years out of the truck would not be good. He felt that everything should be done to refurbish the truck or go to Plan B.

Marcia Delaware stated that she was in favor of refurbishing the truck and setting money aside for the next five years to refurbish the next truck.

Vote: 5 to 2 (Haskell, Blake), motion passes

2. Order A2017-2 MMSWA Sticker Fee Increase

BE IT ORDERED, that the Dexter Town Council hereby authorizes a fee increase of the sale of Mid Maine Solid Waste Association (MMSWA) stickers from \$1.00 to \$5.00 effective February 1, 2017 as recommended by the MMSWA Board Members.

Filed January 12, 2017
MICHAEL BLAKE

Second: Sharon Grant

Marcia Delaware explained that it was decided at the last MMSWA meeting that all Towns would raise the sticker fee from \$1 to \$5 which is still a low fee compared to other places that charge anywhere from \$10 to \$100. All Towns will continue to pay MMSWA 50¢ per sticker but will keep the additional \$4 that is being charged *which means the Town will keep \$4.50 for each sticker sold.*

Vote: Unanimous in favor, motion passes

3. Order A2017-3 Police Department Corporal Pay Increase

BE IT ORDERED, that the Dexter Town Council hereby approves the 50¢ per hour increase for Officer Dana Gatcomb to compensate his recent promotion to Corporal.

Filed January 12, 2017
SHARON GRANT

Second: Mark Robichaud

Police Chief, **Kevin Wintle**, addressed the Council and said that at the last budget there was no money approved for **Officer Gatcomb's** promotion. Traditionally there has always been a 50¢

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per hour increase in pay for the promotion. With the last budget approval, the Council agreed to look at the increase if there was money in the Police Department budget. **Chief Wintle** advised the Council that his overall budget was currently at 43% and the raise would mean about \$1000 for the year. He stated that **Corporal Gatcomb** is doing a great job and is an eight-year veteran of the force with a lot of knowledge and dedication.

Vote: Unanimous in favor, motion passes.

4. Order A2017-4 Acceptance of Donation for Fire Department

BE IT ORDERED, that the Dexter Town Council hereby accepts the donation from Maine Highlands Federal Credit Union in the amount of \$100.00 to be deposited in the Fire Department Special Fire Protection Services Account #R10403-40311.

Filed January 12 , 2017

FRED SHERBURNE

Second: Mark Robichaud

Marcia Delaware asked Fire Chief, **Matt Connor**, what the Special Fire Protection Services Account is and **Chief Connor** replied that it is the account used to deposit money that is reimbursed from auto accidents.

Vote: Unanimous in favor, motion passes

5. Order A2017-5 Acceptance of Donation for Police Department

BE IT ORDERED, that the Dexter Town Council hereby accepts the donation from Maine Highlands Federal Credit Union in the amount of \$100.00 and the donation from Mrs. Gwen Thompson in the amount of \$25.00 to be deposited in the Police Department New Equipment Account #104-01-507-10.

Filed January 12 , 2017

MARK ROBICHAUD

Second: Peter Haskell

Vote: Unanimous in favor, motion passes

6. Order A2017-6 Acceptance of Donation for K-9 Unit

BE IT ORDERED, that the Dexter Town Council hereby accepts a \$3,000 donation from the Plummer Foundation to fund a K-9 unit for the police department.

Filed January 12, 2017

PETER HASKELL

Second: Mike Blake

Marcia Delaware commented that it was interesting that this has come up since she talked with **Officer Roy** awhile back about the K-9 unit. **Ms. Delaware** stated that **Officer Roy's** dog is

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certified now but wanted to know in what fields? **Officer Roy** stated that both he and the dog are Narcotics Detection Certified. **Ms. Delaware** asked if the dog could be used in the schools and **Officer Roy** replied that it depends on the school's policy. With most schools there is an agreement between the school and law enforcement but since there would be no charges if something is found, it would be up to the school's policy for enforcement. **Ms. Delaware** asked if there would need to be a cruiser designated for the K-9 unit and **Officer Roy** replied "yes and no". He stated that they sell a K-9 insert for the back of the cruiser and they have one now but the only vehicle it will fit in is the school resource officer's cruiser and he is not sure how long that vehicle would be on line for next year. The insert usually runs around \$2000 and is generally for protection of the equipment in the car and for people outside of the car. **Ms. Delaware** asked how it would work if other Towns wanted to use the dog and **Officer Roy** replied it would be up to the Chief and the Council but industry standard is that if you have an agreement for mutual aide, they are not charged because we get services from them that they are not charging for. The dog would be used in Town for traffic stops, warrants, schools, bail checks, etc. **Mike Blake** asked if **Chief Wintle** had talked with **Kevin Jordan** about taking the dog into the schools and the reply was "not yet". **Mr. Blake** stated that he was in favor of the program but was not sure about the mutual aide and that maybe some sort of fee should be considered. **Officer Roy** stated that the only two Towns that Dexter has mutual aide with is Dover and Newport and **Mike Blake** urged them to keep records so that in a year the Council could look at it. **Officer Roy** pointed out that the dog actually came from the Town of Dexter and was donated by Nate Wyman and his parents. **Marcia Delaware** asked if vet bills for the dog would be part of the donation and **Officer Roy** replied that in the past he has purchased medical insurance which pretty much covers everything and the annual mid-range premium has been around \$350. **John Parola** explained that **Rich Pfirman**, President of the Plummer Foundation, wanted the Council to know that they supported the K-9 unit in order to do anything that would improve the health, welfare, and safety of the whole community. The Foundation has made a lot of donations to different things in support of health and welfare and they feel this would be a good opportunity for the community to try something without having to put a lot of money into it and as things are documented the community will be able to see if the program is working down the road.

Vote: Unanimous in favor, motion passes

7. Order A2017-7 Tax Payment Extension

BE IT ORDERED, that the Dexter Town Council, pursuant to Chapter 2, Administration; Article VII Sec. 2-192 of the Dexter Code of Ordinances, hereby extends until February 13, 2017 the time period for owners of record and lien holders to bring their accounts current. Owners of record and lien holders are required to make full payment of all property taxes and costs assessed against properties that have tax liens that matured on January 9, 2017. Municipal Quit Claim deeds will be issued at the March 9, 2017 meeting on properties that have satisfied full payment of their taxes. Action will be taken to dispose of any remaining properties with outstanding tax balances with matured liens.

Filed January 12, 2017
CHUCK ELLMS

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Second: Fred Sherburne

Mike Blake asked if there has been any conversation with any of the people on the list and **Shelley Watson** replied "yes" - a number of them and a couple of the owners are at the meeting. **Eugene Sciongay** told the Council that in the past the due date was around the 15th of March and he had planned to pay his taxes when his income tax return comes in and he is not sure he will get the refund in time for the February 13 deadline. **Marcia Delaware** advised **Mr. Sciongay** that if the taxes were not paid by February 13 the Town would put the property out for bid and then he could bid to get his property back by bidding to pay all the taxes. **Ms. Delaware** stated that the Town has to follow the Charter guidelines, however, if the home owner comes to the Council with the bid amount, no Councilor is going to not vote to give the property back to the current owner. **Nicole Gaiss** addressed the Council and said she had the one year of taxes that she could pay on her North Dexter Road property and wanted the Council to accept the one year payment since she would not be able to come up with three years of taxes on her properties. **Marcia Delaware** explained that the Council had issues in the past by making exceptions so last year they set a policy and anything that the Council can do to help they will but it is not right to make an exception for one person. It was suggested that she work with Jean through General Assistance but **Ms. Gaiss** said that she had already been told there was nothing that could be done. **Sharon Grant** asked if there was any way she could get a loan against one of the two properties that she owned and **Ms. Gaiss** stated that she did not work and had no income. **Ms. Grant** asked if the property was owned outright and the answer was "yes" but that the banks would not approve a loan since she was not working. **Ms. Gaiss** asked again if she could pay \$700 towards one year of taxes on the North Dexter Road property and then have 30 more days to pay the one year on the Maple Street property and **Ms. Delaware** advised her that the Council did not have the authority to change the rules that are in the Charter. **Peter Haskell** commented that he thought half the people in Town struggle to pay their taxes. There are 16 properties on the list and next month there are 10 more with the same issue so you can't make an exception for one.

Vote: Unanimous in favor, motion passes

8. Approve/Sign Cemetery Deed for Anita Colomy

Motion to Approve/Sign: Mike Blake

Second: Fred Sherburne

Vote: Unanimous in favor, motion passes

Shelley Watson explained that the cemetery deed for **Deborah Johnson** was not ready because of lot measurements that need to be verified at the cemetery so it should be on the March Agenda.

VI. PUBLIC FORUM

Chief Kevin Wintle introduced his newest officer, **Alyshia Canwell**, to the Council. **Ms. Canwell** has two classes left to complete her Bachelor of Criminal Justice. She lives in Hampden and works part time for Hampden P.D., will be attending the Academy in August, and is doing an excellent job for the Department.

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Fred Sherburne stated that he did not know how the other Councilors would feel if there was an opportunity to have a high school student represent the younger people in Town with a position on the Council. It would be a non-voting position but one that the Council could get some input from. **Mr. Sherburne** commented that we are always talking about our young people and how to keep them here and would like to have them involved. **Sharon Grant** commented that she thought that was already done with the School Board.

VIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

None

Motion to Adjourn at 8:10PM: Mike Blake

Second: Fred Sherburne

Vote: Unanimous in favor, motion passes

Respectfully Submitted,

Kim M. Hughes
Town Clerk