

MANAGER'S REPORT

City Council Meeting

Tuesday, July 7, 2009

TO: Mayor Walter Ash, Jr. and Honorable Members of Belfast City Council

FROM: Joseph J. Slocum, City Manager

DATE: Thursday, July 2, 2009

Consent Agenda Notes:

I am asking at this meeting that you appoint a paramedic on a per diem basis. We will be looking for a full time paramedic in the near future but we are trying to work out a rotating schedule before a permanent paramedic is hired so that schedules will be understood at the time of hire. I anticipate that the permanent position will be posted within six-weeks.

Non-Agenda Items:

A. City approved event banners: The City wants events and these event banners help advertise them. We are looking into the possibility of creating permanent posts that are painted and look nice with preset eyelets in them so that event organizer can easily display their banner on sturdy post that will not collapse in high wind or poor weather and which are located in a safe and secure place so as to not interfere with traffic visibility.

B. Old Business: It will cost \$5,500 to install the electric work requested by the Maskers' excluding all the digging and the road cut to bring the power line underneath the road. It also does not include the cost of repaving the road. The digging and road cut could cost another \$3,500. I will bring more information to the meeting on this.

C. Town Clock: We have two estimates to do this work- they are in the \$20,000 range. The clock needs to be completely overhauled. We have budgeted \$500 to maintain it in this fiscal year 2009-2010.

Agenda Items:

11.B Request by American Veterans (Am vets) to sell games of chance tickets in Belfast City Park during the encampment weekend of July 31 to August 2, 2009.

Council previously approved the encampment. The organization sponsoring the event has asked for permission to sell what is essentially game of chance "scratch tickets" with some kind of prize. I assume it's money but I really don't know because that information has not been supplied by the applicant. The State will not allow this unless the City supports it.

11.C Request from Heaven Sent Thrift Store to hold three (3) sidewalk sales and close off two public parking spots for these sales.

We do not know if they have spoken with their neighbors or the hours planned for the sale. I did make a call but got no answer.

11.D Discussion of a request of Andy's Curbside Grill to locate a lunch wagon in Heritage Park.

I understand that the Parks and Recreation Commission, the Harbor Advisory Committee and the Maine Coast Heritage Trust either supports or does not oppose the location of a lunch wagon parked on a daily basis and selling food for profit inside of Heritage Park.

11.E Discussion and possible action on a Swan Lake Avenue traffic concern. (Baker)

We recently received this e-mail from a concerned resident on Swan Lake Avenue, which Councilor Baker wishes to address at this meeting:

"I live at the beginning of Swan Lake Avenue on the top of the hill. I want to tell you that this road is very dangerous and that someone is going to get seriously hurt walking along it. Cars and large trucks go barreling past my house. These cars cannot see what is on the top of the hill when they come up over it. I see people walking on the side of the road frequently. Usually it is large groups of kids or mothers with their children and strollers. I myself am fearful of taking my son for a walk. Someone either needs to put sidewalks in, or lower the speed limit or both. I'm afraid that this problem will not come to the attention of the town until somebody does get hurt, which obviously will be too late. I really hope you will consider addressing this issue and taking some action"

My response and additional information are included in your packets.

11.F Introduction of Planning Board proposed amendments to Zoning Ordinance that would allow manufactured housing (mobile homes) west of Merriam Drive: Chapter 102, Article V, District regulations, Division 27: Route 137 Commercial District.

Wayne Marshall, City Planner, will address this proposed amendment with you in the attached documents.

11.G Request from City Assessor for the funding of a temporary part time lister assistance.

City Assessor Robert Whiteley used about ½ of the money that was approved last year for temporary help that supports his Department with the preparation of the annual City property valuation. He has attached a memo explaining this. The more property this effort captures the lower everyone's tax bill will be. The \$4,000 requested would come from Assessment Reserves and be transferred to the Assessment Wages Budget Line # 120-501.

11.H Second and final reading of a Council Order authorizing the financing of a general obligations bond for Waster Water Projects in the principal amount not to exceed \$3,000,000.

Belfast was fortunate to be one of the 16 projects selected from 240 applications to receive federal stimulus money for improvements to our wastewater pollution plant and to our wastewater. We applied for money to do \$3,000,000 of work that we were going to have to do anyway over the next several

years under a directive from the Federal and State governments. There is a \$3,000,000 cap on funding. The City received a \$2,182,440 grant with a \$715,554 zero interest 20-year loan.

The City will borrow up to \$3,000,000 through the Maine Municipal Bond Bank, which specializes in municipal borrowing, often bundling multiple municipal loans into a single package to reduce cost. Under the provisions of this loan the City pays the money first and then is reimbursed by the loan. After the loan is drawn down- the first \$2,182,440 is forgiven from the repayment schedule and the balance of \$715,554 is paid back at no interest over 20-years.

There will be two payments due on this borrowing in the upcoming fiscal year. Our plan is to make those payments from the Wastewater Undesignated Fund Balance (not the City's undesignated fund balance). In December the Council authorized up to \$75,000 to be spent from Wastewater Undesignated Fund Balance so that our application for these funds would be "shovel ready" and competitive in the grant approval process. That \$75,000 will now be covered by the grant itself and we can use the money appropriated in December for engineering to pay our debt service next year. We will do the same thing in 2010-2011 and by that time we will have retired enough old wastewater debt to have the payments that would have retired with it available to cover this new debt. In other words we would not have to raise additional funds to pay off the new zero interest debt.

11.I Further discussion on the June 30th Economic Development Work Session.

Council met last Tuesday night, June 30, 2009, with quite a few representatives of local businesses and local and regional economic development activists. So much information was presented to the Council that was no real time for the Council to actually share their thoughts and perspectives. It was decided to refer this discussion to this meeting with the understanding that if more time is needed an additional work session for the Council might be scheduled.

11.J Consideration of the creation of a Recycling Committee. (Lee)

There is some interested within Belfast to expand and improve upon our recycling efforts. We learned this past year that the town of St. George operated a facility that offered more types of recycling opportunities to its residents. Public Works Director Bob Richards and transfer Station manager Steven Roberts traveled to the St. George facility was councilors Lee and Heberer. As result of this trip several potential options for enhanced recycling opportunities to Belfast were identified. Some of these opportunities will involve a careful cost-benefit analysis to determine whether or not Belfast waste stream size, its transfer Station facilities, hours of operation and its budget support the investments needed to bring these enhancements to Belfast.

It is recognized that this analysis will take significant time and effort. It is also recognized that the Public Works Department and the Transfer Station Staff are quite busy and thus would benefit from the assistance a recycling committee might offer. There are also community education pieces and broader community participation pieces that such a committee could assist with. Councilor Roger Lee has asked that we put this on the agenda for your consideration. _

11.K Signing of Council Orders.

11.L Executive session request from the City Manager to discuss union negotiations pursuant to Title 1, Chapter 13 Maine Revised Statutes Annotated Section 405 Sub 6 (D).

Have a happy and fun 4th of July weekend.