

Town of Ashland
Regular Town Council Meeting

July 9, 2024

Present: Chairman Tyler Michaud, Sherri Calhoun Christopher Bessey, Gerard Raymond, Gayle Burby and Manager Cyr Martin.

Absent: None

- I. **Call meeting to order:** The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chairman Michaud.

- II. **Public comments:** Laurie Tarr spoke regarding some abandoned houses in Ashland that are eye sores and she was inquiring what could be done about them. Properties mentioned were the Bushy Building, John Sutherland house and, the Old Poulin House. Manager Martin said he could check with Code Enforcement Officer Dave Milligan to see if there are any Code Enforcement violations relating to these properties. Manager Martin said there is no Town Ordinance regarding these abandoned properties but maybe they could draft one up.

- III. **Consent items:**
 1. Review, approve and sign minutes from the May 20,2024 Regular Town Council Meeting June 4, 2024, Public Hearing, June 12,2024, Special Town Meeting and June 12, 2024, Regular Town Council Meeting. A motion was made by Sherri Calhoun to sign the minutes for the May 20,2024 Regular Town Council Meeting, June 4,2024 Public Hearing. June 12,2024 Special Town Meeting and the June 12, 2024, Regular Council Meeting, seconded by Chris Bessey, No discussion. Motion carried.

 2. Review, approve and sign treasurer warrants #23V, #23P, #24V, #24P, #25V, 25P, #26V, and #26P. A motion was made by Sherri Calhoun to approve the noted warrants with an amendment for Tara Peterson's payroll to come out of the Ambulance Budget and not the police, seconded by Chris Bessey. No discussion. Motion carried.

- IV. **New Business:**
 1. Review and discuss with Bill Greaves on North Maine Woods request to apply for a Grant through the Land and Water Conservation Fund for updates on their building on Main Street. Bill Greaves proposed that North Maine Woods would like to apply for a grant through the Land & Water Conservation Fund. The maximum Grant awarded is \$1,000,000. Some of the things proposed to do with the grant money is, Buy the Sutherland Property next door to North Maine Woods and tear the house down. Making a bigger parking lot, remodeling the existing building or building a new stick building. The grant is a 50/50 matching grant with some donated siding, wood products, and labor would go toward their 50%. North Maine Woods would like The town of Ashland to be a pass through for North Maine Woods. The town would accept the grant for the business and the money would go through the town and the town would write checks to send the money out. Sherri Calhoun made a motion for the town of Ashland to work with North Maine Woods to apply for a

grant from The Land and Water Conservation Fund to purchase the Sutherland Property and to make updates and renovations to the existing property. Chris Bessey Seconded. No discussion. Motion passed.

2. Review and discuss School Budget monthly payments. Manager Martin explained that the Ashland School Budget went up for the 24/25 fiscal year. Last year the town paid \$96,000.00 per month and this year it has gone up to \$1,333,732.77 for the year breaking it down to about \$111,144.39 per month
3. Discuss Wind Turbine development. Dave Milligan, Code Enforcement Officer of Ashland wanted to make the council aware that he met with Green Development LLC, a company out of Rhode Island who is looking to build a Biomass plant where Re Energy Biomass plant was on Reality Rd. A part of their plan is to back up the power plant with very large wind turbines 6 in Ashland and 6 in Garfield. They are looking to put them on the west side of Ashland which would be on the mountain that Ashland overlooks. Where Ashland doesn't have an ordinance that addresses large wind turbines, Code Enforcement Officer Milligan's recommended for now that the town enact a Moratorium on the permitting of wind turbines, so there is time for Ashland townspeople to decide what direction they want to take. And so, the Planning Board can adopt an ordinance addressing the matter. Sherri Calhoun motioned to place a Moratorium on large scale wind projects in Ashland until an ordinance can be put in place. Chris Bessey seconded. No discussion. Motion passed.

V. Old Business:

1. Garfield Representative to address council. Ronnie Fournier Garfield Representative explained that in one year Garfield had a 70% increase in the police subsidy. He said the town agreed to pay the same amount as last year but not the additional 70%. He asked if there was any common ground we could all come to. He also asked how many actual calls come from Garfield. Manager Martin explained because Nashville bowed out of taking the police subsidy. Due to that the town of Ashland had to increase everyone else's subsidy and the increase was based on population. He also said any money we take away from Garfield, Ashland taxpayers will have to pay the difference. Manager Martin also said the town could send to Garfield how many complaints they got called to, but they can't say where they went.

- VI. Manager's Report:** On June 25 the council members attended an MMA class. Manager Martin asked each Councilor to Bring in or email a copy of their certificate to put in their file. Manager Martin said the council needs to pick a date to set Ashland's Mill Rate. The date was set for July 22,2024 at 6:00 pm.
- Now that the camera is installed in the boardroom in the town office the town council meetings will now be recorded and once the town office staff are trained the tapings will be put on the town's webpage the following day.
- Just as an FYI Manager Martin gave the councilors a letter the town received from their lawyer at Bemis & Rossignol regarding the Trotting Park and the consequences of leasing it out and his recommendation.
- Manger Martin reported the Shim coat of paving on the Wrightville Rd was complete with a cost of \$48,736.00. He also explained it would be a wash because the State using the L Rap Program would pay \$41,076.00.

VII. Council items:

1. Gayle Burby asked Manager Martin if the fence around The Trotting Park could either be repaired or torn down and replaced. Sherri Calhoun motioned to get quotes to replace or repair the fence. Gayle Burby seconded. Motion carried.
Gayle Burby mentioned that on June 12 during the Special Town Meeting that it was very confusing, and it looked like the townspeople only had 15 minutes for everyone to vote because the starting time for the next meeting was to start in 15 minutes based on the start time on the agenda. Manager Martin explained that he must set a start time for the meetings and if he pushes it back too far the councilors must sit and wait until the posted start time to start, it can not be started earlier than what is put on the agenda. So, he must try to determine how long the first meeting will take. Chair Michaud suggested next time they don't have multiple meetings on the same night.
2. Gerard Raymond suggested the councilors start conducting annual reviews on the town's personnel. Sherri Calhoun commented that it isn't the town councils' job to conduct annual reviews. That is the Town Managers job. The only review the council does is of the Town Manager.
3. Sherri Calhoun said she noticed that new councilor Gayle Burby takes a lot of notes in meetings and trainings, and she thinks it would be nice if Gayle makes a packet to give to new council members of information that would be helpful to them.
4. Chair Michaud asked if the town could put up nets at the tennis courts and how much it would cost to fix the cracks in the hot top. Sherri Calhoun motioned to get estimates to get the surface fixed at the tennis courts Chris seconded. No discussion. Motion passed.

Sherri Calhoun makes a motion for the council to go into Executive Session. Chris Bessey Seconded. Motion Carried. Executive session starts at 7:38

Sherri Calhoun motions to end Executive Session. Chris Bessey seconded. Executive session ends at 7:25 PM

A motion was made by Sherri Calhoun to accept the resignation of Town Manager Cyr Martin effective August 8, 2024, and to remain as the Administrative Chief of Police until the end of the year. Chris Bessey seconded. No discussion. Motion carried.

Sherri Calhoun motions to purchase a \$500 gift card for Jim Lavewa6y for his retirement in August. Seconded by Gerard Raymond. No discussion. Motioned carried.

Adjournment: Sherri Calhoun motions to adjourn the meeting. Chris Bessey seconded. Motion Passed. Meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Jimmo

Recording Secretary

Tyler Michaud, Chairman



Gerard Raymond



Sherri Calhoun



Christopher Bessey



Gayle Burby