



**TOWN COUNCIL COMMITTEES MEETING
MONDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2022 AT 5:00 P.M.**

COUNCIL CHAMBER, 59 MAIN STREET, ORONO, MAINE

MINUTES

1. Roll Call

Present: Council Chair Tom Perry, Meghan Gardner, Cheryl Robertson, Sonja Birthisel, Leo Kenney, Robert Laraway, and Town Manager Sophie Wilson. Absent: Geoffrey Wingard.

2. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

- a. Request from Down East Emergency Medicine Institute (DEEMI) to Purchase a Portion of Town Owned Property located at 135 Kelley Road** *(Video record time 0:00:30 - 0:36:20)*

Ms. Wilson stated staff received a request from DEEMI to purchase a 0.67 acre portion of Town-owned property located at Public Works, 135 Kelley Road. The 0.67 acre portion of land would be added to the 0.13 acres owned by DEEMI that abuts the Town-owned parcel and would provide additional land to potentially construct a new larger storage building to support its non-profit mission.

Robert Bowie and Vinal Applebee provided information about DEEMI's volunteer search and rescue operation and explained DEEMI's need for additional land and storage.

Ms. Wilson explained that approvals may be complicated by the underground drainage system adjacent to the area that DEEMI is requesting to procure. In order to provide the Committee with further information, staff would need to engage technical services from Sebago Technics. Councilors was sympathetic to DEEMI's need, but also wanted to protect the Public Works site for any future needs.

Ms. Wilson suggested DEEMI look at the Old Public Works Garage site as a possible alternative site. Meanwhile, staff will get technical assistance from Sebago Technics regarding a budget and scope of work for the 135 Kelley Road site.

- b. Discussing the Process of Organizing and Selecting Membership for the newly formed Town Council Advisory Committee on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging** *(Video record time 0:36:21 - 0:51:39)*

Ms. Wilson stated that in August, the Town Council formally created an Advisory Committee on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging. Town staff has promoted the opportunity for members of the public to serve as volunteers on this committee and has received seven applications. Ms. Wilson, in consultation with the Council Chair, made the decision to promote

the opportunity again with plans to review the applications in early November. She also noted that the Council will want to select a Councilor to serve as a committee liaison. Council discussed the process for selecting the Committee members.

The Council agreed to review the applications and talk to the applicants in a workshop format.

- c. **Fire Department Data Analysis and Public Outreach Project** (*Video record time 0:51:40 - 1:02:24*)

Public Safety Director Geoff Low explained that the Fire Department will be going door-to-door conducting fire safety education. He explained that the planned public outreach efforts will be rolled out by fire service districts (24, 25, 25-1, and 26), with targeted safety information.

Ms. Wilson stated the goal is to contact everyone regarding fire safety information. Chief Low stated the outreach will commence next week, and noted the Fire Department will also provide student classroom education.

3. COMP PLAN IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE

- a. **Reviewing the Planning Board Report and discussing Next Steps related to the Proposed Parking Ordinance Revision (Reducing Minimum Parking Standards)** (*Video record time 1:02:30 - 1:14:29*)

Town Planner Kyle Drexler stated the Planning Board reviewed the draft language and held a public hearing to accept public comments on the proposed revision at its meeting on September 21, 2022. No public comments were made at the meeting. The Planning Board discussed the potential of property owners renting dwellings to more people than available parking spaces and the potential of this leading to issues with on-street parking. Staff discussed other means of enforcement which could be utilized if this situation arose. The Planning Board indicated its comfort with the revision as proposed. Ms. Wilson stated the next step would be to call the Council public hearing in October to be held in November.

Leo Kenney asked about the effect of the ordinance on on-street parking. Mr. Drexler stated the reduced number is only for certain dwellings and should not be an issue as long as landlords and tenants communicate.

The Committee agreed to refer the proposed ordinance amendment to the Town Council for its public hearing process.

4. FINANCE AND OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

- a. **Changes in Parking Enforcement Practices** (*Video record time 1:14:30 - 1:42:25*)

Police Chief Dan Merrill stated he recently learned that the practice of chalking or marking tires to determine the length of time a car has been parked in a space has been deemed a violation of the US Constitution (4th Amendment).

Ms. Wilson discussed options for downtown parking enforcement from doing nothing, to police by complaint, use of handheld devices or kiosk ticket system with time stamp, or phone app parking sign up, and she noted the related costs of each.

Bruce Farnsworth, owner of Pat's Pizza, spoke in support of more parking downtown. He also spoke in support of 2-hour parking, stating that most people are in and out of a parking space within two hours. Mr. Farnsworth also spoke of the need for overnight parking.

Councilors supported continuing with signs about parking and not enforcing unless there is a complaint.

Ms. Wilson summarized Council's discussion: She will set up a meeting to talk with the downtown business community, and the police will continue doing what they are doing, and respond if there are complaints.

b. Proposed Ordinance Amendment, Chapter 2, Article V Finance, Division 2 Purchasing

This item was postponed to a future Council Committees Meeting due to the time.

5. Town Manager's Report (*Video record time 1:42:45 - 2:02:34*)

Ms. Wilson reported on the following items:

- Audit completed and it was a good audit (Fund Balance and Revenue Sharing up).
- Groundbreaking for the University of Maine hotels last weekend.
- Webster Park groundbreaking for new statue on October 21, 2022.
- Lights on Silk Bridge being fixed by Hampden Electric.
- Speed details being conducted on Forest Avenue, College Avenue and Park Street.
- College Heights and Mahaney Development construction projects being wrapped up.
- The new Public Works loader has arrived.
- The Orono Efficiency Fair will be held on October 22nd.
- Review of draft Council Meeting schedule.
- Community Conversations - Fire Department, December 8th. Other Community Conversations: January - Police; February - Community Services; March - Community Infrastructure (Public Works and WPCF); April - Customer Service.
- Postcard to homeowners regarding LD290 (Property Tax Stabilization program).

6. Public Comment - None

7. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn by Sonja Birthisel and seconded by Meghan Gardner. All unanimously agreed. The Council Meeting adjourned at 7:02 p.m.

Minutes are not verbatim. A video-recorded version is available on the Town's website at www.orono.org. Respectfully submitted, Nancy W. Ward, Executive Assistant