

**CITY OF EASTPORT
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20th, 2018
SHEAD HIGH SCHOOL - LIBRARY - 6:00 P.M.**

EXECUTIVE SESSION - 5:30 P.M. TO 6:00 P.M.

(Reference WS700 & 700314 & 315)

<u> </u> Personnel Matters	<i>Title 1 M.R.S.A. § 405(6)(A)</i>
<u> x </u> Real Property or Economic Development	<i>Title 1 M.R.S.A. § 405(6)(C)</i>
<u> </u> Labor Negotiations	<i>Title 1 M.R.S.A. § 405(6)(D)</i>
<u> x </u> Consultation w/Legal Counsel	<i>Title 1 M.R.S.A. § 495(6)(E)</i>
<u> </u> Poverty Abatement Application	<i>Title 36 M.R.S.A. § 841</i>

Those in Attendance: Councilor Roscoe Archer, Councilor Scott Emery, and Council President, Gilbert Murphy. Also present were City Manager, Elaine Abbott; Legal Counsel, Dennis Mahar; and City Clerk, Ella Kowal. **Those Absent:** Councilor Hailley Bradbury and Councilor Shannon Emery

Council President calls this portion of the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

MOTION ARCHER **SECOND** SCOTT EMERY **(PASSED 3-0) TIME: 5:31 P.M.**
To go into Executive Session for Personnel Matters under Real Property or Economic Development under *Title 1 M.R.S.A. § 405(6)(C)* and for Consultation with Legal Counsel under *Title 1 M.R.S.A. § 405(6)(E)*.

MOTION SCOTT EMERY **SECOND** ARCHER **(PASSED 3-0) TIME: 5:55 P.M.**
To come out of Executive Session.

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

(Reference WS700316)

Those in Attendance: Councilor Roscoe Archer, Councilor Scott, Emery, and Council President, Gilbert Murphy. Also present were City Manager, Elaine Abbott; Legal Counsel, Dennis Mahar; and City Clerk, Ella Kowal. **Those Absent:** Councilor Hailley Bradbury & Councilor Shannon Emery.

Attendees in the Audience: Lora Whelan, Gordon Smith, Jack Reece, Karen Raye, Kevin Raye, Mary Repole, Peter Repole, William “Bill” Altvater, Samra Kuseybi, and Meg McGarvey

I. CALL TO ORDER - Council President called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. ACTION from EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION SCOTT EMERY **SECOND** ARCHER **(PASSED 3-0)**

To approve the scheduling of a Public Hearing for 4/11/2018 on the sale of City property which is ledge located behind 83 Washington Street.

MOTION ARCHER **SECOND** SCOTT EMERY **(PASSED 3-0)**

To approve and authorize a refund in the amount of \$1,037.78 for overpayment of real estate taxes referencing real estate account #80 and that it be returned back to the mortgage holder which is Machias Savings Bank

MOTION SCOTT EMERY **SECOND** ARCHER **(PASSED 3-0)**

To approve and authorize a refund in the amount of \$139.59 for overpayment of real estate taxes referencing real estate account #572 and that it be returned back to the mortgage holder which is Ross Furman.

III. PUBLIC HEARING(s) - *THERE WERE NONE*

IV. ACTION ON PUBLIC HEARING(s) - *NOT APPLICABLE*

V. ADJUSTMENTS TO AGENDA

MOTION ARCHER **SECOND** SCOTT EMERY **(PASSED 3-0)**

To approve adjustments to the agenda one to **remove** the “scheduling of a public hearing” from the consent agenda for amendment to the City's Bow Ordinance and the other to add “(i) Councilor Roscoe Archer under Item VII New Business.

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS - *NONE*

VII. NEW BUSINESS

a) Adoption of Issuance Compliance Procedures - WWTP Bond Anticipation Note

MOTION EMERY **SECOND** ARCHER **(PASSED 3-0)**

To approve the adoption of Issuance Compliance Procedures for the Wastewater Treatment Plant Bond Anticipation Note.

b) Request for Study to Regionalize Local Schools - Bill Altvater

Bill Altvater addresses the City Council thanks the Council for their service and further comments about an article circulated in the Quoddy Tides and also notes with regard to another letter to the editor relative to the most recent school board meeting. He continues to share his point of view in that it would be great to leave tonight's Council meeting to have an article in the next Quoddy Tides that reads: City Council agrees to reach out to the general population in Eastport in an effort to reduce the taxes for everybody and to work together with the community. He comments to say that the request to reach out to surrounding

communities for a regional school study is probably classified as a wedge into the bigger discussion of taxes. He states that when he first moved to Redoubt Hill in 1983, his taxes were a little over \$500.00 per year and now they are over \$500.00 per month. He further makes a statement to say people have moved out of the area into the surrounding towns because of the tax burden. Each time that someone leaves Eastport, we lose a certain part of the character. That being said, he understands that the property values are sky rocketing with people away from Maine buying property which results in an increase of the values. This, in turn, is putting a serious hurt on us locally as we are losing people.

At the very least, what he would like to see the Council do is send a letter to the surrounding communities to inquire of their interest and see if they would be willing to join with Eastport in funding a regional school feasibility study (i.e. Pembroke, Perry, Charlotte) just a letter and should they say no then we know that we are on our own. He continues to say that this would not preclude any efforts that the Council should take in lowering taxes. He understands that Council is in the position of leadership and states that people (the silent majority) are not willing to come here in this forum for one reason or another. He shares with the Council that one person told him that if they say something that Elaine Abbott does not like, she will be vindictive towards you and make ones life miserable and does not believe that. These are things that he is hearing and that people talk about. He shares with the Council that people are afraid to address the City. He further expounds that this makes the Council's decision making ability very difficult and he states he has a suggestion. He continues to say that his primary purpose here this evening is to ask the Council to open up dialogue and let people know that their concerns in this community are welcome and that they want to be heard. He would like to see a quarter page ad in the Quoddy Tides (and he would be willing to pay for it) with the City Council asking these questions (i.e. do you want this? do you feel we have a need of a unionized police force? Or whatever questions that will help the Council with guidance in their decision making; or ask the people if it would be better to have a town form of government? Or whatever other pertinent questions that Council would like to ask). Mr. Altvater closes with asking Council if they would just reach out to the community.

Councilor Archer reaches out to a member of the audience who is a School Board member, Meg McGarvey, and asks her if this has been looked at before. She responds to say that there has been a lot of discussion about regionalization and they addresses it with regionalizing the junior high/middle school and it was not well received. What has brought them to this point is the loss of industrial base. She states that she is in support of the City reaching out for the potential of economic development. Bringing more business in town will help to pick up more of the industrial commercial base to help relieve the taxpayers.

Councilor Archer asks Ms. McGarvey if the State cut back the funding this year and she responds she did not believe so. She extends an invitation out to Bill Altvater to meet with her and do whatever we can to build the schools back up and to raise the enrollment which will help us get back into an upward spiral which would also increase revenue with regard to tuition, etc. Mr. Altvater responds to say that what he would like to see is the City

put a moratorium on taking property that is paying taxes now and turn non-profit organizations. He continues to say that the prime real estate that the City has is tax exempt. He then speaks to City owned property and suggests that we put it out to bid for a \$1.00 and give them five years with no taxes and then put it back on the tax roles. He ends with the question - do we really need a City form of government? He continues on to say do people really want to pay for being able to pay for registering their car five days a week and would they be ok with doing it say one day a week or even a half day to help bring the costs down? He comments to say for a small calculation, we have high-end cadillac services, especially the police department and he does not feel the City needs a full time police department. His argument is....how does Lubec survive – what does Lubec have that we have. Maybe consider working out a mutual agreement with Pleasant Point. He would like to see these ideas on the table for people to discuss. He shares with Council of an email between him and Will Bradbury and that he understands that North Yarmoth gets more money per student to the school than Eastport does. Maybe the City and the school needs to lobby in Augusta and that we are not being treated fairly. If we do not say anything, there will be no change – the squeaky wheel gets the grease.

Former Councilor Mary Repole addresses Mr. Altvater and suggests that he also speak with Superintendent, Kenneth Johnson, and that he has a great deal of information of the calculation in terms of statewide and the formula that is used and the portion that is put into the school. Legal Counsel, Dennis Mahar, addresses the Council and the audience to say that the tuition rate is set by the State and ruled by Augusta. Thus, telling the City and Shead what they can charge for tuition and is also applicable to all the towns throughout the State – all governed by the State. The City Manager, Elaine Abbott, addresses Mr. Altvater and thanks him for coming and reiterates that she has an open door policy for anyone who wishes to come in and meet with her. She shares that the State is suppose to contribute 55% to education and they do not and has not upheld their obligation to the municipalities and the schools for decades. She also shares that the State increased the homestead exemption from \$10,000 to \$20,000 and that the municipality pays 50% of that and it is matters such as these that are out of the City's control. She informs that the Town of Fayette has organized a meeting to take place on Thursday at noon at Petri Flaherty and all schools and municipal leaders are invited to attended whether it be by phone or in person to discuss education funding and holding the State accountable. She extends an invite to those who would like to attend with her via: speaker phone the conference call at City Hall in her office. Also available for review is a spreadsheet that was generated of the percentages and the effects. Meg McGarvey comments to say that the formula does not take into account the income. Mr. Altvater thanks everyone for listening and sharing and leaves them with one final thought and that is for the Council to reach out to the community and letting them know that their comments are welcome to assist them with their decision making. Councilor Scott Emery speaks to say that he agrees with Bill on a lot of his points made and comments to say that the town and the people that live here expect too many services for a small town and emphasizes that it is time to do something.

c) Council Approval for the Repair of the Dog Island Pump Station - \$4,968.00

MOTION SCOTT EMERY **SECOND** ARCHER **(PASSED 3-0)**

To authorize and approve the repair of the dog island pump station for an amount of \$4,968.00 and that it be expended from the Sewer budget.

d) Council Approval for the Repair of the Cannery Pump Station

MOTION SCOTT EMERY **SECOND** ARCHE **(PASSED 3-0)**

To approve the repair of the Cannery pump station and to authorize Riverside Electric to complete said repair for an amount of \$3,759.84.

e) Election Warrant – State Primary Election – June 12th, 2018

MOTION ARCHER **SECOND** SCOTT EMERY **(PASSED 3-0)**

To approve and authorize the signing of the Election Warrant for the State Primary Election for June 12th, 2018 as submitted by the City Clerk.

f) Open & Award of Demolition Bid – 76 High Street – Tax Map #I7-0C2-02

The City Clerk updates the Council that there were a total of three bids received and gives them to the Council President for opening. Bid #1 opened was from Stanhope's Trucking for an amount of \$3,675.00; Bid #2 opened was from Uncle Buck's Cabins, LLC for an amount of \$19,414.00; and Bid #3 opened was from Downeast Masonry for an amount of \$3,000.00.

MOTION SCOTT EMERY **SECOND** ARCHER **(PASSED 3-0)**

To *accept and award* the demolition bid of **76 High Street** to *Downeast Masonry & Construction* for an amount of **\$3,000.00**, contingent upon confirmation that the bid includes the cost for disposal, and should it not be included, then the bid is to be awarded to Stanhope Trucking.

g) Council Liaison/Manager Updates

MOTION ARCHER **SECOND** SCOTT EMERY **(PASSED 3-0)**

To accept the Council Liaison/Manager updates as given.

h) Council Approval of Consent Agenda

MOTION ARCHER **SECOND** SCOTT EMERY **(PASSED 3-0)**

To approve the Consent Agenda with an adjustment to the agenda removing the scheduling of a public hearing on an amendment to the City's Bow Ordinance.

i) Councilor Roscoe Archer

Councilor Roscoe Archer addressed the City Council and informed them that he is stepping down as the Council liaison to the School Board.

MOTION SCOTT EMERY **SECOND** MURPHY **(PASSED 3-0)**

To accept Councilor Archer's decision to step down as Council liaison to the School Board.

Former Councilor Mary Repole addresses Council and offers up that she serve as Council liaison to the School Board.

MOTION ARCHER **SECOND** SCOTT EMERY **(PASSED 3-0)**

To appoint former Councilor Mary Repole to serve as Council liaison to the School Board.

VIII. COUNCIL ISSUES - *THERE WERE NONE*

IX. ADJOURN

MOTION ARCHER **SECOND** SCOTT EMERY **(PASSED 3-0)** **TIME: 6:46 P.M.**

To adjourn.