

MINUTES
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS/ ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
Meeting of Tuesday, August 27, 2019 – 9:00 a.m.
Conference Room A

Present: Councilor Suzanne Phillips, Chair; Councilors Lee Pratt and Ronald Shepard.

Also Present: Town Manager, Ephrem Paraschak; Director of Community Development, Tom Poirier; GEDC Director, Tom Ellsworth; Executive Assistant, Jessica Hughes.

1. Consideration of minutes of March 12, 2019 meeting.

A motion was MADE by Councilor Shepard, SECONDED by Councilor Pratt and VOTED to approve the minutes of the March 12, 2019 meeting. Unanimous vote.

2. Current Business

A. Economic development update from GEDC Director, Tom Ellsworth.

Tom Ellsworth expressed his appreciation to Councilor Pratt for attending GEDC meetings. He then reported that the Gorham Self Storage business was just sold, and that the group that purchased the self-storage business went through extensive due diligence, especially with looking at the competitive landscape in the Industrial District. They would have preferred to have been on Route 22 as it has 30,000 traffic counts versus 9,000 counts. The new group will ask the Town to consider rezoning the property.

a. Business Activities

Mr. Ellsworth reported the following:

- i. Southern Maine Firewood have submitted an application for the RLF program.
- ii. Harvey Performance Business Park is gearing up to lease a space and had some interest in the Old Canal Business Park.
- iii. The Blue Pig was a RLF loan opportunity; however, they opted for a traditional bank loan.
- iv. Town industrial inventory is lacking and the Gorham Business Exchange, Gorham Village Alliance and Tom Poirier are trying to increase revenue and the tax base.
- v. Gorham Savings Bank requires payment subordination on loans, which is a hurdle for the Town. Councilor Pratt suggested keeping interest rates more competitive with banks - at prime minus 1%, to which Mr. Ellsworth agreed.

B. Update regarding Capital Projects.

Ephrem Paraschak shared that the following large projects are pending:

- Main Street improvements: the scope and drainage requirements have been reduced.
- PACTS project: streetlights on Main Street.
- There will be a request on the October Town Council meeting agenda for the road to be paved up near Little Falls on Route 202, at which time there will be a separate request for funding to pave Mallison Street.

Councilor Shepard asked if the Town can pave a MDOT road and send the bill to the State, to which Mr. Paraschak responded yes. Mr. Paraschak shared that other capital projects include those that are PACTS, MPI and CDBG-funded, as well as drainage and sidewalk projects. Additionally, the streetlight conversion project should be happening in the next couple of months. Other capital improvement items include Municipal Center repairs; a new ambulance that was purchased; fiber optics to be installed in Little Falls; Gorham Fire had new boilers installed last week and Public Works is schedule to have new boilers installed next; West Gorham Fire Station should see an Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) for sprinklers. In Assessing, a revaluation is desperately needed; a full revaluation will cost over the \$250,000 Charter cap, so the Town may issue a RFP for a partial revaluation. The Town may also need to revisit the \$250,000 Charter cap, in which Mr. Paraschak would recommend increasing it and to include an escalation clause. The largest capital project is the fuel pump replacement at Public Works, which needs to be done right away. Councilor Phillips asked what is going on at the Chick Property/baseball field, to which Mr. Paraschak responded that the Recreation Director Cindy Hazelton was getting pricing and if reasonable they may proceed. Councilor Phillips asked if the parking lot needs to be put in before the ball field, to which Mr. Paraschak responded ideally yes, and further said that Cindy is collecting information needed for CDBG grant money. Mr. Paraschak added that the Town still has a 5-year capital plan, which he will ask Department Managers to update and provide new 5-year plans. Councilor Phillips asked that the updated 5-year plan and updated projects list be provided at a future CIP/ED meeting.

3. Other Business

A. U.S. Census

Councilor Phillips recommended that Town staff notify the public regarding the U.S. Census and to expect Census employees conducting field work/going door-to-door.

B. Report of GEDC and subcommittee updates

Councilor Pratt suggested that the GEDC provide a quarterly update at Town Council meetings. Councilor Phillips added that all subcommittees are welcome to report information at Town Council meetings.

4. Schedule next meeting and discuss agenda items for next meeting.

The Committee advised that they will schedule the next meeting at a later date.

5. Adjournment

There being no further business, a motion was MADE by Councilor Pratt, SECONDED by Councilor Shepard and unanimously VOTED to adjourn at 9:50 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jessica Hughes, Executive Assistant