

**COUNCIL MINUTES OF
January 13, 2022**

COUNCIL PRESENT: Charles Ellms, Andrew Bermudez (via zoom), Peter Haskell, David Palmer(via zoom), Adam Briggs, Heidi Kinney (via zoom)

EXCUSED ABSENCE: Levi Ladd

STAFF PRESENT: Marilyn Curtis

I. PUBLIC HEARING

NONE

II. MINUTES

1. Approve/Amend Council Minutes of December 9, 2021

Motion to Approve: **Charles Ellms**

Second: **Peter Haskell**

Vote: 6-1 (Kinney Abstains), motion passes

III. NOMINATIONS, APPOINTMENTS, & ELECTIONS

NONE

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Manager's Report

Trampas King started by thanking the Highway Department for their hard work during the nasty storms that we have been getting. We are getting a little bit of snow and a little bit of rain which makes for long days and nights for the guys. Also thank you to our first responders because in the last month they have had a lot of fires in surrounding Towns that they have had to provide mutual aid for. **Mr. King** thanked everyone that participated in the activities that we did at Christmas time. We had a great parade and the scavenger hunt went awesome. Thank you to the donors that put money towards the Christmas for Kids program and the people that participated in the light contest. There is a big weekend coming up for the fish and game as they will be hosting the derby. This is their only fundraiser that they do for the year and anybody can purchase raffle tickets to support the cause. The ice skating rink will be open tomorrow night for the kids but there will be some rules to abide by which will be posted on the door. The Omicron virus is very active right now with about 15-25 a week testing positive. That is one of the reasons we have shut down the roller skating at the Town Hall. **Mr. King** stated that the trails at Ellms field have been opened up for snowshoeing, hiking, and cross country skiing.

2. Departmental Reports

Heidi Kinney had a question on the Finance Report regarding the public safety budget. **Mr. King** stated he would look into it.

V. NEW BUSINESS

1. Order A2022-01 Signing of Contract with Stantec

BE IT ORDERED, that the Dexter Town Council hereby authorizes Trampas King to sign a five year contract with Stantec Consulting Services, Inc. for airport planning and engineering services as recommended by the Airport Committee.

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CHARLES ELLMS

Second: **David Palmer**

Trampas King stated that we signed a five year contract in 2018 and we need to put everything we will be doing during the five years into the contract. We neglected to put crack sealing in and had to put it back out to bid. Stantec was the only firm that applied so we ended up signing a new five-year contract with them.

Vote: Unanimous in favor, motion passes

2. Order A2022-02 Accept Bid for Rock Crushing

BE IT ORDERED, that the Dexter Town Council hereby accepts the bid submitted by Pidacks, Inc in the amount of \$70,000 for crushing 10,000 yards of rock in the Town gravel pit.

Filed January 13, 2022
HEIDI KINNEY

Second: **Peter Haskell**

stated that we received two bids and that we have used Pidacks the last two times. They are a little bit higher but they break the rock down to 1 1/2" where Superior is only at 2". Also Superior can't break anything down bigger than 24" and that is what we need crushed. **Chuck Ellms** stated that we always get more yardage then what they are billed for.

Vote: Unanimous in favor, motion passes

3. Order A2022-03 Approve Purchase of Airport Beacon

BE IT ORDERED, that the Dexter Town Council hereby accepts the bid submitted by ELCO in the amount of \$16,500 for a beacon at Dexter Regional Airport.

Filed January 13, 2022
PETER HASKELL

Second: **Chuck Ellms**

Trampas King stated that Elco will come and install the beacon for an extra \$4,000. The tower is 40' high and he doesn't want members of the committee to install it on their own. It can be installed sometime in April or May. There is a grant that will pay for it.

Vote: Unanimous in favor, motion passes

4. Order A2022-04 Authorization of Expenditure of Ban Funds

BE IT ORDERED, that the Dexter Town Council hereby authorizes the Finance Director to make transfer \$5,500 from Paving Account #E105-03-507-60 to Paving Bond Account #E108-01-508-04.

Filed January 13, 2022
PETER HASKELL

Second: **Heidi Kinney**

Vote: Unanimous in favor, motion passes

5. Order A2022-05 Renewal of Medical Marijuana Manufacturing License

BE IT ORDERED, that the Dexter Town Council hereby approves the Medical Marijuana Manufacturing License for Delta Solutions Inc., 399 Corinna Road.

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ADAM BRIGGS

Second: **David Palmer**

Anthony Pandozzi asked if this is a third license. **Trampas King** explained that Delta Solutions has two licenses for operations out of the same building.

Vote: Unanimous in favor, motion passes

6. Discussion of ARPA Funds

Mr. King explained that the committee started making a list of things that we would like to see done but they have to follow certain guidelines. A lot of the things on the list are recreational and that type of stuff to get people out of the house. The first item was cable on Zions hill which we already agreed to do.

Town Hall Restorations: The building is pretty run down and we need some work done. The columns need to be done outside as well as some wood replacement on the deck going in the main entrance. We have done the stairs and the wheelchair ramp already. We also need to replace the windows. The bathrooms need to be done over as well as the meeting room.

Lights at Ellms Field: We have old halide lights there that have been shutting off and we need some electrical work done too. We already have \$5500 donated towards them but it will be an estimated \$20,000.

Golf Course Road: Sunrise Avenue is terrible and it needs new culverts as well. This is the chance to do it without using tax payer money.

Walking Trails: The Boy Scouts are working on doing some trails and the money would help to get a machine in there to help with that. We need walking trails as the only place to walk now is the railroad bed and that is a suicide trip during the summer time with the four wheelers on it. Another walking trail that was brought up was an actual sidewalk on Zions Hill from Ellms field up the Town line. A resident is putting in a trail that will go around the top of the lake across to Shore Road. There are a lot of people that walk there now and they are in the road. It would be a lot of money.

Heart of Maine Resource Center: The committee put in \$15,000 and **Mr. King** stated that some members of the Board were present to make a formal request.

Three members from the Heart of Maine's Resource Center asked for ARPA funds to help get the space at 6 Main St. off the ground. Carol Sherburne explained that food could eventually be stored and distributed there, and community members struggling with food insecurity, mental health and other issues could visit for a variety of services. The Heart of Maine Resource Center, which has applied for nonprofit status and several grants, is in the process of renovating the building. A revamped exterior would enhance the beauty of Main Street, which is one of the town's strongest attributes. They hope to provide services for the more than 6,000 residents in this area, which has a 17 percent food insecurity rate. In the future they hope to provide offices for counseling, substance abuse services and other needs that may be identified. The center's volunteer committee has spent three years moving the project forward. Along with the building being gutted, an electrician assessed wiring needs, an asbestos problem was resolved and an energy efficiency evaluation was completed. **Andrew Bermudez**, board member and Town Council Chair stated that repairing the roof and restoring the first floor of the three-story building are priorities so the space can serve as a "central hub" for the community. He estimated the projects would cost \$50,000-\$80,000. "We may not be able to give it ourselves," he said about

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every item or resource that a community member might need, “but we can connect them with the person that can give them that resource.

Playground Equipment: We put in \$5,000 for new equipment and also talked about going to rubber chips instead of wood chips.

Fencing at Crosby Park: The fencing is in real bad shape. When we put the basketball court in we ended up doing the right field of the baseball fence but the whole fence needs to be done. The school said that they would pay for half of this. Would also like to do the protector on the top of the fence as well as the bottom so it doesn't curl up.

Bathhouse: We did some work to it last summer but it isn't in the best of shape. It has shifted and the floor has come away from the walls. If we redo it the showers will come out and not be put back in. There will be four doors to go into four different restrooms so you can change in there as well.

Beach: Talked to Code Enforcement to see if we could dig up some of the grass and possibly put sand in about 100' back. It would also help keep the geese of it.

Fix Beach for Campsites: Someone asked about putting in campsites. To put in power and hook to the sewer and have water to the sites would be about \$30,000.

Water and Sewer to P&L: This amount isn't added to the total at the bottom. It would be for any new business coming in along that stretch of Route 7. It is a big project and would have to have approval of the Utility District.

Community Center: **Mr. King** stated that he was going to pull this off as we don't need another building to take care of.

Parking for ATV and Snowmobile Riding: Think this can be done without spending any money. HH Brown has a parking lot on McFarland Street that they don't use and they will probably let us use it if we ask.

Hazard Pay for Employees: Other Towns have given some of their employees hazard pay that have worked through the pandemic.

Comprehensive Plan: We haven't updated our plan since 2012 when we wrote it. It needs to be done. We would work with Eastern Maine Development Corporation if we are going to do it. They gave us a price of \$20,000 if they were to rewrite the book from the beginning but we could probably do it cheaper. This takes a huge commitment from a lot of people. It isn't an easy thing and you have to have a lot of input from many people.

Update Signage in Town: This was suggested by one of the Councilors at the last meeting. The total of the estimations is \$380,500 and the committee will need to prioritize what we want done. We have \$162,000 left now and will be getting another \$195,700 in September.

VI. PUBLIC FORUM

Mark Stephens, owner of the Brewster Inn, stated that he had worked on the Comprehensive Plan back in 2012 and it takes a lot of time and commitment but it is something that has to be done and needs to be updated. He also mentioned the historic walking tour that he has been working on with the Revitalization committee and **Rick Whitney**. They have already earmarked the buildings but they will need signs. It will be similar to the historic tours in some of the coastal towns in Maine. **Mr. Stephens** said that the signs they use are about \$1200 apiece but we can do something for a lot cheaper and there are 15 different properties. **Mr. Stephens** proceeded to address the Council about the article in the Lewiston Sun Journal that he sent them regarding large scale marijuana grows. **Mr. Stephens** stated that a lot of this is to do with

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making the Town and making the Town better and bringing money and jobs. He stated that he doesn't know **Tony Pandozzi**, only on Facebook but that he is a business owner in this Town and he feels like he is trying to get help from the Town to develop his business, pay taxes, and create jobs. He stated that **Mr. Pandozzi** didn't ask him to be at the meeting, he told him he was coming. He feels like he isn't getting the support he should be getting as a business owner in this Town. **Mr. Stephens** stated that he heard a rumor that there are other Towns trying to get him to bring his business to there. Dexter has missed out stuff for far too long. Newport, Guilford, Dover, Monson, and even Greenville has done well. Dexter seems to always be left out and something has to give sooner or later. He stated that we need to support businesses in this Town and people that bring their money to this Town and want to do things. It doesn't matter what the product is and he wishes, from what he is seeing, that the Council would support him more. He doesn't know if the Council has had conversations with him but he believes that **David Palmer** had a conversation with him a couple of months ago but from what he hears there hasn't been much conversation since. He feels the Council should talk to him and ask him what he wants and what he is doing. We have to get this Town to do better. The two articles that he sent them were regarding Towns in Maine that have cannabis businesses that have raised tax money through building assessments and through lotteries to allow businesses. He realizes that we aren't big like these Towns but there is money in cannabis whether we like it or we don't. It is time to start looking at this once and for all. He would like the Council to make the pledge to talk to **Mr. Pandozzi** and see what he wants to do and what he can bring to the Town. **David Palmer** stated that everyone needs to understand that over the course of two years, Dexter has made a lot of changes to allow cannabis businesses to come in. During the process there was compromises made by some Council members and others to find something that worked. A lot of people need to understand that there are certain processes that people have to go through – licensing, permits, etc. It isn't only the Towns that set up certain restrictions and guidelines but the State already has multiple things in place that will prevent certain types of cannabis businesses being in certain areas. For example you can't be within 1,000' of a church, school, or daycare. **Mr. Palmer** stated that there is a lot of misinformation out there as far as what the Town has restricted. He stated that each member of the Council has their own feelings on this and voted accordingly but we all worked together to get the two businesses that are here. **Andrew Bermudez** stated that there isn't a Council member that doesn't want to make the Town better. Everybody has a different idea of what the Town should look like and what would make it better. The Council members represent the voices of the Town as well and they work really well together. **Mr. Bermudez** stated that the two businesses that are currently functioning under the cannabis licenses in Town came to us with their business proposals. We didn't go to them. He is all for welcoming new businesses to Town and does feel like we are handicapping anybody. There is a process to go through and those two businesses went through the proper channels. There seems to be a misconception that if somebody doesn't have a business in Town that it is somehow the fault of the Council being anti-business or not wanting the Town to get better. **Charles Ellms** stated that in the five years he has been on the Council he hasn't seen one organization or individual that has come to with a solid business plan that we haven't encouraged or tried to help all that we could. He hasn't seen anybody that we have tried to run out of Town or anything else. It is like what has been said, there are certain things that you have to do that are beyond our control and there isn't anybody that we haven't tried to help. **Tony Pandozzi** stated that in 2018 he did sit with **Trampas** and **Al Tempesta** and he had a business plan and an architectural drawing of the lot and he got put through the mill for a year. Now he will go through the steps

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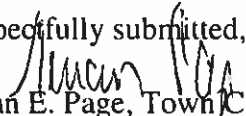
again. He will present his business plan and would like to talk to them about it. He stated he isn't going anywhere and is growing medical cannabis there under State law and doesn't need Town permission. He would like to subdivide the lot where the stage is and make that a recreational grow whether it be a building or a greenhouse but he will present a plan. **Mr. Ellms** stated that none of the Council ever saw a plan from him. **Trampas King** stated that it was 2018. **Mr. Pandozzi** stated that he was ahead of the curve and he had to go through the cannabis task force and it was a dog and pony show at the time.

Trampas King told the Council that Eastern Maine Development Corporation is setting up regional planning commission and they want support from the Towns. It will take care of the Piscataquis, Penobscot area so they are looking to see if we will give them support. What they are planning to do is have a commission and every Town has two representatives. They will have a meeting scheduled once they get it going and the first meetings will probably be biannual. **Mr. King** stated that he would really like to see it happen because it will help us work in collaboration with other Towns around us. **Mr. King** stated that he usually works with Piscataquis County Towns with the exception of Corinna and Newport so to have this collaboration it would be a great opportunity to get our name out there and be in the mix of it all. We can't sit back on our hands and wait for things because they won't come to us. The more we are out there, the more we will see. It is a great opportunity and we will be the first Town to put it in motion if we agree to do it. **Mr. King** stated that the Town manager is on the commission and that **Levi Ladd** has approached him about being on it as well but it will be up to the Council as to who the other representative will be if we choose to do it. **Mr. King** stated that he would like to have a motion to support EMDC in the formation of a Regional Planning Commission to serve Penobscot and Piscataquis counties, and to appoint two representatives to serve a 2-year term on an RPC Advisory Committee, one of which must be a municipal officer. **Adam Briggs** made a motion to support the Commission. **David Palmer** seconded and the Council voted unanimously.

VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

NONE

Respectfully submitted,


Susan E. Page, Town Clerk