

CALAIS CITY COUNCIL
FEBRUARY 22, 2018

The second regular monthly meeting of the Calais City Council was held this date in the Councilor Chambers of the Calais City Building at 6:00 p.m.

Present was Mayor Howard presiding over Councilors Sherrard, Rogers, Carr, and Nixon.

On a motion by Councilor Nixon and a second by Councilor Carr, it was unanimously voted to approve the following consent agenda:

- A. Previous Minutes
- B. Treasurer's Warrants City through February 21, 2018
\$243,079.72
- C. Treasurer's Warrants School through February 21, 2018
\$330,871.82
- D. Treasurer's Warrants Water through February 21, 2018
\$ 22,132.89

At this time, the 2016-2017 Audit was explained to the City Council by Hank Farrah of RKO Auditing firm.

Councilor Geel joined the meeting at 6:12 p.m.

The City Manager then gave his report. He reported on a proposed change to the International Festival Street Fair, an informational packet on Tax Acquired Property Policies, and he also asked the City Council to consider suspending the Council Rules in order to add an agenda item of an expense of purchasing new software program for the Assessing Dept to keep maps updated on the City's Website. On a motion by Councilor Nixon and a second by Councilor Geel, it was unanimously voted to suspend the rules. It was then moved by Councilor Rogers, seconded by Councilor Nixon, and unanimously voted to authorize the expense of \$1600.00 for the software update.

The following Council Committee reports were submitted:

1. **Finance Committee** – No report
2. **Property Committee** – No report
3. **Public Safety Committee** – No report
4. **Public Works Committee** – will meet in March

Attendance

Consent Agenda

Audit

City Manager Report

Suspend Rules

Mapping Expense

Council Committee Reports

5. **School Liaison Committee** – will meet on Feb 27th at 5:00 p.m. and the Supt of Schools is trying to schedule a meeting with the Baileyville Supt and Board and Council
6. **Economic/Community Development Committee** – No report

The Finance Director presented the City Council with the following Bid Result on Short Term Financing for the Broad Band Fiber Project:

Bid #1: The First

Fixed interest rate of 1.99% - No Bond Counsel Required

Bid #2: Machias Savings Bank

Fixed interest rate of 1.93%- Bond Counsel is Required

Bid #3: Bangor Savings Bank

Fixed interest rate of 2.89%- Bond counsel is Required

Estimated cost of Bond Counsel: \$2,500

Since there is no Bond Counsel required, it was moved by Councilor Rogers and seconded by Councilor Nixon to award this bid to The First. Voting in favor were Councilors Geel, Sherrard, Rogers, Nixon, and Mayor Howard. Councilor Carr Abstained. Motion carried.

The City Clerk presented the Council with a list of Tax and Sewer Acquired Properties. The following motions were made:

Moved by Councilor Sherrard, seconded by Councilor Carr, and unanimously voted to advertise for sale by sealed bid the property located at 802 Main Street, Map 13, Block 1, Lot 4 with a minimum bid equaling everything owed on the property, plus an estimate of the taxes for the coming year.

Moved by Councilor Sherrard, seconded by Councilor Carr, and unanimously voted to advertise for sale by sealed bid the property located at 7 Price Street, Map 5, Block 2, Lot 23 with a minimum bid equaling everything owed on the property, plus an estimate of the taxes for the coming year.

Moved by Councilor Carr, seconded by Councilor Geel, and unanimously voted to advertise for sale by sealed bid the property located at 100 Shattuck Road, Map 37, Lot 235 with a minimum bid equaling everything owed on the property, plus an estimate of the taxes for the coming year.

Broadband Fiber Project
Financing Bids

Tax Acquired Property

Moved by Councilor Sherrard, seconded by Councilor Nixon, and unanimously voted to advertise for sale by sealed bid the property located at 34 King Street, Map 3, Block 3, Lot 6 with a minimum bid equaling everything owed on the property, plus an estimate of the taxes for the coming year.

Moved by Councilor Sherrard, seconded by Councilor Geel, and unanimously voted to advertise for sale by sealed bid the property located at 14 Cherry Lane, Map 6, Block 2, Lot 19A with a minimum bid equaling everything owed on the property, plus an estimate of the taxes for the coming year.

Moved by Councilor Sherrard, seconded by Councilor Geel, and unanimously voted to advertise for sale by sealed bid the property located at 469 South Street, Map 3, Block 8, Lot 13 with a minimum bid equaling everything owed on the property, plus an estimate of the taxes for the coming year.

Moved by Councilor Sherrard, seconded by Councilor Carr, and unanimously voted to advertise for sale by sealed bid the property located at Midland Ave, Map 4, Block 2, Lot 7-2 with no minimum bid.

Moved by Councilor Sherrard, seconded by Councilor Rogers, and unanimously voted to advertise for sale by sealed bid the property located at 8 Cherry Lane, Map 6, Block 2, Lot 27 with no minimum bid.

Moved by Councilor Sherrard, seconded by Councilor Geel, and unanimously voted to advertise for sale by sealed bid the property located at 21 & 23 Chapel Street, Map 3, Block 3, Lot 18 & 18-1 with no minimum bid. The successful bidder must remove buildings from the property within 90 days.

On a motion by Councilor Rogers and a second by Councilor Sherrard, it was unanimously voted to send the following letter to the County Commissioners as well as all of the local county newspapers.

INSERT LETTER TO COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

On a motion by Councilor Rogers and a second by Councilor Nixon, it was unanimously voted to Contribute \$40,000 to Downeast Economic Development and to charge this expense to Economic Development.

On a motion by Councilor Sherrard and a second by Councilor Carr, it was unanimously voted to authorize the Chief of Police to enter

Letter to County
Commissioners

Contribution to Downeast
Economic Development

MOU – Police Depts

Dear County Commissioners,

The City of Calais strongly objects to the proposal to raise its County tax by \$529,555, or 8.7 %, for the purposes of adding additional law enforcement personnel. This increase, when added with annual increases over the past 8 years, would represent more than a 45% increase or nearly 6 % per year for the City of Calais. This being said, the census reveals that there has been a 4.4% decrease in the population of Washington County over that same period.

While the County Manager makes the point that this increase would be \$8.09 per person, this would only be the case if every person in Calais paid real estate taxes. Taxes are only assessed to property owners. While this proposal would add .2 mils to the tax rate, we know there are many other pressures on our budget such as energy, insurance and other personnel costs that will force additional increases in the future. We feel the tax burden is being shared by fewer citizens at a time when the economy is struggling. Of particular concern, are the elderly who are on a fixed income. If you add to their tax burden, they must make it up somewhere else in their household budget. Often times it will come down to paying the property tax or cutting food or medicine. In recent years the City of Calais has worked diligently to keep our tax rate flat. We have made tough decisions that have made us more efficient while providing a reasonable level of service to our citizens. The increased County tax has been funded through cuts and efficiencies in our own budget. Even then, many taxpayers struggle as each year Calais has seen an increasing number of citizens seeking payment arrangements to redeem their properties at foreclosure.

Another issue that is bothersome, is one of manpower. When the Sheriff's Office has added officers in the past, these officers sometimes came from the rosters of local police departments. These officers were often experienced and academy trained. This causes additional hardships and expense to recruit and train new officers.

We acknowledge that the opioid and drug epidemic is a serious issue, but we don't feel this proposed increase in manpower is the only answer. Greater efficiencies through inter-agency cooperation and information sharing should be explored fully.

We invite other communities to express their concerns.

Respectfully Submitted,
Calais City Council

into a Memorandum of Understanding with Eastport Police Dept, Indian Township Police Dept, and Pleasant Point Police Dept in an effort to stand untied and combat the trafficking of illicit drugs in Eastern Washington County.

On a motion by Councilor Nixon and a second by Councilor Geel, it was unanimously voted to authorize the Immaculate Conception Church to present the "Stations of the Cross" along Main Street and up Calais Avenue starting at 765 Main Street and ending at the Immaculate Conception Church located at 17 Calais Avenue on Sunday, March 25th at 2:00 p.m.

Other items addressed with no Council action being taken at this time included:

- School Shooting Tragedy in Florida
- International Festival Meeting
- audit Presentation

There being no further business to come before the City Council at this time, it was moved by Councilor Rogers, seconded by Councilor Nixon, and unanimously voted to adjourn this meeting at 7:35 p.m.

ATTEST: 

Theresa M Porter, City Clerk

Stations of the Cross

Other items

adjourn