COUNCIL DRAFT MEETING MINUTES
GARDINER CITY COUNCIL
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 15, 2025

1. ROLL CALL / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE 6:00pm

City Council Present: *Mayor Hart, Councilor Cone, Councilor Greenleaf, Councilor Cusick, Councilor Kimball, Councilor Babcock, Councilor Dolley, Councilor Grant.*

City Employees Present*: Kathy Cutler- City Clerk, Todd Pilsbury- Police Chief, Alyssa Jones- Deputy City Clerk, Denise Brown-Finance Director, Dawn Thistle- Head Librarian, Rick Sieberg- Fire Chief, Melissa Lindley- Economic Development Director, John Cameron- Public Works Director, Kris McNeill- Code Enforcement officer.*

Others Present:

Debby Willis, Sean O'Brien, Nick Sabatine, George Trask

2. PUBLIC COMMENT (anything not on the agenda)

George Trask of Libby Hill had a couple questions for the council regarding an attentive agenda topic that was scheduled to be on the February 12th, 2025, meeting. The Credit Enhancement Act for Peter Prescott will be moved to the March 5th meeting, as requested. George wanted it moved as he would not be in town on February 12th and the council unanimously approve that request. There will be no public hearing as there already had one regarding this Act but, Public Comment will be available at the beginning of the meeting as always.

3. PETITIONS / PUBLIC HEARINGS PETITIONS / PUBLIC HEARINGS

a) Public Hearing regarding changes to the Land Use Ordinance Section 10.24.6.5.6 Theater House Signage. ***Mayor Hart opened the public hearing at 6:06pm. There being no comment, she closed it at 6:06pm.***
b) Public Hearing regarding changes to the Land Use Ordinance Section 17 definitions Bed and Breakfasts. ***Mayor Hart opened the public hearing at 6:06pm. There being no comment, she closed it at 6:06pm.***
c) Public Hearing regarding changes to the Land Use Ordinance Section 6.5.4 Bonding Roads. ***Mayor Hart opened the public hearing at 6:07pm. There being no comment, she closed it at 6:07pm.***
d) Public Hearing regarding Offsite Cannabis Sales. ***Mayor Hart opened the public hearing at 6:07pm. There being no comment, she closed it at 6:07pm.***
e) Public Hearing regarding changes to the Land Use Ordinance-LD2003**. *Mayor Hart opened the public hearing at 6:07pm. There being no comment, she closed it at 6:07pm.***

f) Public Hearing regarding changes to City Code-Fireworks. ***Mayor Hart opened the public hearing at 6:07pm. There being no comment, she closed it at 6:07pm.***

g) Public Hearing regarding a Medical Cannabis Retail Store License renewal for Medco. ***Mayor Hart opened the public hearing at 6:08pm. There being no comment, she closed it at 6:08pm.***

h) Public Hearing regarding a Cannabis Testing Facility License renewal for MCR Labs. ***Mayor Hart opened the public hearing at 6:08pm. There being no comment, she closed it at 6:08pm.***

i) Public Hearing regarding approval of a Recreational Cannabis Retail Store License for Mystique, Inc. ***Mayor Hart opened the public hearing at 6:08pm. There being no comment, she closed it at 6:08pm.***

j) Public Hearing regarding a Liquor License renewal for Gerards Pizza. ***Mayor Hart opened the public hearing at 6:08pm. There being no comment, she closed it at 6:08pm.***

k) Public Hearing regarding a Liquor License renewal for Lisa's Legit Burritos. ***Mayor Hart opened the public hearing at 6:08pm. There being no comment, she closed it at 6:09pm.***

l) Public Hearing regarding a Liquor License renewal for Johnson Hall. ***Mayor Hart opened the public hearing at 6:09pm. There being no comment, she closed it at 6:09pm.***

4. NEW BUSINESS

a) Second Read regarding changes to the Land Use Ordinance Section 10.24.6.5.6 Theater House Signage~
Action: Councilor Greenleaf moved to approve the Land Use Ordinance Section 10.24.6.5.6 theater house signage. Councilor Babcock Seconded the motion. No Further Discussion. Unanimously approved.

b) Second Read regarding changes to the Land Use Ordinance Section 17 definitions Bed and Breakfasts
Action: Councilor Babcock moved to approve the Land Use Ordinance Section 17 definitions Bed and Breakfasts. Councilor Kimball Seconded the motion. No Further Discussion. Unanimously approved.

c) First Read regarding changes to the Land Use Ordinance Section 6.5.4 Bonding Roads
Action: Councilor Greenleaf moved to approve the first read regarding changes to the Land Use Ordinance Section 6.5.4 Bonding Roads. Councilor Cusick Seconded the motion. No Correspondence. No Further Discussion. Unanimously approved.

d) First Read regarding Offsite Cannabis Sales
Action: Councilor Grant moved to approve the first read regarding Offsite Cannabis Sales. Councilor Dolley Seconded the motion. No Correspondence. No Further Discussion. Unanimously approved.

e) First Read regarding changes to the Land Use Ordinance-LD2003 10.29 11.4.5
Action: Councilor Cusick moved to approve the first read regarding changes to the Land Use Ordinance-LD2003 10.29 11.4.5. Councilor Kimball Seconded the motion. No Correspondence. No Further Discussion. Unanimously approved.

f) First Read regarding changes to City Code-Fireworks

Action: Councilor Dolley moved to approve the first read regarding changes to City Code- Fireworks. Councilor Greenleaf Seconded the motion. No Correspondence. No Further Discussion. Unanimously approved.

g) Consideration of approval of a Medical Cannabis Retail Store License renewal for Medco
Action: Councilor Cusick moved to approve the Medical Cannabis Retail Store License renewal for Medco. Councilor Cone Seconded the motion. No Further Discussion. Unanimously approved.

h) Consideration of approval of a Cannabis Testing Facility License renewal for MCR Labs
Action: Councilor Cusick moved to approve the Cannabis Testing Facility License renewal for MCR Labs. Councilor Kimball Seconded the motion. No Further Discussion. Unanimously approved.

i) Consideration of approval of a Recreational Cannabis Retail Store License renewal for Mystique
Action: Councilor Cusick moved to approve a Recreational Cannabis Retail Store License renewal for Mystique. Councilor Kimball Seconded the motion. Unanimously approved. Discussion~ Councilor Grant noted that this license is a new license but not a new property selling cannabis and that she cannot vote against it because they are doing exactly what they are supposed to do. Each month these come in and is getting more uncomfortable voting for them. She would love the opportunity to investigate the ordinances and regulations on cannabis laws in the city. There is no number of how many cannabis locations the city can have but the code says five hundred liner feet which allows for about four on Water Street.

j) Consideration of approval of a Liquor License renewal for Gerards Pizza
Action: Councilor Babcock moved to approve the Liquor License renewal for Gerards Pizza Councilor Grant Seconded the motion. No Further Discussion. Unanimously approved.

k) Consideration of approval of a Liquor License renewal for Lisa's Legit Burritos
Action: Councilor Greenleaf moved to approve the Liquor License renewal for Lisa's Legit Burritos. Councilor Cusick Seconded the motion. No Further Discussion. Unanimously approved.

l) Consideration of approval of a Liquor License renewal for Johnson Hall
Action: Councilor Dolley moved to approve the Liquor License renewal for Johnson Hall. Councilor Babcock Seconded the motion. No Further Discussion. Unanimously approved.

m) FY24 Audit Presentation by RHR Smith ~ Ron Smith president of RHR presented the FY25 audit to the council.

n) Discussion and possible action regarding disposal of soils from former TW Dick Brownfields Property.
Discussion~ Melissa, Nick and Matt talked with the council about the TW Dick brownfield property, the site is still city owned. To prepare for development core samples had to be tested once those came back all samples except one meet the criteria for Hatch Hill to accept the soil as cover material. Next step is to talk with the City of Augusta and see how much they are going to charge for the cover material. Matt is going to trek the soil to Hatch Hill and cover those trucking fees. But there could be a fee for them to accept the soil at Hatch Hill. The thrush hold that was discussed for these fees would not exceed the cost of the property.

The project is fully supported, more discussion will be held at the next meeting.

o) Consideration to extend Purchase Option for Mastway Development~ Asking for an extension of one year.
Action: Councilor Grant moved to approve the interim city manager to authorize a one-year extension to the Purchase Option for real estate with Mastway Development. Councilor Babcock Seconded the motion. No Further Discussion. Unanimously approved.

p) Consideration of request from Transport Leasing Corp to amend the build-out requirements (PILOT) for Libby Hill Lot19
Action: Councilor Grant moved to approve the deed modification for Libby Hill business park Lot 19 to remove the size requirement for constructed commercial building. Councilor Greenleaf Seconded the motion. No Further Discussion. Unanimously approved.

q) Consideration of Appointments - Ken Holmes to the Gardiner Water District Board of Trustees and Denise Brown to the New Mills Dam Committee
Action: Councilor Greenleaf moved to re-appoint Ken Holmes to the Gardiner Water District Board of Trustees and to appoint Denise Brown to the New Mills Dam Committee. Councilor Cusick Seconded the motion. No Further Discussion. Unanimously approved.

r) Consideration of approval of the City Council meeting minutes from December 10, 2024, and December 18, 2024.
Action: Councilor Grant moved to approve the City Council meeting minutes from December 10, 2024, and December 18, 2024. Councilor Kimball Seconded the motion. No Further Discussion. Unanimously approved (7/7). Councilor Cone Abstained.

s) Consideration of sending ordinance changes regarding Road Standards to the Ordinance Review Committee

t) **Action: Councilor Cusick moved to send section 11 of the land use ordinance to the Ordinance Review Committee. Councilor Greenleaf Seconded the motion. No Further Discussion. Unanimously approved.**

u) Consideration of submitting Letter of Intent for CDBG Grant
Action: Councilor Babcock moved to approve the Letter of Intent for CDBG Grant. Councilor Grant Seconded the motion. No Further Discussion. Unanimously approved.

5. DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS – The Mayor wanted to thank the Departments heads for spending a Saturday with them doing orientation.

6. INTERIM CITY MANAGER REPORT

Report from Denise~ Denise would also like to thank the department heads, it is not only helpful to the mayor and council, it is good for all of use to recognize and hear what we do all do, very informative.

7. COUNCIL REPORT/COMMITTEE UPDATES

Mayor Hart: Welcome Councilor Cone, we had a nice ceremony last week. It was lovely for everyone to attend and great to be in Johnson Hall. Thank you, Denise, for all that you have done as interim City manager, always on time and always doing your homework it was great to

have you. We do have another Saturday, coming up in February everyone will get the materials tomorrow.

Councilor Cone: I would like to thank the department heads as well. Not sure if anyone has seen the front page of the paper with morning, it is a great testament as to what is going on in the city and the department heads. Continued to be progressive. Also, excellent job to the rescue team for saved a dog in Cobbossee stream. From the Climate Assessment Committee, we took some time looking at other cities who are dealing with flooding might be a good opportunity to look at where the water goes and catch masons are in South Gardiner and some other of those issues.

Councilor Greenleaf: Couple things~ I agree with what Councilor Grant said earlier I am also feeling uncomfortable with the marijuana; they have all done a great job following the rules, but I too would like to revisit some of our laws in the City. I would like to thank Chair Willis she does a tremendous job for the city her work is amazing. Thank the department heads for Saturday and your reports, we aways appreciate you. Congratulations on saving the dog. I have bought this up a couple of times but the traffic light caused another accident just last week, would love to see if they could come and talk to us about it. Steve Landry of Maine DOT will be at the February 12 meeting to discuss issues with the traffic light.

Councilor Cusick: ~ Thank you for Saturday, it was informative you all did a great job. Thank you, Denise, for all you do as Finance Director and Interim City Manager.

Councilor Kimball: Thank you to all the department heads for Saturday, I know what you do but also do not know at the same time it was informative, and I wasn't bored at all. That dog rescue was very heartwarming! Thank you to Denise for all you do!

Councilor Babcock: Just wanted to echo what everyone has thank you all for Saturday and taking time to meet with us it was highly informative. Thank you to Denise for your hard work.

Councilor Dolley: we a warm welcome to Councilor Cone. It was nice to spend Saturday together, I still learn a lot from those meetings just to see the full scope that the city does accomplish its impressive.

Councilor Grant: Thank you to Denise, we already knew that you were gold but after hearing the audit it just reminds us. Also, a warm welcome to Councilor Cone, it is like you have always been here. I always appreciate the time that went into Saturday thank you. Quick question from Kathy's report, it indicates on here that the salvation army funds were all gone in the first three months. Is that something that goes to GA? *Denise notes that Gardiner administers those funds for multiple surrounding towns, people who have a need can apply for GA (general Assistance) of course there are state statutes that must be met. Traditionally, once they are gone, they are gone but I believe Angie has reached out to them to see if more funds could be administered.*

I had a citizen talk to be about the tree light event, which was beautiful. This individual was driving down the hill on 201, going to take a right going downtown and saw that it was blocked off. They said there was a wooden barricade and would like to have it more visible at nighttime.

8. EXECUTIVE SESSION
    a) Enter into Executive Session pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. 405(6)(A): Discussion Regarding Personnel Matter
    Action: Councilor Cusick moved to go into executive session pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. 405(6)(A): Discussion Regarding Personnel Matter at 7:26PM. Seconded by Councilor Babcock. No Further Discussions. Unanimously Approved.

9. ADJOURN ~ meeting adjourned at 8:05PM

Upcoming Meeting Dates

January 8, 2025
January 15, 2025
~~February 5, 2025 – Cancelled~~
February 12, 2025
~~February 19, 2025 - Cancelled~~
March 5, 2025
March 19, 2025
April 2, 2025
April 16, 2025
May 7, 2025
May 21, 2025
June 4, 2025
June 18, 2025
July 2, 2025
July 16, 2025
August 6, 2025
August 20, 2025
September 3, 2025
September 17, 2025
October 1, 2025
October 15, 2025
November 5, 2025
November 19, 2025
December 3, 2025
December 17, 2025