

**TOWN OF ORONO**  
**SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING & WORKSHOP**  
**MONDAY, MARCH 29, 2021 AT 5:00PM**

**WATCH ONLINE AT**  
<https://zoom.us/j/97398846107>

**For Dial in Only call 1-312-626-6799 Webinar ID: 973 9884 6107**  
**(LINK AVAILABLE AT ORONO.ORG)**

*Comments can be submitted via email before the meeting at [info@orono.org](mailto:info@orono.org)  
and during the meeting by using Zoom comment features.*

**MEETING MINUTES**

**1. Roll Call**

Present: Council Chair Tom Perry, Terry Greenier, Cheryl Robertson, Laura Mitchell, Meghan Gardner, Geoffrey Wingard and Laurie Osher (at 5:06 pm).

**2. Public Hearings**

- a. To consider a Moratorium Ordinance regarding Marijuana Retail Stores specifically limited to the Commercial-2 Zoning District. (Video record time 00:30-19:53)**

Public hearing a. opened at 5:01 p.m. Town Planner Kyle Drexler stated on March 9th Orono residents voted to opt in and allow marijuana establishments in Orono. Council and staff then realized that part of the ordinance did not meet the setback intent of marijuana retail stores in the C-2 District. The proposed 6-month moratorium ordinance seeks to prohibit applications for retail marijuana establishments in the C-2 zoning district (along Park Street) to allow Council and staff to re-examine the impact on the Park Street corridor area. He noted that all the other zoning districts and allowed uses will be able to go forward on April 8th.

Keith Manaker asked about the Council's criteria and desire for Park Street. Mr. Perry stated the moratorium will allow Council the opportunity to study the desired outcome, present a recommendation, hold a public hearing and receive public comments.

Ms. Osher asked about the details the staff has learned. Mr. Drexler explained setback measurements from the property line, but with shopping centers the measurement would be from the buildings rather than the property line and that exception would also apply to the University (so the measurement would be from building to building versus the property line buffer). He noted it was not Council's intent to have marijuana retail stores at the entrance to the University.

Ms. Osher asked about the development vision plan for Park Street. Mr. Drexler noted the Comp Plan intent of the C-2 District is mixed use (residential and small scale businesses). Ms. Wilson discussed the setback requirements. Mr. Drexler stated the review during the moratorium would be to look lot-by-lot. Mr. Perry noted that the Council will examine the options and does not intend to drag out the moratorium.

Mr. Manaker commented he looked at purchasing two parcels on Park Street but one was too close to the childcare facility (as the crow flies) and the other was too close to the University entrance. He suggested Council look at how the measurements are made and the building standards for property improvements. Public hearing a. closed at 5:20 p.m.

**b. To consider amending the Town Fee Schedule related to Marijuana Establishment Licenses and Fees for Police Services.** *(Video record time 19:54-25:35)*

Public hearing b. opened at 5:21 p.m. Ms. Wilson reviewed the proposed fees for annual marijuana business licenses for the different types of marijuana establishments. She also noted the fees for police response to large gatherings. Ms. Robertson commented staff researched other communities' fees and these fees are less than average compared to other places. Ms. Wilson stated there will be a brief Special Council Meeting on April 5th at 5pm to consider the moratorium and fee schedule changes. Public hearing b. Closed at 5:25 p.m.

**3. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 5:25 p.m.

**WORKSHOP MINUTES**

The workshop commenced at 5:26 p.m.

**4. Discussion Formalizing a Draft Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan** *(Video record time 25:36-1:07:08)*

Councilor Mitchell provided a brief presentation of proposed next steps for the Town Council's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion efforts. She noted this is a middle ground approach to the two original proposals. Ms. Mitchell reviewed the purpose and intent, six action areas, Council's work, Town's work, Ad Hoc DEI Committee and DEI initiatives. *(See presentation)*

Council reviewed details of the plan: Composition of the Ad Hoc DEI Committee which Council would decide; first person referencing; Penobscot land acknowledgement; whether the timeline for the plan could be extended for the committee; engaging the public and students; representation on the Committee, the public application process and remaining inclusive; the need for a detailed plan on how to fill the Committee; and tweaking the Committee Application form. An order will be on the April 12th Council Meeting agenda to establish the creation of the Ad Hoc DEI Committee.

John Banks thanked Council for their work on this DEI Plan and their recognition of a Penobscot land acknowledgement.

Sarah Marx thanked the Council for their collaborative process with the DEI Plan and making a timeline extension possible for the Ad Hoc Committee.

## **5. Council Practices and Policies Manual** *(Video record time 1:07:10-1:19:23)*

Councilors reviewed the meeting ground rules. Ms. Mitchell suggested having the ground rules present on the screen during the Zoom meetings. Council suggested combining ground rule 1 and 2; combining 3, 6 and 7, and prioritizing 5 and 8. Ms. Wilson will create a new ground rules slide and a flowchart for public speaking at Council Meetings. Ms. Wilson will create a condensed set of ground rules for Councilors to review at its next meeting.

## **6. Brief Town Manager Report** *(Video record time 1:19:26-1:37:18)*

Councilor Osher read a personal statement she made about taking a stand against gun violence and proposed Council join her in making a public statement against gun violence and how we can lead on this issue. Mr. Perry suggested postponing a discussion on this issue until Council has a chance to think about it.

Sarah Marx noted there are already Council ordinances that speak of points of order.

Ms. Wilson reported on the following items:

- Tracking the American Rescue Plan and invited to join an MMA discussion on how the plan will be rolled out.
- Finalizing a Code Enforcement violation Consent Agreement for 31 Hamlin Street.
- Working with Code Enforcement regarding junkyard violations.
- Purchase and sale agreement for redemption of 173 Kelley Road.
- Covid response at Town Hall.
- Continue working with the Avenue and with UMaine.
- Conditional employment offers for the Fire Department.
- Received and completed Maine Municipal Bond Bank paperwork.
- Engaged an Appraiser and Deputy Assessor for Black Bear Hydro Partners, LLC Abatement.

## **7. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned by unanimous consent at 6:38 p.m.

Minutes are summary only. A video-recorded version is available on the Town's website at [www.orono.org](http://www.orono.org).

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy W. Ward  
Executive Assistant