

**TOWN OF ORONO
COUNCIL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE VIRTUAL MEETING
THURSDAY, MAY 20, 2021 AT 5:00 PM**

WATCH ONLINE AT
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MINUTES

1. Roll Call

Present: Terry Greenier (Community Development Committee Chair), Cheryl Robertson, Laura Mitchell, Geoffrey Wingard, Laurie Osher, and Town Manager Sophie Wilson.

2. Reporting on Planning Board Recommendations Related to the Proposed Land Use Ordinance Amendment Regulating Solar Energy Systems *(Video record time 00:20 - 11:27)*

Town Planner Kyle Drexler stated the Planning Board held its public hearing and review of the proposed amendment to the Land Use Ordinance related to regulating solar energy systems. He reviewed the four Planning Board recommendations: 1) requiring site plan approval for any large-scale solar energy system in the University District; 2) language change in section 3A, Height, defined by the type of system involved; 3) section 4E adding language that would give the Planning Board the option to require an applicant to submit their vegetation management plan for review; and, to add clarifying language to section 5A to add examples of why a solar energy system may need to be placed in a front yard (and the screening requirements). Committee members asked clarifying questions. Mr. Drexler noted a typo that he will correct that reads section 18-153 and it should read 18-154.

The Committee agreed to forward the Ordinance Amendment to Council for public hearing.

Ms. Wilson and Committee members acknowledged the great work of Town Planner Kyle Drexler with the marijuana establishments issue.

3. Discussion of Repealing or Amending the Town's Emergency Ordinance Mandating Face Coverings and Large Residential Complex Planning Related to COVID-19 *(Video record time 11:28 - 34:00)*

Ms. Wilson stated that last August, the Town Council adopted an Emergency Ordinance that required individuals to wear face coverings inside public places and large residential complexes to implement plans to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. On May 14th, Governor Mills announced that, effective May 24th, the State of Maine would begin allowing fully vaccinated individuals to no longer wear face masks inside public places. Staff has fielded inquiries from

community members, housing managers, and business owners about repealing or amending the Town's ordinance.

Most Committee members expressed thoughts that the Town should align itself with the State's CDC guidelines. Mr. Greenier offered different thoughts on this topic; noting some businesses are not comfortable repealing the ordinance. The Committee encouraged the public to be vaccinated. Ms. Wilson explained the enforcement process that will be complaint driven.

The Committee consensus was to forward an Emergency Ordinance to Council to consider repealing the ordinance. Mr. Greenier noted that he was still cautious and unsure.

4. Manager's Report: UCU's New Color Branding (Gray Building with Teal Lettering)
(Video record time 34:01 - 40:05)

Ms. Wilson provided an update on the agreement with UCU President Renee Ouellette and UCU's desire for new branding with changing from a beige building to a gray building with teal lettering.

The Committee supported the change. Ms. Wilson will write a letter of support for the new color change.

5. Discussion of Town Adoption of Land Acknowledgement *(Video record time 40:06 - 1:12:44)*

Councilor Wingard presented a draft Land Acknowledgement Statement. Mr. Wingard noted that the statement has been reviewed by Darren Ranco (UMaine Native American Programs Chair) and representatives of the Penobscot Nation. He reviewed details of the statement and its uniqueness with the Town of Orono. He also reviewed the three action statements for recognition, acknowledgement and respect of the Penobscot Nation and Wabanaki Tribal Nations. The Committee discussed details of the draft Land Acknowledgement Statement.

Ms. Wilson suggested making the land acknowledgement statement a resolution for Council to consider. The Committee agreed.

6. Proposed Changes to Municipal Review Committee (MRC) Contracts that are Classified Fundamental Matters and Subject to Member Notification and Review
(Video record time 1:12:45 - 2:17:58)

Ms. Wilson stated she is currently serving in her sixteenth year on the MRC Board of Directors and is the corporation's Treasurer. This is a volunteer position, elected at-large from the MRC membership.

Ms. Wilson provided details of the Town of Orono’s membership in the Municipal Review Committee. As part of this membership, the Town has entered into a fifteen year contract (Joinder Agreement) with the MRC to dispose of all municipal solid waste generated within its municipal boundaries through the MRC. To facilitate this disposal, the MRC purchased and improved land to lease for the construction and operation of a municipal solid waste processing facility; jointly permitted said facility; and entered into an agreement to supply waste from its 115 members (Master Waste Supply Agreement). After a significantly delayed opening, the facility began operations and met performance standards; however, in May 2020, Coastal Resources of Maine (plant owner) closed the plant. Since the closure, MRC has continued to make arrangements to process member waste as it worked with plant ownership to reopen the plant. While the MRC does not have an ownership interest in the facility or control of its sale, the corporation has worked to leverage the assignment of its contracts as well as its role as a co-permittee on various regulatory permits to assume a larger voice in future operations and elements to reduce future risk. In order to facilitate the sale, portions of the Master Waste Supply Agreement and Site Lease were renegotiated and some of the terms to be changed are considered “fundamental matters” and subject to member review. In order to facilitate this review, each member was provided with written notice of the change and provided the opportunity to call a membership meeting to vote on the change. Calling a meeting requires several members (with at least 60,000 total estimated annual tonnage) to join together and call a meeting. MRC Executive Director Michael Carroll provided information about the four “fundamental matters” in the agreement. Ms. Robertson expressed concerns about the agreement and potential buyer, DTE-HM. Ms. Wilson provided information and addressed Council’s concerns. Mr. Carroll stated there is information on MRC’s website that reviews the financial information regarding the sale. The Committee also talked about being environmentally friendly about Orono’s recycling/waste. The Committee agreed to let this process play out and support MRC’s recommendation.

7. Town Manager’s Report (*Video record time 2:17:58 - 2:42:12*)

Ms. Wilson provided an update on the following items:

- Orono Gateway Signs - putting up temporary vinyl signs.
- National Public Works Week - thank the Public Works and WPCF workers.
- June 8, 2021 - RSU#26 Budget Referendum Election.
- Council Budget Workshop, May 24th on General Government.

8. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned by unanimous consent at 5:42 p.m.

Minutes are summary only. A video-recorded version is available on the Town’s website at www.orono.org.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy W. Ward
Executive Assistant