

**TOWN OF ORONO
COUNCIL COMMITTEES MEETING
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2021
BEGINNING AT 3:30PM**

IN-PERSON: COUNCIL CHAMBER – MUNICIPAL BUILDING

ON-LINE: <https://zoom.us/j/99738479648>

DIAL IN TO ZOOM WEBINAR: Call 1(312) 626-6799; Webinar ID: 997 3847 9648

MINUTES

1. Roll Call (at 3:30PM)

Present: (In Person) Council Chair Tom Perry, Geoffrey Wingard, and Town Manager Sophie Wilson. (Remote) Meghan Gardner, Terry Greenier, Cheryl Robertson, and Laura Mitchell.
Absent: Laurie Osher.

Mr. Perry reviewed the guidelines for meetings.

2. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

a. Committee Interview of Consultant to Provide Technical Assistance and Training to the Town Council related to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (Video record time 02:37 - 32:30)

DEI Consultant Mandy Levine provided information about her background in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) and qualifications. Councilors asked questions of Ms. Levine to get to know her and her DEI skills. Ms. Wilson spoke of Ms. Levine's background and ways she can assist staff and Council in providing standardized staff and leadership training as well as to support longer term planning related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Ms. Wilson suggested Town Council also receive the same baseline training so that it has the same knowledge and language as staff.

Mr. Perry suggested having Ms. Levine provide staff and Council training. She would also provide support for a review of the recommendations from the Town Council's Ad Hoc Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee. He noted that Ms. Levine would assist in developing a formal longer-term plan for the Town. **The Council Committee agreed with this plan. Mr. Wingard also requested keeping open to an additional person in the future.**

Ms. Wilson stated Ms. Levine will be providing staff training on September 30th.

b. Review of Planning Board Recommendations for Revisions to the Mobile Food Vendor Ordinance to Allow Certain Qualifying Applicants on Property Owned by the University of Maine to Obtain Permits Issued by the Code Enforcement Officer (Video record time 32:25 - 35:47)

Town Planner Kyle Drexler proposed a minor amendment to the Mobile Food Vendor Ordinance to allow mobile food vendors, on University of Maine property, to obtain permits issued by the Code Enforcement Officer versus requiring a review by the Planning Board. He noted the Planning Board held its public hearing and had no changes or public comments.

The Committee agreed to forward the ordinance amendment to Council for its public hearing.

c. Review of Draft Revisions to the Land Use Ordinance Related to Commercial Marijuana Activities *(Video record time 35:48 - 46:59)*

Mr. Drexler presented draft revisions to Commercial Marijuana activities in the C-2 district. The Committee discussed the commercial marijuana activities within the C-2 zoning district. The Committee agreed to limit commercial marijuana in the C-2 district. **The Committee referred the revised language to the Planning Board for its public hearing and review.**

3. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE

a. Review of Planning Board Recommendations for Contract Zone to Allow for a Counseling Office at 163 Forest Avenue *(Video record time 47:00 - 55:23)*

Mr. Drexler stated the proposed contract zone at 163 Forest Avenue has been to the Planning Board for its public hearing and review to allow for a Counseling Office. Ms. Wilson stated the next step is for Council to hold its public hearing on October 18th with consideration of adoption in November.

The Committee agreed to move this item forward to Council for its public hearing.

4. FINANCE AND OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

a. CITIZEN REQUEST: Waiver of Permit Fees Related to Orono Economic Development Corporation's Construction Project (Taylor Road) *(Video record time 55:30 - 01:11:30)*

OEDC representative Bob Bass provided information about the project and requested the Town waive local permit fees related to the organization's construction project on Taylor Road for an outdoor recreation center. Committee members spoke of it being a great project, but expressed concern for setting a precedence of waiving fees. Ms. Wilson stated that the Council has the discretion to make a one time donation with economic development funds to cover the permit costs of \$1,066.

The Committee agreed to support a donation of \$1,066 (equal to the permit fees) to OEDC.

b. Contracting for Town Electricity *(Video record time 01:11:32 - 01:18:40)*

Ms. Wilson stated the Town has competitively bid and executed agreements with vendors to purchase electricity for many years. She commented that the Town has 26 electrical accounts. She noted the Town has worked with Competitive Energy Services and recommends staying with

them due to the instability in the natural gas market. At this point, staff has inclusive, fixed electrical rate quotes that are valid through September 30th and will reset on October 1st, likely at a higher rate.

Staff recommends executing an agreement with the second lowest bidder as this is for a 36 month contract as opposed to the 60 month contract offered by the lowest bid. The difference in cost, based upon this estimated usage, would be approximately \$3,000/year; however, the shorter contract would give the Town the opportunity to bid again sooner.

The Committee agreed with the staff's recommendation.

5. Town Manager's Report (*Video record time 01:18:42 - 01:42:35*)

Ms. Wilson provided a report on the following items:

- The individual wanting to repurchase his property came in and paid in full. An order will be on the next agenda.
- Tax bills were mailed out. Property owners with questions should contact the assessor.
- The audit will be starting this week.
- Staff met with the UM President to discuss creating a university focused entrance to the town, University flags on some poles, economic initiatives, expanding the town/gown work with landlords and students, partnering on some issues, and meeting multiple times a year.
- Nominating Erin Hootery to the Municipal Review Committee.
- MainePERS changes in the State Legislature regarding PLD retirement plans.
- Council meeting schedule for October through December 2021.
- Items on next week's Council agenda.

6. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 5:14 p.m. by unanimous consent.

Minutes are not verbatim. A video-recorded version is available on the Town's website at www.orono.org.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy W. Ward
Executive Assistant