

**RECORD OF SPECIAL MEETING
ELLSWORTH CITY COUNCIL**

DATE: MAY 04, 2018

TIME: 8:00 AM

PLACE: ELLSWORTH CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS

**CITY COUNCIL PRESENT: BEATHEM, BLANCHETTE, CROSTHWAITE,
FORTIER, HAMILTON, HUDSON, AND MOORE.**

CITY COUNCIL ABSENT:

**KEY SPEAKERS PRESENT: CITY MANAGER DAVID COLE, GARY
SAUNDERS, RICHARD TUPPER, MICKI SUMPTER, JENNIFER MADORE,
JASON INGALLS, MICHELE GAGNON, AND HEIDI GRINDLE.**

Call to Order.

Chairman Blanchette called the special meeting of the Ellsworth City Council to order at 8:00 AM.

Council Order #051800, Request of the City Manager for authorization to apply for a grant from the Northern Borders Regional Commission.

David Cole noted the City received a Northern Borders Regional Commission (NBRC) grant three years ago to help fund the 3 miles of fiber line within the City. The grant application is due on May 11, 2018. Michele Gagnon, City Planner and Jason Ingalls, IT Administrator are working on a grant application that packages together federal and state funds through the MaineDOT and local contribution. Ingalls' presented the three goals that will be met through this grant opportunity. Those are capitalizing on the recently installed 3 miles of community-owned broadcast infrastructure (COBI) to reduce congestion and improve high-speed internet reliability/access by reinforcing the Ellsworth Intelligent Traffic Signal System (ITSS); improving the functionality of a downtown intersection; and expanding COBI and providing redundancy for Ellsworth customers, as well as for the greater Downeast region. See attachment #1 for the complete request including the Northern Borders Regional Commission (NBRC) 2018 Application for Economic Development & Infrastructure Investment Program Resolution. This will also be a good opportunity to implement changes to the intersections that were recommended through the recent traffic survey. Cole noted he feels a very high priority is to improve the connectivity within the City. Traffic has been a concern for several years, this issue cannot be solved by building more traffic lanes as space does not allow for that option. The issues facing Ellsworth can only be solved by managing the traffic patterns. This grant includes traffic improvements, pedestrian improvements, and a modest amount to expand the fiber network. The broadband portion is approximately 10% of the project or an estimated \$22,000. This project is mostly traffic improvements; therefore, the City has approached MaineDOT under their Business Partnership Initiative for funds to be applied toward this project. They have not committed yet; however, have been very receptive so far. It is expected they will contribute 1/6th of the costs or approximately \$126,536. Cole clarified the goal this morning is for the City Council through a Resolve to authorize an application be filed with NBRC as well as to commit matching funds if

Call to Order.

Approved - Council Order #051800, dispense with reading the Resolution into the record and be it resolved that the Ellsworth City Council authorizes the City Manager to submit a NBRC 2018 Application for Economic Development & Infrastructure Investment Program for \$282,849 and to commit the necessary match. The funding will be used to strengthen Ellsworth's ITSS, to implement lane modification and related pedestrian improvements at the recently studied signaled intersection of Main @ Water, and to provide more

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the grant application is successful. The matching funds will come from future financing. The lower intersection project will need to be completed eventually and this is a great opportunity to receive funds to help finance those improvements. Michele Gagnon, City Planner explained when the intersection at Main and Water Streets was studied the level of services was looked at. This factors the time a vehicle waits at a light on all movement that is possible within a lane for all approaches. One of the worst level of services within this area is 3.5 minutes; this is beyond unacceptable according to the Institute of Transportation. By adjusting the timing this intersection will be improved. A technical explanation was provided on the type of software and hardware that will be purchased through this program to assist with traffic patterns on High Street. Councilor Crosthwaite inquired what would happen to the project if MaineDOT and Network Maine do not approve their matching funds. Cole noted if the matching funds do not come through than the project does not move forward without returning to the City Council for reconsideration. Crosthwaite inquired where the \$71,000 would be funded from within the municipal budget. The funds could possibly come from the Local Roads Budget or from TIF funds. Councilor Blanchette inquired if this project will assist with the traffic coming in from the Surry and Bucksport Roads in the morning including the left turn onto State Street. Ingalls explained part of the study looked at this and consideration was given to making the right hand lane designated to right hand turns and straight traffic, and converting the left lane to left turns only. However, when this was modeled it made the traffic flow much worse than it currently is. The short version of what was determined was a slight change to the timing plan would be the best solution. It was noted that since the last timing change was made a year or two ago the backup from the Surry Road has not been as bad. The survey indicated with an additional timing change the City could do better concerning the back up of traffic from this direction. With the installation of a camera at this intersection there is now actual traffic data being captured daily, including turning patterns. This data is much more accurate than the previous data as it is captured daily rather than just a one day snapshot. Councilor Fortier simplified the situation by stating the camera knows what time of day it is and can identify which direction needs more time based on traffic counts for that same time of the day. Councilor Moore stated another possibility which should at least be discussed is no left turn toward State Street. Ingalls noted in the morning there are between 300 and 500 cars making a left hand turn onto State Street. The concern is if there is no left hand turn at this intersection a lot more traffic will be pushed onto School Street, through City Hall Parking Lot, and onto Oak Street and those areas may not be designed to handle the additional traffic. Councilor Beathem noted the

customers access to high quality and reliable internet service by adding broadband infrastructure on Washington Street filling the gap between Water and High Streets, and hooking into Maine's 3-Ring Binder project. In addition, that the City Manager be given the authority to sign any NBRC grant document to bind the City of Ellsworth.

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City has roads and intersections that were designed for a certain volume of traffic and the City is now far exceeding those numbers. The only solution he sees is with the timing as well. If the intersections were to be widened to accommodate the additional traffic it would require removing buildings. Blanchette inquired if this project would address the Shaw's traffic signal. Ingalls stated it would not impact that traffic signal. Several concerns have been discussed and voiced at the Traffic Committee level. Synchronizing the entire system will help with the timing issue at that traffic light; however, will not solve the other concerns in that area.

Crosthwaite inquired who would be writing the application for the grant. Micki Sumpter, Economic Development Director explained Gagnon has been writing the grant application and it is excellent. Sumpter noted all the points NBRC are requesting have been included. Eastern Maine Development Corporation assisted Sumpter when the last NBRC grant was awarded to the City; however, the approach being used this time is the most complete way to proceed. Gagnon expanded on the next steps within the process and how the application was being presented with the emphasis being on economic development. They are striving to bring this application to the same successful level as the first application. Blanchette inquired if there will be any physical changes to bring the intersections into ADA compliance. Ingalls noted there will be some changes especially in the sidewalk areas. This portion will not be completed until next spring. In lieu of reading the entire Resolution into the record it was noted that it would be attached to the minutes as attachment #1.

On a motion by Crosthwaite, seconded by Beathem, it was unanimously

RESOLVED to approve Council Order #051800, dispense with reading the Resolution into the record and be it resolved that the Ellsworth City Council authorizes the City Manager to submit a NBRC 2018 Application for Economic Development & Infrastructure Investment Program for \$282,849 and to commit the necessary match. The funding will be used to strengthen Ellsworth's ITSS, to implement lane modification and related pedestrian improvements at the recently studied signalized intersection of Main @ Water, and to provide more customers access to high quality and reliable internet service by adding broadband infrastructure on Washington Street filling the gap between Water and High Streets, and hooking into Maine's 3-Ring Binder project. In addition, that the City Manager be given the authority to sign any NBRC grant document to bind the City of Ellsworth.

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Council Order #051801, Request of the City Manager to accept conveyance of easements and property interests from abutting property owners relating to the Water Street Parking Lot Improvements Project.

David Cole, City Manager noted the reconstruction of the parking lot located near Main and Water Streets has begun with great progress being made. The remaining matter that needs to be resolved involves the properties located directly behind the Pierson, Rosborough, and Acadia Law Group buildings. There appears to be a clouded title on the strip referred to as the “court” area and some of the owners have not been willing to participate in the project due to this confusion. See attachment #2 for the complete request and site map. Cole has been working with Rudman and Winchell to find a mutually agreed upon solution so that this section can be included within the improvements. If this section cannot be included that is okay, the project will still be a good one. Cole would like the Council to give the City Manager authority to continue working with the City’s legal counsel as well as the private parties involved to figure out what combination of easements, releases of interests, conveyances of interests would be necessary to allow the City to take over that section and perform the improvements and maintenance required to make this area into public parking. Cole noted it is very unlikely this would cause any risk to the City; however, that is always a possibility. There appears to be a very old interest in connection with the Deane family estate. This is a time sensitive issue as the contractor has been mobilized on the project and would be costly if the project is completed and then they had to return to complete this small strip. Cole will keep the Finance Committee updated on the progress of resolving this issue. The cost to upgrade this area is approximately \$10,000. There are more than sufficient funds remaining in the project budget due to the favorable bid from KJ Dugas. Councilor Fortier inquired if taking this strip of land through eminent domain was an option for the City. Cole noted that would be an option; however, would take more time than is available. He feels a better option is to continue working with all the parties involved to reach a favorable result for everyone involved. Everyone involved is being cooperative the matter is just very confusing.

On a motion by Moore, seconded by Fortier, it was unanimously

RESOLVED to approve Council Order #051801, Authorize the City Manager to negotiate with the pertinent owners the necessary conveyances and/or releases of property rights necessary to facilitate the Water Street Parking Lot Reconstruction Project, execute any necessary agreements, and utilize available

Approved - Council Order #051801, Authorize the City Manager to negotiate with the pertinent owners the necessary conveyances and/or releases of property rights necessary to facilitate the Water Street Parking Lot Reconstruction Project, execute any necessary agreements, and utilize available project funds to carry out these improvements at an estimated cost of \$10,000 if needed and appropriate.

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needed and appropriate.*

Adjournment.

On a motion by Fortier, seconded by Moore, it was unanimously

RESOLVED to approve adjournment at 8:43 AM.

A TRUE COPY

**ATTEST: _____
HEIDI-NOËL GRINDLE**

**Approved -
Adjournment at 8:43
AM.**