

## MEETING NOTICE

The regular monthly meeting of the Ellsworth City Council will be held on Monday, June 19, 2023 at 6:00 PM in the Ellsworth City Hall Council Chambers.

Meetings will be broadcast live on:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ellsworthme>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/c/CityofEllsworthMaine>

Spectrum Channel 1303

### AGENDA

1. Call to Order.
2. Pledge of Allegiance.
3. Rules of Order.
4. Adoption of the Ellsworth City Council minutes from the following meeting (s):
  - ✚ May 8, 2023 Special Meeting Minutes
  - ✚ May 15, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes
  - ✚ June 5, 2023 Special Meeting Minutes
  - ✚ June 5, 2023 Emergency Meeting Minutes

**Motion to approve by M. Beal, second by C. Hanson, passed 7-0**

5. City Manager's Report.
6. Committee Reports.
7. Citizens' Comments.
8. Presentation of Awards.
  - ✚ Captain Shawn Willey for 20 years of dedicated service to the Ellsworth Police Department
  - ✚ Chase Hardwick- HCTC Intern with Public Works

### UNFINISHED BUSINESS

9. Discussion to broadcast Finance Committee Meetings (Sponsored by Hanson from 5/15/2023)  
**Motion to broadcast live by C. Hanson, second by S. O'Halloran, 2-5- Failed**  
**Motion to video record and post online to youtube by C. Hanson, second G. Lyons, passed 7-0**

CONSENT AGENDA

CONSENT AGENDA: All items with an asterisk (\*) are considered to be routine and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a Council member so requests, in which event, the item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and considered in its normal sequence on the Agenda.

10. Council Order #062300, Request of the Deputy Treasurer/Tax Collector to set the real estate and personal property tax due dates at September 14, 2023 and March 14, 2024. \* \*\*
11. Council Order #062301, Request of the Deputy Treasurer/Tax Collector for an Order of the Municipal Officers on the application of real estate and personal property tax payments. This order will allow for the Tax Collector and Treasurer to apply tax payments against the oldest unpaid tax bills. \* \*\*  
**Motion to approve by T. Mote, second by C. Hanson, passed 7-0**

NEW BUSINESS

12. Public hearing and action on the application (s) for new or renewal for the following license (s):
- Pavida Visetrut Young d/b/a Thai Sana, 321 High Street, for renewal of a City Class C License (Liquor and Victualer) and renewal of a State Restaurant Malt and Vinous (Class III and IV) Liquor License. \*\* **J. Stein/C. Hanson/7-0**
  - Sugar Mags Central LLC, dba Sugar Mags 142A Main Street for renewal of a City Class A (Amusement, food, arcade) and mobile vending \*\* **G. Lyons/C. Hanson/7-0**
  - Zeppa’s NY Pizza, 92 Water Street, for renewal of a City Class C (liquor, Victualer) and renewal of State liquor license (class III and IV). \*\* **G. Lyons/T. Mote/7-0**
  - Fogtown Brewing, 25 Pine Street, for renewal of a City Class B license (liquor, Victualer, amusement) and renewal of State Brewing license. \*\* **G. Lyons/C.Hanson/6-1-0 (J. Stein abstained, conflict)**
  - LJNI LLC dba Forest Ridge Campground, 40 Flockamoosen Way for a new City Lodging license. \*\* **Not taken up due to absence**
13. Council Order #062302, Appointment of City Officials by the City Council.  
a. Reappointments. \*\*  
**Motion to approve except the Board of Appeals until July by C. Hanson, second by T. Mote, passed 7-0**
14. Council Order #062303, Approval of City Manager’s appointments.  
a. Reappointments. \*\*  
**Motion to approve by C. Hanson, second by T. Mote, passed 7-0**
15. Council Order #062304, Request of the Deputy Treasurer/Tax Collector to set the interest rate at 6% on overdue taxes. \*\*  
**Motion to approve by C. Hanson, second by M. Beal, passed 6-1 (G. Lyons opposed)**

16. Public hearing and action on Budget Resolutions for FY 2024. \*\*  
**Motion to approve the budget of \$24,570,558, second G. Lyons, passed 6-1 (SO Opposed)**  
**Motion to approve the additional resolution (Library 703,798, Water Rev. \$1,360,072 and Exp. \$1,280,232, and Waste Water Rev. \$2,098,000 and Exp. \$1,841,340) M. Beal, second by T. Mote, passed 6-1 (SO opposed)**
17. Discussion regarding Franklin Street Parklet (Sponsored by Hanson)
18. Discussion regarding a request to the Hancock County Commissioners for ARPA funding (Sponsored by Hanson)
19. Appointment of an Arbor Commission (Sponsored by Hanson)
20. Councilor Comments
21. Adjournment.  
  
**Motion to adjourn by M. Beal, second by G. Lyons, passed 7-0**

# Minutes, City Council Meeting June 19, 2023

## **Dale Hamilton**

call to order the Ellsworth city council meeting Monday June 19, 2023. All councilors are present. Pledge of Allegiance.

## **Dale Hamilton**

Rules of Order we follow Robert's Rules of Order and any other rules that the Council adopts along the way. Councilor Stein, you wanted to make a statement.

## **Jon Stein**

Good evening, it's June 19. Some of you may have noticed some institutions closed today. This is a federal holiday called Juneteenth, officially Juneteenth national independence day in the United States commemorating the emancipation of enslaved African Americans deriving its name from combining June and 19 it's celebrated on the anniversary of the order by major Grainger proclaiming freedom for slaves in Texas on June 19, 1865. This is two and a half years after the Emancipation Proclamation was issued. Originating in Galveston. Juneteenth has been observed annually in various parts of the United States, often broadly celebrating African American and black culture. Today was first recognized as a federal holiday in 2021. This is off of Wikipedia, but I encourage you to deep delve in deeper if you will. There was an incredible event celebrating at Knowlton Park today. You can go to [Juneteenthdowneast.org](http://Juneteenthdowneast.org). We r u our local radio station, did a live recording and that'll be available there. Thank you.

---

## **Dale Hamilton**

Item four adoption and Ellsworth City Council minutes from the following meetings May 8, 2023. Special meeting minutes May 15, 2023. regular meeting minutes June 5, 2023. Special meeting minutes and June 5, 2023. Emergency meeting minutes.

## **Michelle Beal**

So Moved

## **Casey Hanson**

Second.

## **Dale Hamilton**

any discussion? All those in favor? Unanimous.

---

## **Dale Hamilton**

Item five city manager's report manager Moshier.

## **Glenn Moshier**

evening Council just have a few things to update you on upcoming closures city facilities and a library will be closed Tuesday, July 4 and observance of Independence Day. city facilities and the library will

close at noon time on Friday, July 28 for the annual employee appreciation cookout. The rain date for that is August 18. Clerk's office would like me to remind everyone that the school budget election is June 29. Absentee ballots are available through the clerk's office through June 26. And it's that time of year again for ATV in boats for re registration. Rapid renewal is now back online for vehicle registration renewal. This can be accessed through the city's online service services webpage may have you may have recalled last year. With the switch to the new software everyone had to come in and do it in person. But now it's back online. RF Jordan is still on scheduled to begin work on Christian Ridge Road in mid July. So pay attention to traffic announcements and there will be signage alerting folks as to when that exact construction will begin on Christian Ridge Road. And the temporary repair of the branch Lake has been completed. It was completed in May. The water level thanks to Mother Nature has risen about a foot from the winter level where we had to have it for leak purposes, but also what we maintain for winter levels. The dam is closed with the exception of a small amount of water that's allowed to flow for the branch Lake stream. And we're hopeful that with the rain that we've had that boating will be able to be enjoyed the summer on Branch Lake without a lot of the concerns that we were facing just a few weeks ago when the water level was significantly lower. And that is all I have for this evening.

---

**Dale Hamilton**

Item Six committee reports. Any counselors attend committees that they'd like to report out on

**Jon Stein**

the solid waste Committee did not meet but we finally finished our application. So keep an eye on the city website applications. We'll go live from the solid waste committee. We've got some exciting things planned and you can join myself and Councilor Mote. We're gonna do great work.

**Casey Hanson**

And I guess I'll report from the Comprehensive Plan steering committee, we had a kickoff meeting at the it was in the Franklin parklet. Right. I was at work. So it was on Friday afternoon. So that was a great start for starting to get input from citizens about the comprehensive plan. And the Communications Committee met last week, June 12. And talked about a variety of different ways to improve communication with the community, including working on the city calendar, having a rotating Department reports. Other ideas that we're thinking of to communicate important updates with citizens.

**Michelle Beal**

I have a couple of committees, the Finance Committee has met three out of the last four Friday's, we've been mostly talking about, obviously, the audit, getting receiving updates from the finance director about where the audit is, and when we should we see the 22 audit so that we can start on the 23rd audit, and then also discussing reports, organization of reports and information that should be coming to the Finance Committee once the audit is complete, and our numbers updated. We also tonight when we discuss the ARPA funds, the Finance Committee has a recommendation for that. And then the harbor commission, I was unable to attend the meeting. But I have been speaking with the committee members, and they had asked me to just provide a little information on their next project. That's actually collaboration with the partners of the Union river. I didn't know we had a partners of the Union river, but I do now. And they are a group that is a 501 C 3 that was created last year. And their mission is to ensure public, the public use and the rehabilitation of the Ellsworth waterfront and they will be coming

to the company to the console next month. They have a plan for signage. Its interpretive educational signs and Harbor Park to focus on the history of the harbor waterfront and provide information on the wildlife of the river. This is a project that they're not going to be asking the Council for money for they're going to raise it themselves through grants and public funds. But they would like to come next month and ask for permission to do this project.

**Dale Hamilton**

Superintendent Bowles, who commentary I think is doing an exceptional job of really breaking down the silos and working as a whole city and including all sides of the the city involved. And so she is asking for representation from the Council on three different committees. One is the HCTC building committee. One, another one is the Ellsworth school strategic plan. And then the last one is preschool committee. So we're looking for one counselor to participate in each one of those committees. So with that, do any of you have an immediate

**Casey Hanson**

preschool committee

**Michelle Beal**

Thank you. I'll do the HCTC.

**Dale Hamilton**

And the strategic plan anybody interested in that?

**Tammy Mote**

Okay.

**Dale Hamilton**

Thank you for volunteering. We knew who we were gonna go to next. All right.

---

**Dale Hamilton**

Item Seven is citizens comments. This is a portion of the agenda where citizens can make a comment you have three minutes to speak on any topic you wish. If there's an agenda item that you wish to speak to, you can wait for that item to come up and you'll have an opportunity at that point to talk about that specific item. Or you can choose to use this three minutes to talk about an agenda item if you're not going to be sticking around or you just wanted to get out in front of that. I leave that to you. So with that. If you'd like to speak just go to the podium state your name and you'll have three minutes

**John Linnehan**

Good evening counselors and taxpaying citizens of Ellsworth, I'm John Linnehan 157 shore road lifetime Ellsworth resident. I'm here to address what in my opinion is a lack of justice displayed by Judge Bruce Maloney who was supposed to be presiding over the civil suit brought by councilor Steve O'Halloran and three local business owners. The headline the Ellsworth American Read judge dismissed suit over new PD. I have no problem with the suit was dismissed over legal issues. I do have a problem the suit was dismissed over a technicality, commonly referred to as a lack of legal standing. The actual illegal activities issues brought against the city were never addressed. These real genuine

illegal issues to briefly summarize were listed in the paper accurately as follows. Number one City failed to give appropriate legal public notice to the proposal to lease new space for the police department. Number two, the city did not follow its own procurement policy requires a bid process for services that cost more than 15,000 Maloney explained in his decision in his sole opinion that local taxpayers did not have sufficient personal stake in this controversy to obtain a court decision on the issues. councilors, my fellow citizens and taxpayers of Ellsworth. This is not justice, either by the basic legal system, or by the original intended by US Constitution. Because of Maloney's weak interpretation of in standing, which in my opinion, was a very minor technicality of best he never allowed the real legal issues as listed above to be addressed in a court of law for legal conclusion. The need for adequate and appropriate space for police department is long overdue and sadly, has not been properly handled by past City Council's. However, this lack of transparency improperly rushed, mishandled and the legal process that as current solar city leadership has recently gone through, hopefully will never be repeated again that city. In conclusion, if this council had acted illegally, originally, the city probably we've millions of dollars ahead now, by owning its own brand new Police Department EPD could possibly be in a better location instead of leasing all the renovated space and additionally spending over a million dollars of our city money to renovate a leased facility owned by someone else. My fellow citizens that makes no financial sense whatsoever. Special thank you to council Steve O'Halloran for bringing this issue to the public's attention at considerable personal expense of his own time and his own money. I encourage the council to entertain a motion to repay Councilor O'Halloran for his legal expenses just the city is had to pay for the city's attorney. Justice on this issue has not been served to this point for Ellsworth tax payer, at least reimburse Steven thank him for service. If he had appealed judge Mahoney is in standing decision, which he could have been probably should have done, the city would have had to spend even more taxpayer money to defend its illegal position. Plus, Ellsworth would still be running the high risk of losing instead of that.

### **Dale Hamilton**

Anybody else like to speak?

### **Cara Romano- Heart of Ellsworth**

Good evening, my name is Cara Romano. I'm the director of heart of Ellsworth, our downtown organization. I'm here this evening to talk about our business benefits, new webpage that we launched, that serves the downtown businesses and other entrepreneurs in the area who interface with downtown. The pamphlet that you have before you was created after the webpage was created, which you can there's a button on the webpage where you can download this pamphlet as well. This sort of outlines how we assist downtown businesses in the downtown district. Last Wednesday, we held our first monthly coffee and donuts event in the Franklin Street parklet. And in addition to the many businesses that have used our form on on the website, there's been a sort of consistent things that the downtown businesses are asking for that I know that city officials and other city staff are working on, but I just want to sort of highlight a couple of those so that we are all sort of on the same page of what we're hearing as the downtown organization. We had over 25 people attend the coffee and donuts and we had a lot of feedback on what it is that folks are looking for. And so part of the part of what for acts are sort of looking for. And we have been clear that these things take time and trying to get folks to also perhaps say how they could help bring some of these things to fruition. One of them is wayfinding signage. The second is additional trash cans and recycled containers on Main Street and side streets.

And the last one is a public restroom. I know all three of these are sort of larger things that take time and a lot of money. But part of Ellsworth is here to assist in whatever ways it is that we as an organization, whether it's leveraging funds, which was spoken about earlier for another group, leveraging funds in our in main, and perhaps flip places from far beyond that to help these three things come to fruition. But a part of that is also is part of Ellsworth and the board of directors are really looking forward to assisting city staff and with the business attraction plan and the comprehensive planning process. And so however, however, our organization can be of help with both of those two initiatives that are on the table right now, this year for the city, we would appreciate being asked to be involved in those things. And we also wanted to just extend an invite to council members to join us for our next coffee and donuts event, which is happening July 19, from 830 to 930 in the parklet. And if there are any questions about the pamphlet, the business benefits pamphlet, also happy to answer them or any business questions or any other questions happy to answer them as well. Thank you

**Dale Hamilton**

anyone else like to speak?

**Dale Hamilton**

I'm here because of the roads in this town. I'm glad you said something about Christian Ridge, but my truck is getting beat to crap because of these roads. I just wonder if they're going to do any more work. Like State Street, Water Street are all horrible. Good on Water Street. You got a big pot hole, you can see the cement? I go like five, maybe 10 miles an hour. He was slower. People behind me get aggravated. It's just I'm concerned about the roads and businesses are gonna start losing money. I'm sure because I bypassed town or going on Water Street hit Bayside road just to stay out of town. Because it's so horrible. Is there anything going to be done besides Christian Ridge Road? That's all a question I have Thank you

---

**Dale Hamilton**

item eight presentation of awards. We have one presentation this evening and the second one we will move to until next meeting. So I'd like to call up Captain Shawn Willey.

**Dale Hamilton**

City of Ellsworth proudly presents a certificate of service to Captain Shawn Willey, in recognition of 20 years of service to the city of Ellsworth Police Department. Your devotion to duty and loyalty to the community have contributed to the improvement of the city of Ellsworth presented this 19th day of June 2022.

**Dale Hamilton**

Item nine discussion to broadcast finance committee meetings sponsored by Councilor Hanson.

**Casey Hanson**

I just read I just looked at the last meeting minutes and the end with Glenn saying I can explore those and bring them back. I can explore those ideas, bring them back.



**Glenn Moshier**

I have had conversations with IT. And you we can they can show me how to video record. Broadcasting requires somebody in the booth so they would have to be present to do that. We can record as we have been doing with the audio, we can record audio and video and then have that available for folks if they wanted it. We can push that up to council like we currently do with the audio. Some of that, I mean, ultimately the decision is the council's it's your meeting. So to what extent you want to broadcast or record is entirely up to you all of it is is doable. So if we if you decide to broadcast, you know that does potentially come with the cost of the employee coming in to do that? But there's, you know, there's ways that we can work around that as well. If that's the decision that the council is makes regarding that, the only kind of thing I would point out is just the slippery slope because we don't broadcast any of the committees, committee meetings. So if we start too, with doing one, and then the expectation is that we begin doing others, then it does become a, somewhat of a burden on the staff to have a staff member here, you know, two or three nights a week, every night of the week, broadcasting these different committees, whether it be the harbor committee, or what have you. So that's one thing that I would just caution you on, when we talk about broadcasting of committee meetings. But if it's the wish of the council, then we can and will make it happen.

**Casey Hanson**

I guess I I think that the Finance Committee meeting is kind of a different committee than the other committees, and a lot of really important conversation happens during them. I mean, this originally came up because I wish I could see them, but they happen at a bad time for my work schedule. I have found the audio recordings that get sent later just are not helpful. So anyways, I would be in favor, not of recording every committee but of recording the Finance Committee. I could even make a motion for it. I would make a motion to record and broadcast the finance committee meetings.

**Dale Hamilton**

There was a motion.

**Steven O'Halloran**

Second,

**Dale Hamilton**

further discussion?

**Jon Stein**

Has any other counselor had any requests from their respective committees to broadcast? I have not on my 1000 committees? It could happen but I just don't think it has happened yet.

**Michelle Beal**

I think it really could with I mean, your comprehensive planning committee meetings me those which should be very interesting to to the public. If we do a new charter commission, that absolutely will be another one that people will want to say. probably like to see the local roads committee meetings so they could side. So he'd have an understanding of which roads are being discussed for for renovation. So I think it is a slippery slope. You know, I don't if it's videotaped, and then put out I mean, absolutely.

But I don't think that asking staff to come in for a 7am meeting, to broadcast it live is necessary if people want to if you want to see it after that. You can't watch it. But you can't watch it anyway.

**Casey Hanson**

It was broadcast the way this meeting is broadcast, then yeah, I could just turn it on.

**Michelle Beal**

Except that we offered to have you call in and listen to it.

**Casey Hanson**

Yeah, no, I could do I could do that also just prefer to broadcast.

**Michelle Beal**

I just don't I personally don't think it's fair to the staff to ask them to do that. Because it will mean, we do have some important stuff that's coming up. That could very well be asked to broadcast. And we only have two people on there that can do that.

**Jon Stein**

If we recorded audio and video and made that available later without broadcasting live, that wouldn't necessarily take an additional staff person.

**Glenn Moshier**

No, they can. IT can. We already recorded the video is just a small additional step that that I can do in the morning when I come in, and we start the meeting. And then that video file, much like the audio file would be put into that drive where you all have access to it. And then like Mr. Linnehan today requested an audio file, and that was sent out to him today, so we're able to process those requests relatively easily. It's just, again, it's just the broadcasting that requires the physical presence of a person in the IT office to make that happen.

**Steven O'Halloran**

Just like to throw out the idea that I don't know what the cost is. But I think we've had many conversations about being open to the community and getting community involvement. And I realized that picking one committee is going to eventually lead to probably all committees. I respect that. But isn't transparency what we're after, or, or what, what the citizens deserve. if they so choose to watch rather it's after the fact or during I realized that could come a cost but with all we ask of our taxpayers an open book, I think is a healthy solution.

**Michelle Beal**

I agree with that. 100%. It's just I don't think it's I mean, if you videotape that, and you put it out there on our YouTube channel for anybody to watch when they can, because 7am On Friday morning, I'm not positive, how many people you're gonna get to watch that broadcast anyway? Well, I'm sure you do. And I show Mr. Linnehan does cause you come to every meeting, but two people out of 8400 in the city that are doing it, and I was I just, it's available, they can see it.

**Casey Hanson**

It would be on the YouTube page. the audio file you've been sending. It's just really clunky and hard to it takes quite a few steps. So if it was on the YouTube page, like really, I could just find it the way I find any meeting.

**Glenn Moshier**

Yeah, once it's recorded, putting it, putting it on one of those platforms is is not a problem. We just have not been doing that. Because that wasn't what was requested.

**Steven O'Halloran**

I'm in favor of that. Just making it available. It doesn't have to be live i It's as long as it's available for people to see. You know, I agree with the show. If you're gonna get up and watch the television, seven in the morning, then maybe you could come to the meeting if you wanted to. But having it available after the fact for anyone to go view much like the city council meeting. I'm in favor of that, as opposed to a live feed business.,

**Casey Hanson**

make a friendly amendment to myself. No,

**Dale Hamilton**

you won't leave it. Now. You can leave it

**Casey Hanson**

this way. But

**Dale Hamilton**

I would just got I like the idea of putting it on YouTube after the fact. So that because either way, it's gonna go on YouTube. If we videotape it, whether it's live or not, it's gonna go on YouTube. Most people will review it after the fact. Many people do that now that school board other meetings. So I think starting out doing it that way. And then as this discussion evolves, in terms of other committees, there's some logistical issues in terms of scheduling. We have different meetings that are held in this room this is the only room where that can we're videotaping them happens at some their committee meetings that take place outside of the chambers. So it will give some time at least to think through. But at the same time, have that transparency. Put that up there. Any other disclose the motion? Again, the motion is to broadcast live? That's the motion.

**Jon Stein**

Logistically this motion doesn't pass will counselor have the opportunity to make additional

**Dale Hamilton**

motions all night long motions.

**Dale Hamilton**

any other discussion? All right. All those in favor of the motion to broadcast the Finance Committee. All those opposed?

**Casey Hanson**

Okay, I'll make a new motion. I move to videotape and put on our city council YouTube page the finance committee meetings.

**Gene Lyons**

Second

**Dale Hamilton**

Have a motion in a second any discussion? Seeing none all those in favor? Unanimous.

---

**Dale Hamilton**

Consent Agenda, consent agenda items with an asterix are considered to be routine and will be enacted by one motion. There'll be no separate discussion of these items unless a council member so requests in which event the item will be removed from the consent agenda and considered in its normal sequence on the agenda. Item 10. Council order number 062300 requested the deputy Treasurer Tax collector to set the real estate and personal property tax due dates at September 14 2023 and March 14 2024. Item 11 Council order number 062301 requests of the deputy Treasurer Tax Collector for an order of the municipal offices on the application of real estate and personal property tax payments. This order will allow for the tax collector and treasurer to apply tax payments against the oldest unpaid tax bills.

**Tammy Mote**

Move approval of the consent agenda as presented

**Casey Hanson**

second,

**Dale Hamilton**

motion a second any discussion? Seeing none all those in favor? Unanimous

---

**Dale Hamilton**

New business public hearing and action on the applications for a new or renewal of the following licenses. Everything in order anything new or these renewals

**Toni Dyer**

last one is new And I did not see him here.

**Dale Hamilton**

Okay, so if there isn't anyone here we will need to table that Correct. Correct. (see the Agenda for votes on all business licenses)

**Dale Hamilton**

So we can't take it up this evening. Because they need to be present. However, with that said, given the nature of their business, if you when you if you can contact them, if you find that this is going to present any kind of problem for them as a business, please let me know. And we'll call an emergency meeting to have a public hearing. Because we don't want that to create a problem. I'm assuming that's okay. Thank you. All right.

---

**Dale Hamilton**

Item 13. Council order number 062302. Appointment of city officials by the city council. These are reappointment. Go through my that's the entire list. You have the you have your appointments. Right item 14 is separate. So those that list is in your packet. What I would request is that if when a Motion is made, that we hold off on the board of appeals member a pending resolution of an issue and then we'll take that up at the at the next council meeting.

**Dale Hamilton**

Would you like me to go through the list? Or have you had a chance to,

**Casey Hanson**

can we approve it as a whole as a whole?

**Dale Hamilton**

With that exception, I would ask that the motion be made to accepts all appointments with the exception of the Board of Appeals member.

**Casey Hanson**

Motion to approve all of the below, with the exception of the Board of Appeals member, which will be taken up next month.

**Dale Hamilton**

As a motion, is there a second

**Tammy Mote**

Second

**Dale Hamilton**

Discussion?

**Steven O'Halloran**

Can you elaborate on why we're setting aside the Board of Appeals?

**Dale Hamilton**

Just there's a internal matter that we need to resolve before we can take it up. And that will be happening so that we can bring it back to the July meeting.

**Steven O'Halloran**

So what happens after June 30?

**Glenn Moshier**

There's no appeals schedule. There's no meetings of the appeals board scheduled between now and the July meeting. So we have time to resolve the matter before July.

**Dale Hamilton**

Further discussion all those in favor? Unanimous

---

**Dale Hamilton**

Item 14 Council order number 062303. Approval of city manager's appointments reappointments. was also in the packets

**Casey Hanson**

Move to approve the city manager's appointments.

**Tammy Mote**

Second,

**Dale Hamilton**

motion is seconds. Any discussion? All those in favor? Unanimous.

---

**Dale Hamilton**

Item 15. Council order number 062304. requested the deputy Treasurer Tax Collector to set the interest rate at 6%. On overdue Texas.

**Sue McLean**

Good evening. I'm Sue McLean, the tax collector. It's that time of year again, I have to come before you and ask you about setting the interest rate. Last year we had it at 4%. That was the maximum that the Treasurer of the State allowed us to have this year we can go up to 8%. But I'm asking for 6%. I think going from four to eight is a really big jump. So I thought maybe halfway so I'm asking to go with a 6% interest rate on overdue taxes for the fiscal year 2024.

**Dale Hamilton**

Discussion

**Steven O'Halloran**

is there any process in place or hardship situations that that there is some flexibility here at your discretion

**Sue McLean**

In the interest rate? Yeah, no, no,

**Steven O'Halloran**

not in the interest rate. But in the in the process of some delinquent tax that might need some help?

**Sue McLean**

we have poverty abatements, we have, there are some different options that I put out to people. If they call and they're having an issue. I will go through all of the options and send them whatever applications I very rarely get them back. I think in the last two years, maybe one and then at the last minute they paid it off and we didn't go anywhere with it. But but there are options. And I do talk to them about it.

**Steven O'Halloran**

So it's not just a slap it. It's something that you can work with with other tools in hardship situations.

**Sue McLean**

Yes, but the interest, there isn't any way to just freeze the interest. But there's ways to get them help to get the taxes paid off quicker than if they were if it was left to them alone knowing that they can't afford it. But I can't stop the end. interest from building out in the meantime, thank you,

**Dale Hamilton**

just for the Council have been through it, because I don't think we've had a situation for a while. But the council also can get involved. It's part of the process where somebody can come before the council to request relief in terms of tax abatement. So that that there's a whole process where that can happen and where the council actually becomes involved at that at that point.

**Steven O'Halloran**

And is that something that you would walk these people through? If that was

**Sue McLean**

That's that's some of the paperwork that I sent them. Yes.

**Jon Stein**

The reason for this state increase to 8%? Isn't to an interest rate tied to the federal, or is it?

**Sue McLean**

it's the prime rate published in The Wall Street Journal, the first first day in January 1, printed day in January, and they set it and then the state, lets us know what it is. We can't go over that. But we can do anything under.

**Dale Hamilton**

For me, I mean, four percents of reasonable interest rate, if somebody's having difficulty paying their taxes, you know that 2% difference isn't going to push people to pay it any sooner. And the goal of the city isn't to, you know, be punitive, it's to help people. And then there's a whole process if people are unable to do it. So I'm not sure that increasing it. I don't know what the gain is. And I don't know if that actually creates a bigger hardship for for individuals. So I don't know MC mixed on, on whether we we really need to increase it or not, just because it's not tied to anything other than just an incentive to push people to, to pay the bill. That was way thank you.

**Michelle Beal**

So the reason that you do put it a little higher, is because we pay in two installments. And we do that in order to keep our cash flow. And not to have to use a TAN. And what happens is if your interest rate is lower than the rate that a person can invest, it's cheaper for them to not pay those taxes and until March, and so we don't get that cash flow. So that's the reason why we don't we don't always go to the maximum. But we just want to make sure that we're not helping someone invest their money on taxpayer dollars.

**Dale Hamilton**

wasn't thinking about that. That is a good point.

**Steven O'Halloran**

I was wondering if there was, my mind was going there as well. But I'm wondering, is there okay, there's interest for delinquent taxes? Are there penalties and other things? Or is this simply just interest so that 4% of bargain 8% is a deterrent?

**Sue McLean**

Well, there's not until you hit liens. I mean, it's just simply the interest, right? Yeah.

**Gene Lyons**

How many people in Ellsworth are not paying the taxes just to make money off the interest?

**Michelle Beal**

is more than you would think. Yeah,

**Gene Lyons**

I've been in favor of leaving it at four

**Casey Hanson**

would 6% be enough to avoid that.

**Michelle Beal**

I mean, it for the people put it in CDs for six months or whatever, 6% Would do it. But and the other thing is, it's usually the higher taxes than the ones that are held, which hurt us even more. And there is help for people that can't pay their taxes. And and this only really affects people that don't have mortgages, because mortgages either are paid by the bank or if they get delinquent, the bank takes them over pays an interest. So it's the minimum of the people that end up having to pay the interest that can't afford it

**Sue McLean**

right in the in the banks will call just to kind of double check that it's been paid even though it maybe isn't escrow and it's not uncommon to receive a check from a bank and to pay it just to make sure it doesn't go to lien or foreclose or anything. So



**Steven O'Halloran**

I just like to ask you, who lives this daily life do you? Do you see any strategic mindsets of people using the city's money for better gains? Been through this whole process.

**Sue McLean**

Um, I have to say that I do see that it tends to be the bigger higher taxed homes that wait. And they may call, I'll get a phone call and they want to know what's the date it's going to lien? They're gonna get me a check just before it goes to lien. So that makes me wonder. I have not had anybody tell me, obviously, that that's what they're doing. But I do get a lot of those calls, and they are 95% are the higher taxed homes?

**Steven O'Halloran**

Businesses

**Sue McLean**

some. I mean, I couldn't name any. You know, I don't I couldn't really tell you. But But I mean, just I'm just talking opinion and what I deal with. But I do get those phone calls. And it makes you wonder.

**Jon Stein**

Is there any precedent for having varying rates depending on the tax amount? Sort of like the deferred income?

**Sue McLean**

I mean, it's it. Yeah. It would be difficult. I think I am. Yeah. Yeah.

**Gene Lyons**

I'm thinking that higher income people probably buy nicer homes, and maybe they're income, you know, I think 4%.

**Steven O'Halloran**

Could we get your Glenns input on?

**Glenn Moshier**

I don't really have an opinion. But honestly, Steve, I mean, I think that Michelle's point is is a valid one. It's probably not a significant amount of people that do that, but I'm sure it does happen. And I would defer to the tax collector regarding you know, the status of how often she gets questioned about the interest.

**Dale Hamilton**

And is there anybody from the public wanted to speak? Is there a motion?

**Casey Hanson**

Move to approve the request of the tax collector slash deputy treasurer to set the interest rate and overdue taxes at 6%?

**Michelle Beal**

Second,

**Dale Hamilton**

any further discussion? All those in favor? Aye. Those opposed? Motion passes. Thanks.

---

**Dale Hamilton**

item 16 public hearing and action on budget resolutions for FY 2024. So just process piece so that everybody's clear on this. What we will do is I will open the public hearing first, and allow the public to make comments on the budget, I will then close the public hearing. And then the council will take it from there in terms of discussing the budget and moving it forward. At that point, there will be no more public comments. So as soon as I open up the public hearing, that will be your opportunity to speak on on the budget, we won't be engaging back and forth. At that point. We've had many, many budget meetings. And at this point, were at the point of pulling that all together. So with that said, I will open the public hearing on budget resolution. This is a public hearing public hearing is open and anybody that wishes to speak on the on anything related to the budget may do so at this time. Just go to the podium, state your name and you'll have an opportunity to speak.

**John Lindquist**

John Lindquist, the executive director of friends and action, just like to explain a little bit more we increased our request this year from the 6200 that we got last year to 10,000 this year. Wanted to explain that 6200 is the amount we've been getting since 2018. And although we're very appreciative but our expenses have gone up. Right along with inflation since then, it's been 2% a year, most years lately 8%. Refresh our mission is to enable senior residents of Hancock County to live independently and thrive 73% of the things that we do affect Ellsworth residents, not other parts of the county. All the funds if you regardless of whether it's what whatever amount you'd give us will be put 100% to the direct expenses of coordinating our transportation services and our senior center services. There are 453 Ellsworth residents who are registered to use our services, which resulted just on the transportation side and 4358 trips. And that's just the Ellsworth citizens getting taking those trips, and it equated or added up to 40,000 miles. In addition, there are 304 businesses including medical offices, and retail businesses that we carry people to. From outside from within and outside Ellsworth. We also in 2022, delivered 30,000 hot meals to residents at a minor charging cost. In 2022, the charge was \$4 a meal in 2023, our costs have been increased. And it's now \$5 A meal. If we get if the 3800 is not approved, one measure is that it will reduce the number of trips to doctor's offices, other appointments, shopping to get food, delivery of food delivery prescriptions and any reduce it by at least 152 trips, which is fairly significant. We've reduced in order to handle the increase in costs. We've reduced our budget by \$111,000. And we're down to the point that there's not much more that we can do other than start paring back some of the services.

**Christopher Johnson**

evening my name is Christopher Johnson. I'm here tonight representing a scenario Agency on Aging. I was asked to provide my services tonight for any questions I don't have any news from when I was here last time. It's full speed ahead for us. We are reopening cafes and other services throughout the four county area that we serve. As a reminder for the value that we provide for the area of Ellsworth, we we sent the board, a sheet indicating a value of \$97,000. For our services here and Ellsworth. We are

asking for more this year, we've asked for \$1,350. And I understand it's difficult. I can't make any promises or anything as a result of any holding the line at 1000. I understand that and I do want to make sure that you folks understand that we don't compete with this gentleman. We work together with his folks. We provide a lot of different services. We're back after COVID Like so many of us are COVID really knocked this for loop. But we're back out and we're reorganizing and we hope to be in more contact with you folks as the year goes on rather than just having me come with somebody else come once a year and request money so we will be seeing more of us in the near future. So thank you for whatever you can do and I understand whatever you do is appreciated thank you

**John Linnehan**

John Linnehan Ellsworth. What is the total increase for the budget percentage wise Do you have that figure right there?

**Steven O'Halloran**

We've got 17.38% here on this list. That's before city revenues, right offset.

**John Linnehan**

Is there a bottom line increase with the revenues and the expenses to offset some of that one figure that would be applicable to the budget.

**Steven O'Halloran**

I can read what's on this list. And there's been some minor adjustments but last year amount to be raised by taxes was 20. This includes the school was \$21,690,860 and this year is \$24,253,391.

**Tammy Mote**

So you're looking at just for the city side or that as a whole

**John Linnehan**

I take either one at this point, the city of the school that the total

**Steven O'Halloran**

total is what we have here, but there has been some that

**John Linnehan**

right. I understand it's a work in process, but I'm just trying to get an approximate idea. is so percentage wise, you're talking how much approximately Steve

**Tammy Mote**

Based on those figures you just gave me

**John Linnehan**

I mean, I was guessing proximately 10. Im opposed to any increase in the budget. I'm prioritizing reallocating and really looking at things and I'm not saying that you don't do that. But budgeting is always a tricky thing. And that's a big increase for the city or for any any organization city of Ellsworth.

And so I'm opposed to any increase over what it was last year. 10 percents a large increase or loving or whatever it is like that. So I would like to see flatline the budget remain the same the amount remain the same with no increase for this year. Thank you very much

**Cara Romano- Heart of Ellsworth**

good evening Cara Romano DIRECTOR OF HEART OF Ellsworth. I just have a quick question, a process question that I'm trying to sort of understand. In past years, sometimes when heart of Ellsworth has received appropriations, we have just received a check in the mail. And that's how it works. And then other years, we've had to submit invoices that total our budget or requested amount, and I'm just wondering how that gets allocated, and what that process is. And is that is there a process sort of across the board? That all special interest groups? I think that's what they're called? I'm not sure. But um, special interest groups that they each are all sort of treated the same across the board? Is there a standard procedure? That's what I'm asking?

**Dale Hamilton**

So the answer is if if somebody if an organization is receiving funding for specific activities, that's generally reimbursed on invoices in terms of the activity happens, and, and invoices are submitted and paid. If organizations are supported kind of as a general support, then that's generally paid out either in two installments, beginning of the year and the end of the year, or if it's a small amount, at one time. So that's generally the case, it depends on the nature of the what the request is and what the allocation is for. If it's, and sometimes it's in advance. So if an organization is sponsoring XYZ, and they know what those costs are, and they split the cost on the front end, they received that. Does that help?

**Cara Romano- Heart of Ellsworth**

I guess to just to clarify, what I what I think I'm also wondering is, is this sort of I know that there's a lot of changes that are happening in this for fiscal year 2025. I, or at least that's what I'm right. Okay. And so I'm wondering, is there going to sort of be a direction of how special interest groups formulate their requests? And so there's sort of are there are there's going to end you may not know the answer to this, but are there going to be two different tracks that folks are suggested to sort of go down? Or are you looking to streamline that? And again, you may not know the answer to that yet,

**Michelle Beal**

for the next budget cycle? Yes. Oh,

**Cara Romano- Heart of Ellsworth**

sorry. I know, no one's thinking about that. Right. Forget it. I'll come back. And yes.

**Dale Hamilton**

There has been discussion about that. No decisions have been made, but trying to organize it better, so that it's clear for anybody in the community to know the process. That's absolutely been the discussion that we've had several times during this cycle with the goal of next year having more definition to it and think conference table. We'll have some information on that later too. And the thought process

**Jon Stein**

as well as inviting organizations to come back throughout the year and give progress reports and let us know what's changed.

**Jon Stein**

Speaker inaudible. Can provide audio file upon request

**Dale Hamilton**

Yeah. So if you're able to stay, you'll you're going to hear that, in fact, a large part percentage of the proposed city side is in roads. So you'll hear that if you can't stay, it will be posted. It will be online on Facebook and you'll be able to hear it. So if you're if you're not able to stay, by all means, watch the watch the discussion because you'll hear a lot about the roads here. Come here.

**Jon Stein**

Okay. Because they have I mean, they can't even fill the potholes and that one down there thank you

**Marc Blanchette**

good evening counselors. I want to talk roads, a particular road tonight, but I'm not sure that I can follow that presentation but thank you. Counselors Welcome to what may be your last session of cobbling together an FY 24 budget. After several long and sometimes tedious meetings, of adding dollars to this and that and subtract in dollars from other accounts, you may just may add to this evening have somewhat of a personal life back to yourself to enjoy the upcoming summer. But before the summer solstice begins on Wednesday morning, marking the beginning of your family plans and get togethers. I want to bring your attention to one more item the condition of the hill on birch Avenue. In short, the city is losing the battle to Mother Nature. Without corrective and proper measures. The highway crews will be there after every heavy and or extensive rain. Is that okay? Three days before the paving plants closed last November. Birch Avenue was graded rolled and prepped to be paved after undergoing eight weeks of reconstruction for new water and drainage lines. That night and into the following day. The skies opened up. And the rain came down in buckets to the point that Noah had anchored his ark at Birch and Oak Street awaiting a second coming. The road was completely washed out and rendered impassable. Highway showed up later that Saturday morning and did what they could and finish the job on Monday as the paving crews were showing up. Again, keep in mind the plant was closing later that day. Then the rains of Christmas Eve came six weeks later. Not to be outdone by the delusion February in February, and another one early last month. In the seven months, the city has lost the 24 inches of with a brand new pavement that was put down in November. pavement that cost 1000s of dollars to put in place after the reconstruction. All of this could have been avoided had the city taken my long offered advice and installed curbing on the hillside. Rather than creating very wide and very deep gullies, the running water would have been directed into catch basins rather than the force of the water washing out the ends of property owners driveways, making them also impassable. The water would have been directed into catch basins rather than cascading rocks, gravel in very large chunks of new and expensive pavement. tumbling down the hill on birch Avenue and plugging the tops of the catch basins making them also useless. The water would have been directed into the catch basins what will it take for the city to realize the cost savings of investing in curbing on hillsides. Not just birch Avenue but any problem hillside. How many more trips for highway crew and the associated power equipment that

comes with them to make bandaids repairs until the next time it rains at least 15 years ago, Park Street, the next street over from Birch, and that has the same incline on its hillside was rebuilt and curbing added to both sides. At the end of this photo presentation, you'll see photos that I took this morning on the effects of that decision. There is no damage. No ruined driveways, no plug catch basins. The same holds true for the lower half of Davis Street. Approximately 12 years ago, a sidewalk and curbing were added to it as part of a walking to school grant the city received. The ball is now in the city's court, it can opt to keep kicking the can down the road and do nothing all the while having employees come and show up to apply a bandaid or it cannot see the results of the park and Davis street decisions and apply the same decision to birch Avenue. This is the curbing on Park Street. It's been there for 15 years, it's held up there have been no repairs made to it. Notice how the curbing curves in for the catch basin not away from it. This is the result of doing nothing on birch Avenue. The water comes down on the east side of the street. And just before it hits the railroad tracks, it goes next to the tracks and comes out underneath to the point the railroad had to put in a a sleuth way for the water to run. The water then runs down runs down Spring Street. That whole section of Spring Street right there has no pavement. It's washed out because of the water problem on birch aluminium, so it isn't just the hillside on birch. It also causes problems on the adjacent streets to it. So thank you very much.

#### **Dale Hamilton**

Anyone else like to speak? Seeing none, I will close the public hearing. Public Hearing is closed. So we are now at the point of taking up the budget. And we have at this point, brought it to a place to start the discussion in terms of where we ended up the city staff has taken that information and compiled the budget so that we can pick it up from from this point and move it forward. So city manager I'll turn it over to you. Madam Clerk?

#### **Glenn Moshier**

Yes. So through many, many meetings, many, many workshops. What you have before you tonight is what we've come up with for a final offering, if you will, a couple of maybes, some somewhat significant changes since our last meeting. If many, many of you may recall that we had requests, the highway department had requested an additional personnel. And then we had a couple of employees leave. Well, one of those employees have since come back and another employee was hired directly from the transfer station. So they currently only have one vacancy, I had reduced their position to a half time half year position, anticipating that it would be difficult to fill the three vacancies that they had. With that, with them only having one vacancy, I think it's prudent to put that back in as a full year position so that we can go through the hiring process and potentially have that person on board and ready for the winter season, which is obvious, for obvious reasons their busiest time of the year. That's really the only substantial change. We did take 15,000 out of capital since our last meeting for the fire department. They had proceeds from the bond and the purchase of the rescue vehicle that was designated to go to rescue five the heavy rescue truck and the decision was made to use some of those funds to purchase the The airbags that were in the capital improvement for FY 24. So that purchase has been taken out of capital and has been made using bond proceeds. So those are really the two significant changes, the position is addition of \$27,000. Which approximately half of that is offset with the 15,000 that we removed out of capital. And then there was some minor changes made to social service agencies. But I see that there's some additional potential requests here for some

changes to be made there. And outside of that, documents that you have before you is what we've worked out through all of our meetings.

**Tammy Mote**

Do want to add that I was just working with Toni, there was some inconsistencies in the TIF. So we did have to make some adjustments on that. So it did change that mil rate

**Toni Dyer**

by point two zero.

**Tammy Mote**

so I don't know, if you want that, can you send that to all of us

**Dale Hamilton**

So maybe the thing to do is, if you could walk through this by department, in terms of just talking about what the request is for each department, because there are a couple of changes that were made earlier today as well, that so we want to make sure that we're all looking at the same information, as well as allowing the public to hear some of the details by that. So if we could do that. Quick, you probably have the most current. So could you walk through that document and and just save the name of the department and what the total is, for each part, and then that will ground us in the discussion.

**Toni Dyer**

Okay, so under administration, after conversation with Tammy before the meeting that's been reduced to \$4,828,818. The change, there was Jannas budget for her. It's funded through the TIF. And so those monies are actually in a different line on the sheet. That's the reduction there, her department's still funded, it's just an a separate line on on the sheet I just emailed it to you all to so you should be able to pull it up and follow along. Public Safety has not made any changes since I emailed it to you last week. And this morning, that is at 4,398,301. That does include street lights and traffic signals inside of that, and the rental of our hydrants. If I'm going too fast, just let me know. Public Works, increasing that to a full 12 month position. brings that to 2,447,887. General Assistance is that \$110,208. recreation activities is that \$192,025.

**Dale Hamilton**

Okay, stop you there for a second. Just the Health and Human Services. You talked about the general assistance? Wasn't there another line item in there?

**Toni Dyer**

The other recreation items get split under the next subject. So there's Health and Human Services, which has your outside agency which is your section eight in your book, but then in the leisure activities below that has the rec department and then the agencies, the rec committee that's through them. So they kind of run out into two categories, but the total for that is 192. The health and social services on there I have a figure here but depending on counselor Stein's. And up he's presented this earlier today that is subject to change, which is one of the things that I'm I have a draft version going on the side here. That right now about \$41,650 for leisure activities, the library, the city funded portion 125,898.

And then you see their historic preservation is for 6000. Historical Society's 2000 Recreation Commission is 131 650. And then the harbor is at 52,375. And those four items make up your recreation. Section nine in your book. City property, which is your all your buildings is 357,880. Debt service, there was a change made to there in relation to the TIF at the start of the meeting. So that's been reduced to 858,868 over the 1.3. those funds are also accounted on another sheet elsewhere for the tif.

**Steven O'Halloran**

Could you repeat that number, please?

**Toni Dyer**

It's been lowered to 858,868. Thank you. And then your county tax has not changed that is \$586,248. So the total municipal budget sorry, Tiff. Your TIF expenses on their increase to account for the full TIF from \$536,035 to \$1,175,581. You have capital improvements, which includes your local roads budget, which is the only change there was the reduction of 15,000 for the fire department airbags. So the number there is 2,407,842. And then 1.9 of that is your local roads. off to the side, you'll see the \$264,208. That is not being calculated on your resolution. It's just there because those are capital projects that you through workshops, we kind of proposed ARPA funding for those I wanted it noted on your resolution, but it's not. It's not taxation funds that you're using. Then you have your revenues down below their other taxes. These are all things by property. So vehicle excise tax, things like that is 1.844 million. Inter governmental revenue 3,001,954 licenses and permits 339,300 departmental income \$558,950 other revenues 327,300 And then the TIF revenues. This is where the offset happened was reduced from the 1.17 5 million to \$867,115. The two TIF numbers were just in the wrong places. So they got flopped. That makes sense now. School Department budget is 13,469,271. So right now with the Pending Changes, the final number on here was 24,253,392 and it's closer to 25 million right now. Just kind of depends on where you all go with any other changes tonight. I have 25,201,403

**Casey Hanson**

And that makes the mill rate

**Toni Dyer**

17.5 which is also an estimate.

**Dale Hamilton**

know we have a mil rate from last

**Toni Dyer**

15.7

**Michelle Beal**

When we're talking about the net change and that city budget or expenses only be careful because it looks like because that TIF is so much more now. It makes that because of the way the finances are looking comparatively, it's it's it's making this city look like it has a huge increase in his expenses, which it does not only because of that comparison, because you have TIF expenses last year of 137,482. And



expenses this year 1.1 million, and there's not that much of a change in the TIF. It's just the way you recorded it. Correct.

**Toni Dyer**

Correct. Last year, the TIF was not properly recorded in the budget process and therefore, is why the mill rate was lower than probably should have been. Yeah.

**Tammy Mote**

Yeah. So we also found that it was kind of tucked into other places like it was covered in the debt section, rather than in that tif expense line item. So and the revenue was the same way.

**Jon Stein**

if we retro actively correct for that, could we see a more accurate version of what last year's mill rate?

**Michelle Beal**

the issue is? Now, it's been happening for a few years for two years? If you look at your budget, so you'd have to go back to actively back several years

**Toni Dyer**

I did some work looking at last year's budget, that 137,000, which should have been closer to like \$850,000. So it's a substantial difference that should have been in that line last year. It would have increased your mil rate.

**Michelle Beal**

Yeah, it's actually two years. Yeah. Because the last time it looks like it was correctly recorded was 2021. Correct. I mean, it doesn't, other than next year, when we do the budget, we're gonna have hopefully actuals, too. So it's, it's really hard to judge budget to budget. It's really what our actuals are. And so I think next year, with the finance office reorganization, we'll hopefully have a better comparison of previous year's budget. I just want to be careful when it's like published, that we have this huge increase, and we really don't. And we have one new

**Toni Dyer**

tif this year, we did have one new tif this year, which is, again, it's it's approximate based on an approximate mill rate, it's about a \$66,000 increase over last year.

**Dale Hamilton**

So one of the things that complicates this over the last, certainly last year, valuations play into how much taxpayers pay based on the value of the property and because properties skyrocketed. Even though the overall mill rate stayed pretty level, individuals paid more in taxes, because the value of the property went up and went up because of how properties are valued and the sale price of properties, all of those those different factors. And that that continues that trend continues in to this year. The other reality is that over the last, if you look at the last five years of budgets, the mill rate has been very flat, with very small changes in Mill rate, and last year was the anomaly with evaluations in terms of out of pocket expense. Where the as far as the city is concerned, when you look at costs, we had this

discussion with the school, it's the same thing on the city side, pretty equivalent in terms of where your costs are city, the school. It's it's 80% personnel. And there there are cost of living changes that took place. We have unions in the city. Those are negotiated in good faith by regulations that exist around that. And this was a year where those contracts both at school level at the city level there were several contracts negotiated and those changes were made. Those are those are costs that are automatic. There's nothing that we can do short of eliminating lots of positions. that cost is, is part of the process. The other reality is the economy. The city is not immune from the costs of goods and services that have gone up. And as much as all taxpayers are dealing with it and all businesses are dealing with it, that's part of what's what we're seeing with this budget as well is that the increase is in terms of costs. that factors into the budget. I think that although you can argue in terms of with with what has happened with the solar industry, but we knew going into this several years ago, that the benefit was going to go somewhere, and the city acted on that became part of it. And without that our electric costs would be even much, much higher than that they are now we are saving significant dollars because of that decision. So there have been some positive things that have been happening to try to mitigate some of this. But this is a year where there's just a collision of several issues that really put a lot of pressure. And we spent a significant amount of time more time than I think the council has spent in many, many years, if ever, in terms of going through the this budget and getting information and trying to identify what we could come up with in terms of keeping the budget as low as possible. And I think we had some great discussions. We're obviously not in 100% agreement on any issue. But we had the opportunity to really dive into the budget and look at it. And consider the implications that the roads came up tonight. That's a significant that the roads committee put a recommendation forward to the council with a significant increase \$1.9 million of funding to support roads. And that's a place where 1.9 million is not going to go that far with the costs of construction. So we're faced with that, too, is that in the past, I know, I think it was my first year on the council, that was the place big number went to that cut. And he can only do that for so long. You can only cut for so long. I think that the pandemic certainly didn't help but we've been moving in the right direction in terms of looking at bonds and when those retired to take on new debt so that we're not just adding to our debt. The finance committee is working on that process, looking at capital expenditures, and really trying to treat the city budget in a way that's planful. We've accomplished some of that as a city in terms of you haven't heard over the last several years, a big rush, none of this talks about five new trucks we'd have to purchase because Winter's coming and we don't have any trucks. You're not seeing any of that, because that's been been playing better for that's that's been we've made those big purchases and staggered them. But it's a big number. And it's and I think in a lot of ways, it certainly makes you think in terms of what can be done. And I I think that everything that we've come up with, we've cut everything we possibly can I don't see any big numbers unless you want to cut the roads budget, we're not going to make a significant debt dent into what's been presented. So those are my thoughts in terms of where we've been. During this budgeting process. I just wanted to share it with the entire community.

### **Jon Stein**

some small suggestions, I handed out this form earlier. So if you recall back to our budget hearing on outside organizations, we got to a point where we had a really great discussion about what a good application process would look like and what counselors what I heard counselors say was what they were interested in funding things like are we addressing concerns of Ellsworth citizens? Are we giving appropriations directly to programs that benefit where there are gaps in what the city can offer? So with

that in mind, I reached out to some of the outside organizations. And as you recall on our last budget, I was sent out, many of them stay stagnant from last year's appropriations to this year. So fiscal year 23 to 24 for most of these organizations, saying exactly the same even though their requests increased. So in mind what I heard you all requesting in terms of information, what are the programs how many Ellsworth residents are affected by these programs? I compiled this comprehensive list of first is friends and action. So we heard from them about what that money would go towards. So they're requesting 3800. above what we have in our current listing, which is 5000, and operational, 1200, and health and social services. This is one of the larger increases, the rest are smaller. Eastern Area Agency on Aging is requesting just 350. Both last year's request, which we've already put in the budget here. The Emmaus homeless shelters requesting a good deal more, but I went in with, with our suggestions in mind from our budget hearing, looked at, you know, 80% of people who use their services are also with residents. And some of the funding would go toward buildings, and building up keeps and other operational and administrative costs that we didn't necessarily want to fund. So I took a smaller request at the pay a suggested 50% of their increase Downeast community partners we heard from last winter, I think the the need is, is real there. And they justified that need with the increased costs of heating. So the rest are fairly similar. Wic as well increased pretty drastically. I suggested meeting in the middle between their this year's requests and what they were, what the appropriations were last year. So with all these specific numbers in mind, I just wanted to kind of reframe how we think about these, I think we did that last meeting, instead of talking about city giving donations we're really investing in, in services. So we talked about, you know, investing in our roads, we're investing our community, we're allocating taxes where we think they should go, you know, I don't have kids, I didn't go to high school here. But we're still taking my taxes and investing in the schools. Likewise, I have some employees that walk to work, they don't own cars, but their taxes still go to the roads. And they're not necessarily using that's just kind of part of what we do. So when we talk about increased costs of fuel of food of electricity, that hits us all, but really tends to hit the most marginalized in our communities hardest of all. So they're part of our community, these organizations operate. Really, they're really quite lean low overheads, a lot of volunteer hours, or our bucks really go pretty far with them. So this is my organizational recommendation for these outside organizations and increases what's currently on our budget of 41,650 by \$12,301.

### **Casey Hanson**

I just really appreciate all the work you did on this Jon. And I think, as we spoke in our workshop meetings, I think we're all eager to have a different presentation next year so that we can compare these things. And I feel like you really answered a lot of those questions. And I just really appreciate that I agree with you that part of our goal here is to help keep people who are going to fall through the cracks from falling through the cracks. And these organizations are amazing partners in helping the most vulnerable Ellsworth citizens, so \$12,000 additional seems like a very, very small amount of money to help a lot of people and so I support your proposition. And thank you.

### **Jon Stein**

I wanted to add, as well heart of Ellsworth, I did not include on this list, because I think that we discussed increasing that to 8250. But on the last version I saw it was only Yes,

**Toni Dyer**

I hadn't flopped on the wrong line, but I've corrected it on my version that will finalize, hopefully tonight.

**Dale Hamilton**

Question, what you're proposing is, I'm just not familiar enough with WIC. If that is a private 501 C three organization? Is it fully funded because the services are services that are funded by the government so I am having a hard time figuring out is, are they delivering services that are not under that rubric, SNAP benefits are not, that's not a private, they're not raising funds. They're receiving that so To give, I just I'm not familiar with. So that's, that's what that's been my question from the beginning. And I'm just not comfortable increasing allocation without knowing what type of organization it is. And we didn't, we didn't really get a lot of,

**Jon Stein**

we didn't hear from them specifically either. I don't know if anybody can speak to with more than I can.

**Tammy Mote**

Looks like they're covered under maine.gov

**Dale Hamilton**

WIC is a program. And so I just don't know the entity that these funds are going to. And since the present, I don't know where those dollars are going, what they're supporting.

**Jon Stein**

So the organization in Washington Hancock counties is Maine family planning. And so in this county, it looks like they provide free nutrition and formula packages to pregnant or nursing women and their children. Also nutrition education, and access to dietitian and health screening support.

**Dale Hamilton**

Which some still questioned where they get their funding.

**Jon Stein**

This is one I didn't hear back from specifically, unfortunately.

**Dale Hamilton**

I apologize for the heat. It's a technique I figured the hotter it gets, the shorter the meeting is, but everybody wanted cooler. Now you're stuck yet till 12. Y

**Michelle Beal**

I appreciate what you did, too. I know. This is this is a definitely a tough one. Because we don't have a process. We I mean, people that came and spoke to us, but it's in the applications that we have. But it's something that I do hope that we do a better job with. But I other than WIC. I know of all of these organizations, and I agree with you on. I don't want to wait because it is a state program. But the others? I do. And I appreciate the work you did on this.

**Jon Stein**

Free to remove the increase. Looks like WIC, hold steady at 1500 from last year. An application would have definitely been helpful.

**Toni Dyer**

Come up with a new total of 51550.00.

**Casey Hanson**

I just want to make a comment that this is my second year on city council. And compared to last year, we did many more budget workshops this year. And although it was exhausting to come here that many times, it just felt like that was a much better process. And I really appreciated how careful we were with each of the individual budgets.

**Michelle Beal**

And also, my comment about things being wrong for the last couple of years for staff to step up like they did with the necessity of creating a budget for us without a lot of financial help from you know, I think they've done a really, really good job for doing that. I do appreciate it. Because I

**Steven O'Halloran**

may not agree with the expenses and the numbers. But I just would like to say to I believe it was your idea, Mr. Chairman, to start the process early and what two meetings a week so we had breathing room last year, it seemed that we had less breathing room than we had this year. To your point. I appreciate starting early and and diving right in and learning what we could learn and we had we had a month at the end where we could breathe a little bit and digest. And I appreciate starting early

**Dale Hamilton**

I don't know if you can answer this question one One of the only question that for me that remains, and it's not this is, as I say this, this is not a proposal to reduce the budget, I just want to understand where it's being allocated. And that that is what the roads is, we allocate a lot. And those projects, part of the challenge with those projects is that many of the projects require engineering, or some of the projects require engineering, some of total rebuild, some are just paving, they all require contracts. And so if the dollars aren't appropriated, for the fiscal year, contracts can't be entered into. And so some of the work that takes place in the spring, may actually go out to bid in the winter. And if the money isn't there, then you can't put that out to bid. And it turns into that cycle of not being able to do anything. And and so just in terms of where we're in the construction, period, peak period, with last year's, we have a number of projects that are underway of using funds from last budget. Are we in a position with that 1.9? I don't remember details, but just that 1.9, will that be utilized to be able to get those projects going so that we will have projects just moving and seeing some some change in in the roads? Or are we budgeting that we're going to end up with a lot of fund balance and projects not even getting off? That? So can you speak to?

**Glenn Moshier**

Yeah, no. So our funding from last year, as has been most has been expended. When we budgeted last year, we didn't our paving prices went up astronomically. So what we had budgeted for was

dramatically cut into what we could actually accomplish based on what we have for funding. There is the upper light is scheduled to be paved soon. And there was one other project from last year's budget that's still in the works to be done in the in the next couple of weeks, depending on northeast pavings. Schedule, the weather last couple of weeks has really been detrimental. But so those projects are still online to be completed from last last year's budgets. This year's budget, as you stated does include some engineering and some other costs. So it's not like the full 1.9 is going to go straight into you know, road projects, fixing potholes and those types of things. But you know, some of the more significant Water street is just one complaint leader and echoed this evening. Foster streets. So those are some of the projects that are scheduled within that 1.9. Now they won't all get done this fall or window of opportunity to do paving. And to do construction type work is is relatively short. So they will schedule as many as they can for the fall, and then try to catch up with anything leftover in the spring. And again, with a lot of that, especially with the paving specific, were somewhat at the mercy of, you know, of Northeast paving and their scheduling and being able to work, you know, work in to get certain projects done. But the 1.9 as you stated, it's, you know, significant increase over what we've budgeted in the past few years. And certainly, I've taken a different approach when it comes to local roads in the sense that my predecessor was very reluctant to do any of the work and tried to catch it all up at the end, because he was concerned that that those funds would be needed for other purposes. And since I've been the city manager, we've been more aggressive with scheduling and getting the, you know, getting the projects in the hopper to get them to get them completed as soon as the budget has passed. So I think that, you know, we'll see a few projects through to completion with this amount of money. But it's realistically, it's not enough that you're going to see that needle move dramatically when it comes to complaints about our roads. And, you know, we've talked recently, you know about the potential long, more long term looking at bonding, we're looking at, you know, taking out debt in order to address some of the more glaring issues with with our roads. But you know, our staff works really hard to coordinate with M D O T for MPIs and and searched out other funding sources to make sure that all then we can get some of these projects done without all of the burden falling on the taxpayers. You know, and Oak Street is slated in the MD O T, work schedule for a complete rebuild. So right now we're getting all the all of our ducks in a row to do the drainage, and any other water and wastewater that needs to be done while that road is, is being constructed by Maine, D O T. And that's that construction phase is is not any cost to the city, high street is on their work plan for FY 24 for a mill fill from the upper light all the way up to the top of Beckwith Hill. So that's, you know, something that main Dot is doing. And there's a lot of work that we can piggyback on them as they, as they bring that process through, of course, Christian Ridge is an MPI, with Maine D O T. And then a lot of these other sort of, you know, smaller side ruins that our highway department tries to focus on, you know, those getting those smaller projects done, we have a drainage project on Water Street, right at the base of Foster Street. And we've tried three years unsuccessfully to bid that out and have and get that project completed. And we're at the point now, where our highway crews going to commit to do doing that project. And there'll be paving that will go along with that. And foster Street, which has seen some pretty significant deterioration over the last couple of years, and has had some significant construction taking place with Oriole Way and Oriole senior housing, introducing drainage. As you also know, we have the pump station, which is being constructed or reconstructed on Water Street. And also we're in the early stages of doing the one on High Street. So there'll be some interruption, and some need to get into paving and roads, when for those projects as well. And with all the development, you know, we recently saw route three opened up the top of Beckwith Hill for water and storm and wastewater to go into the new

development up there on Route three. So all of these projects, you know, lead to additional problems with the roads right now you got a big divot in the road up at the top of Route three, where they open the road back up. So and you heard earlier from Mr. Blanchette about Park Street. And that's our birch ave. And that's a work in progress that was never completed last year, because we ran out of time. And now this year, they'll be going back up and and doing some additional work there ditching drainage, and eventually the final layer of pavement and possibly, I know there's been a lot of conversation about some strategic curving, not curving the entire length of the road, because that would retire, you know, require an entire rebuild of the whole road, but place doing some strategic curving that will help reduce that water flow. So I know that's a long winded answer to your question. But I think it's important that the public understands that there's a lot of work being done. You know, we utilize all of the resources that we can to leverage funds and get funding funding sources to assist. But, you know, there's going to continue to be bumpy roads, and we'll continue to, you know, to hopefully the city will continue to prioritize it. And you know, after a few years of spending a significant amount of money. I think you're you're going to see progress, but it's going to take it's going to take a couple of years. They didn't deteriorate overnight, they can't be replayed, repaired overnight.

**Dale Hamilton**

thank you. That's helpful.

**Michelle Beal**

Other comments, questions?

**Michelle Beal**

They increased their electricity to \$15,000. And we had talked to one of the budget meetings that we were going to let them know about, because they they are they do receive subsidies for

**Glenn Moshier**

solar credits. Yeah, solar credits. So

**Michelle Beal**

I just was wondering if that was ever looked at.

**Glenn Moshier**

I don't know that we ever looked at that specifically. for them. We did. We did budget, some revenue for solar credits. Correct. So yeah, so offset it that way, as opposed to lowering their specific electrical bill.

**Toni Dyer**

I think that was just because the Board of Trustees had already kind of adopted her budget as presented. And I didn't want to make her go back just for

**Michelle Beal**

as long as it was, as long as it's in there, I think we can work on next year.

**Glenn Moshier**

And next year, we will have a much better, clearer, much more clearer picture dealing with solar credits next year, because we'll have a full year's worth of experience to be able to look at our bills and see exactly what we paid for in solar credits, and what that translated into savings on our bills. And then we'll have, you know, year over year to be able to compare. So we'll see, this is what our bill we were spending before now, this is what we're spending with the solar credits and be able to more accurately forecast what that savings is. This year, most of the departments we just dropped the electrical a couple \$1,000 just to reflect the solar credits, because we we don't have that comparison yet. Because May, will May, or June, June this month is the full year. So let's we don't really just have that experience to be able to accurately predict so which is why we were modest in our in our conservative in our estimate reductions and then put a little bit of additional revenue in there to kind of close that gap. Thank you.

**Dale Hamilton**

Just make one more general comment. Just in terms of the budgeting process. I've been through a number of these now. And what what's challenging is that in a community of this size, everybody has their own priorities, their own interests. And I can tell you that when there's a proposal to reduce significantly any part of the budget, there is, there has always been that doesn't matter what the issue has been, when that reduction has been made, there have been pushback from the community in terms of saying, don't cut that. Cut this. And if you do try to reduce that, another group will come and say well, don't cut that cut this, it's it's part of what we have as a community in terms of I think, to your point cancer scientists that we all benefit in different ways from the city, we all have our own interests in terms of what moves the city forward and, and how to best use taxpayer dollars. I can say with a lot of confidence that everybody sitting around this table had the same interest, no one here is looking to put a burden on the taxpayers of this community. And although we don't agree 100% on what those budget items should look like and what the amount should be. To me, there's always been that that shared perspective of trying to put together a budget that reflects the best for this community to make the city of Ellsworth the best it can be to support the citizens to support the guests that come into it to support our youth. And just make this a better community overall. And we're never going to have 100% That's what this this process is all about. But I think if you have people sitting around this table, and you have the involvement of the community, who are all interested in making the community better, you come up with the best budget you possibly can. Is it perfect? Absolutely not. Is it more expensive than we would like? I think yes, it is. I think that will always be the case. And we would always like to lower taxes. But at the end of the day, I think we have to look at what kind of community we want. Are we moving the community forward? And if we're not let's have conversations about that. Let's let's keep working towards the positive and not get caught up in the negative aspects because you can pick apart every single budget you can throw labels at and name call and project to your anger around it. But I believe that everybody here is invested in making the city the best it can be.

**Toni Dyer**

I so I've made changes to outside organizations based on Councillor Stein's recommendations. And some of the TIF adjustments. We've had to you a new resolution with all of those changes shown so the total is 24,570,550.



**Steven O'Halloran**

Earlier you said it was around 25401203.

**Toni Dyer**

Yes. And then we made some other tif adjustments. I still had general budget in there. And then debt service and debt service

**Casey Hanson**

can I make a motion? You can move to approve the budget for \$24,570,558.

**Gene Lyons**

Second,

**Dale Hamilton**

we have a motion second. further discussions.

**Tammy Mote**

That's I think we also need to add the the additional resolutions as part of

**Toni Dyer**

which I did not print because those haven't changed. So whatever I had emailed you earlier for the water capital and wastewater.

**Dale Hamilton**

Do we do each one separately? Okay.

**Michelle Beal**

I think we can and

**Dale Hamilton**

I think we'll take them separately just so that's really very clear. Unless there's objection. Alright, so we have a motion in a second to adopt the budget as presented amended. Any further discussion? All those in favor? Aye. All those opposed? budget passes.

**Michelle Beal**

it's just the further resolution. there and it's further resolved. For motion that the city of Ellsworth Council approves the budgets for the following departments in the amount specified the capital improvement budget. 2,407,842, Public Library budget is that netted with revenues of 620,798 and expenditures of for net on the public library 703798

**Toni Dyer**

This is 625 890 is their city appropriation. The rest of those are the rest of their revenues for a total of 703 798 Okay.

**Michelle Beal**

Okay. What? Toni, you get that in writing, right? Water Department, revenues of 1,360,072 and expenditures of 1,280,232. Wastewater department have revenues of 2,098,000. expenditures of 1,841,340.

**Casey Hanson**

second.

**Dale Hamilton**

motion and a second, further discussion. All those in favor? Aye. Those opposed? Motion passes. So, counselors, I want to thank you, as we mentioned earlier in terms of the time that you committed to this budget process. And I also absolutely want to thank Madam Clerk and the rest of the staff, the amount of time that was put into this both during the meetings attending the meetings, as you saw it tonight, being able to rapid fire back to us in terms of information and getting it straight and keeping us straight manager Moshier for your attention to the budget from the beginning, in terms of being responsive to presenting a responsible budget, but then being willing to go back and make changes throughout the process and being open to that your transparency and bringing city department leaders to the table to share their information, very much appreciated. What made this process possible. And as difficult as it is having that openness was very much very much appreciated, very important to the process. Now, one of the things I just want to put the Council on notice for is that this budget has passed with the assumption that the referendum, the school portion of the budget, is going to pass that's included as part of this overall budget that we just passed, which obviously impacts the mill rate. If the school budget does not pass, we will need to have an emergency meeting to do a continuing resolution to in order for the city to operate because we will not have a budget. And we will have to revisit this in July. And there was only literally two days from the vote to the new New Year. So just be aware that if it doesn't pass, we will have to hold an emergency meeting to do a continuing resolution on this budget, I just wanted you to be aware of that the community be aware of it. And we'll just see where where things go from here. Any final thoughts that anybody has on the budget?

**Glenn Moshier**

I just real quick, I just would like to echo that sentiment towards the staff. And certainly Toni Dyer for her assistance with putting this budget together and Councilor Mote for her assistance as well. But it's my third budget with a and my third different financial person doing the numbers. So it makes it challenging at best. But I'm hopeful now with the staff that we have in the finance department. And certainly the interest that the council seems to have with the process going forward, that we can make it much more efficient and a much easier process for everyone involved. And I would just really ask that, you know, citizens get involved. You know, I mean, we held how many budget meetings and you know, had very little to no citizen participation, and I'm certain that people are going to wake up tomorrow and hear these figures and, and be angered or inconst by it. And, you know, the opportunity for them to have participated in and to have provided us some, some guidance as to where their wishes are, you know, has come and gone and in the future, I would encourage everyone to, you know, to participate early and often because that's the only way we can truly have a budget that's going to reflect the entire community's desires and wishes as opposed to a budget that you know, the seven people sitting in this

table have kind of choked down so you know, it's like it's like a mediation as long as everybody leaves unhappy then you know, you're that's kind of how this budget is.

---

**Dale Hamilton**

Item 17 discussion regarding Franklin Street Parklet sponsored by Councilor Hanson

**Casey Hanson**

Yes, that is me. It's actually about the parklet. itself. It's about the, of course, because we close the road, there are some requirements for what we need to do in terms of signage to tell citizens that the road can't be driven down. But it looks terrible as you drive down Main Street, and i so that my request was to just bring this here to try to look at the D O T. Rules and see if there was more attractive way to solve the problem, because the parklet is so great. And it's so cute. And I've had a variety of people come tell me how much they like it. But it's just too bad that when you drive past that you're like, oh.

**Glenn Moshier**

So in response to Councilor Hansen's questions, I have spoken at length about the issue with Lisa, a public works director. And long before you ever raise it as an as a concern, it was it was something that we discussed as staff, the very first year, we put up the parklet. And then again, each subsequent year, because much like you and others, you know, the signage, and the other requirements are somewhat unsightly. And we'd like for it to be as attractive as possible. There are some potential options that we can explore. Of course, everything comes along with you know, funds, what we've used out there is what we have available to us without spending any additional funds. Just a few, a little bit of an explanation as to why the prettier if you will, barricades more attractive barricades are back behind the crosswalk. And the reason for that is we want we didn't want to set those on the backside of the crosswalk and have vehicles run the risk of potentially turning and immediately running into a concrete barricade. So the barricades and the road closed sign are kind of the you know, wake up call for anyone who thinks they're going to be turning right or left onto onto Franklin Street that they can't do that the road closed sign is required. barricades are our requirement. In fact, the national standard requires three tear barricades, which are basically like a wall, it's like, instead of just having the one they want you to have three, but where it's a low, low speed, not heavily traveled roadway, we felt comfortable with the single barricade in order to be able to achieve the same goal we have looked into. And I think she provided you some photographs of singles, yeah, those type of blinding the roadway with those as opposed to the barricades, it's still we still would require a road closures sign in. But we could utilize something like that instead of barricades. And she Lisa is looking into the cost of those of those. And ultimately, again, we need to block that road because you don't want people turning on and then getting on to the crosswalk, and then seeing the concrete barriers and then be like, oh, and trying to back out on the main street would be problematic at best and extremely dangerous. So that's the purpose for having the sort of the two tiered approach to the road closure. And, again, there's perhaps some slightly more attractive ways that we could do it. We've just done it this way, the last three years because it was the equipment that we have on hand.

**Casey Hanson**

It's different on the on this side. Is there a reason? It can be one way on one side? And

**Glenn Moshier**

well, the this side of is not a road, it's coming out of the side of the parking lot to access it. And the through way of store Street is significantly less traveled than what you have on on Main Street and or Franklin Street for that matter. The vehicles coming off of Franklin Street across me.

**Steven O'Halloran**

making a suggestion. I'm asking the question. Do the rules change? And if you close it permanently, I'm not saying we should do that. I'm just saying what does it do to the city? What does it do for road closure signs permanent posts? I'm not suggesting I'm asking that.

**Glenn Moshier**

Yeah, if if we discontinued the road, which is a process that you can go through it has. We have to have public hearings and so forth, then yeah, then it would no longer require the road closure because it wouldn't be a road any longer. This is a temporary closure. So we open it back Up in October, and then people are trapped traversing it again. So in order to maintain the safety of period dirt that is closed, we need those those closure signs. And like on this backside there is a road closed sign. We don't have any barricades but the but the stone, cement barricades are right on the roadway. So again, what you're not getting the traffic turning in to Franklin Street like you would get off of Main Street. So if we were to bump those planter concrete barricades onto the outside of the crosswalk, the potential for vehicles to turn into that turn in and perhaps collide with those concrete barriers is much greater on the main street side than it is on the on the backside of US store street side, which is why the decision was made originally to do the concrete barriers just straight across as opposed to the orange and yellow barricades that you see up front.

**Jon Stein**

It has been a recurring discussion in the Recreation Commission as well about a permanent closure and what that would look like and the safety concerns. Obviously, the fire and police access would be an issue but not insurmountable. I think management measures and thoughts of doing like the tree lighting ceremony and other winter events in that space as well. So the recognition has talked about it as excited about the notion of keeping that conversation going about making it permanent.

**Steven O'Halloran**

We both heart of Ellsworth, what's their position?

**Cara Romano- Heart of Ellsworth**

So I'll just dial the conversation back and I will not be up here for long, but I will dial the conversation back to 2017 when heart of Ellsworth did the first road closure for an event. The purpose of taste of Ellsworth was not only to bring folks together, and to celebrate our community before the start of the summer season. But a lot of it had to do a showcasing that space, what it would look like when there were trees in there. And it were actually to be a park. I think it's safe for me to speak for the board and to state that we believe as a downtown organization that we would like to see that space become permanently closed. And for that to become a park, that it marks sort of the center of our you know of downtown. We hear a lot of people that comment, whether they're visitors from away or people that live here. You know, Ellsworth is like Gilmore Girls, for anybody. I've never watched it. But for anybody who

knows, it's a thing. And I think it bodes as a compliment. And I think that it like I said, I've never watched it, but I think it perfectly encompasses, you know, what people think of our city and we were once known, I think our tagline was the friendly city. Ellsworth was, and I think a space for people to gather where people are always able to use that place no matter what the season is. I think it sort of brings back that whole feeling and sense of place, which is a big part of what art of Ellsworth is all about. So thank you for asking,

**Gene Lyons**

is a time when police and fire were using more?

**Glenn Moshier**

Police not so much I know the fire has concern about being able to it's kind of their quickest route. We've had many discussions about it because I don't really view it as a very safe route to be traversing the parking lot and going down onto that road. So I think I think there's room I think the biggest pushback we've had about closing it permanently outside of the loss of parking and, and the citizens who utilize it as a shortcut to try to get over to State Street and avoid traffic control devices, which is a good goal but is is from Highway Department and plow because it becomes it's it's a useful avenue for them during the winter months for plowing both of the parking lot store Street and Main Street. So I think that's probably one of the more significant issues that we would have to work through. Probably more so than fire because again, it's not really the most the safest route for the fire departments. We go anyway.

**Gene Lyons**

Plow guys, they use that plow

**Glenn Moshier**

to bring to bring the snow off of Main Street up into the parking lot rather than having to go all the way to the bottom of the hill come up State Street and come into the parking lot, just shorter.

**Tammy Mote**

There are also be issues with snow removal in that area. If we were going to use it all year as some sort of Parklet it'd be another duty for the highway department to get rid of that snow in that area as well. So

**Gene Lyons**

push that on the table and hire a private person.

**Casey Hanson**

I mean, it's it's sort of two questions. My question was just about the barricades. And I think the question about whether to close the parklet is an interesting one. But maybe the the information from the D O T, or whatever that was from it didn't really answer the question, like what is required? So I don't know if there's a way to get the answer to that.

**Gene Lyons**

Three tiered right?

**Toni Dyer**

required by USDOT is a three tier, barricade, and we just have a single so ours is just the one strip.

**Casey Hanson**

But the inference, but the stuff in there didn't say we the D O T require X and such for this kind of road for this example

**Glenn Moshier**

is not DOT first of all is the

**Glenn Moshier**

federal and this that is their, that's their standard expectation for relocation. So that's whenever you're going to close a road. That's the signage that they expect you to utilize.

**Casey Hanson**

But that wasn't really in the packet like it didn't really specify, like that must be written someplace. And that wasn't in the packet was like all these examples of roads where you have to make a detour, which really isn't this. want to follow the federal rules, but it's not that clear,

**Glenn Moshier**

I did it so I went on the website that she provided you for the Federal Bureau of Highway Safety, whatever the and so like guidance, the guidance for the road Street closed sign should be used in advance of the point where a highway is closed to all road users, or two all but local road users. And then for road closed signage guidance, the road closed should be used when the roadway is closed to all road users except contractors equipment, so forth and so on. The guidance the road, closed signs should be installed at at or near the center of the roadway on or above a type three barricade. That's where the type three barricade comes into. When it talks about barricades, barricades should be used. freeways and expressways or other high speed roadways. Type three barricades should be used to close partial close to partially closed the road. Type three barricades used at road closures may be placed completely across the roadway, or from curb to curb. So that's the federal standard that they expect when you are closing the road that you'll utilize the signage and those barricades in order to notify the more Republic that the roads closed.

**Michelle Beal**

So what can I ask the question? So those are those are federal guidelines. Right? So those are rules, those aren't hard and fast rules. And this isn't a highway it's a 25 mile an hour road that's got a lot of traffic on it. So anyone that really goes to turn in there, and does it see that it's those barricades, even behind them isn't either paying attention it's more of a safety issue for that rather than there's a high speed someone's going to turn it to go run something over because they're going to stop by then you know, honestly, it's not like they're going high speed. So it is a safety issue and I get that I just wonder if it's kind of like when we made my Beckwith Hill one way put all the signs put these barricades they

went right through it anyway. Honest to God because the GPS told me to But isn't there some way that we can nicely put something across the even if it's planters or something that people can see that they can't drive through rather than those barricades and the roads closed and all of these things, you get something that's that's nicer looking that is going to stop them unless they want to run over. But if we buy big planters, hop them across the road, three of them and and across the air will look nice with the show off the rainbow crosswalk and look nice with the parklet. Anybody that drives through that has got to not be paying attention. I mean, I don't think that those big roads Federal Highway rules not really for Franklin Street extension, and a 25 mile an hour zone. Just my opinion.

**Dale Hamilton**

Would you be willing to go back and have that discussion with your team and and see if there's some wiggle room to come up with something?

**Glenn Moshier**

Yeah, yeah, we can. I mean, we can discuss it further.

**Michelle Beal**

I'd appreciate it. I mean, it isn't. It's just not a highway,

**Gene Lyons**

I was pouring concrete in the middle of an intersection in Hammond. It was the big barrels, seven traffic cones, three big barrels of concrete mixer. And a lady took out the three big barrels, the seven traffic cones, caught her bumper on the concrete mixer and got stuck in the middle of the concrete that we just poured. So don't think for one second, those planters that they're going to see him and not get run over in a pack. If they don't do everything we can to make it visible, what

**Michelle Beal**

we have for that sign now isn't going to stop that person.

**Gene Lyons**

Right. But if you're the one sitting at the table, you want more out there to make sure they can see

**Gene Lyons**

i can push that concrete planter from that front of that parking lot all the way up to this parking lot. I guarantee you that on a turn. Yeah, you can do it. Probably three people can pick it up.

**Steven O'Halloran**

And I just asked one thing, I think we're talking in two things, what can we do immediately? And what can we do in the future. And I'm wondering if, if in the immediate nature, if Jersey barricades they make planters that go on top of them. So they're hard to push. But you could click the planter on top of them that fits over the jersey barricade, I've seen it in several places. It might be a quick fix with with the signage, things on the barricade but yet planter on the top, just as a quick fix while your work on the rest of it. Something I think you're talking about this season, and I kind of pushed it into next season. And I didn't mean to do that. If there's some easy fix short money that might address it for this season.

And I don't know if you can put them on, on the on the main street side of the crosswalk to help with because not that you couldn't push a barricade but that's what they're made for.

**Cara Romano- Heart of Ellsworth**

Thank you. So part of the city's benefit, being part of the Maine downtown center, and the city being an affiliate community of the main downtown center, we have access to resources of other main street and other affiliate communities and other communities in general around the state. And I think that perhaps, if the city is interested, we could use our resources and not have to reinvent the wheel here, perhaps maybe even be able to come up with I don't know maybe even some solutions that wouldn't cost the city any money. And that we could harvest those, if you will, from Anne Ball and Sylvie PK who came to present earlier this year, because there are tons of other downtown's around the state that have done this. So if that's of interest, happy to find solutions,

**Glenn Moshier**

Yeah, I will go back to staff will reach out to DOT and their leadership and see if if we can come up with something that is more appealing. That meets a certain level of safety. Because if we do have to be mindful about safety and the fact to Gene's point that people behind the wheel do some insanely not so smart things.

**Gene Lyons**

When I drive down High Street in my big pump truck that sits way up here. About half of the people driving down the high street are still playing with their phones. I mean, they're not paying attention anymore.

**Steven O'Halloran**

One question thus far has there been close calls major problems?

**Glenn Moshier**

Well, yet today we had two people park on the crosswalk to separate people because they moved the cones and pulled the car in there and parked on the crosswalk to separate times. they move the cones that are on the if you're looking down there, they move the cones there on the right hand Side pulled right in and parked right on the on the crosswalk. Have officer going out to separate times and have them move the vehicles

**Steven O'Halloran**

there hasn't been any. haven't had any accident any close call? Yeah. It could be. Oh, yeah.

---

**Dale Hamilton**

All right. Okay. We're gonna move on to the rest of your agenda. item 18 discussion regarding a request to the Hancock County Commissioners for ARPA funding Sponsored by Councilor Hanson.

**Casey Hanson**

Okay, that one was, well, we got the agenda for whenever the Hancock County Commissioners meet, which does anybody know, how often do they meet? Is it. I don't know why we got that. I don't know why we got that one agenda. But some, somebody in Hancock County was making a request to utilize



ARPA funding. And I remember that when we had our presentation from the Maine Municipal Association guy about our April funding, he basically said, You guys didn't actually get that much money. Ellsworth. Hancock County got a lot of money. And you're a big part of Hancock County. So you should be asking them for their money. And I think it was maybe Dale's idea that you had thrown out the idea of maybe asking them for help with what do you call it when you have to redo the track? They need to rebuild the whole thing, rebuilding the track. So it just made me think that we should be thinking about how to make a request and just getting on top of that now and not waiting. So that was what my

**Michelle Beal**

So the Finance Committee is actually discussing that. We we wanted to make a recommendation to the Council of what to do with the remaining ARPA funds. And we went and looked at many projects that that could be used in the city of Ellsworth and we spoke with the school department about their needs also. And we did come up with the track and the lighting for the track is a is a totally community and actually regional project. Obviously the schools use it schools from outside of Ellsworth use the track, nonprofit organizations use the track and the center of it for fundraisers. And it's definitely used by people outside of Ellsworth for walking and exercise. The entire county uses that area. It's a great tribe. So we have that is our recommendation is to work with us the remaining funds and to ask the Hancock County Commissioners for funding and manager Moser and Superintendent bowls. What have you I'm looking at trying to have a estimate on the costs. And then looking at putting together a proposal to go to the county commissioners to yeah, great to do that.

**Casey Hanson**

Well, that a little bit. That item is settled.

---

**Dale Hamilton**

Item 18 appointment of an arbor commission. Counselor Hanson.

**Casey Hanson**

Yes. Okay. So I Tabitha White is going to come present. So actually, this is sort of a two part thing. One is Toni printed this out for all of you that we actually have a tree ordinance in our charter. That indicates that we have to establish an arbor Commission. The arbor commission shall consist of nine individuals appointed by the city council. And the purpose of the arbor commission is to undertake projects supporting and promoting maintenance removal pruning of trees of streets or other public sites. So anyways, we don't have an arbor commission. And as Tabitha told us at a previous city council meetings, we shouldn't have one. And part of the benefit of having one is that we can then apply for a, I lost the name of our project canopy grant. So my Tabitha is going to teach us a little bit about that. But my my request is that we appoint an arbor commission or that we at least say we're going to apart like request submissions for people being on an arbor commission to allow us to apply for grants such as Project canopy. Once we have actually what do we have, right? Yes, This is a new iteration of something we've gotten in the past.

**Tabitha White**

Thank you so much. Good evening councilors and thank you for your time tonight. You've saved the best for last which is awesome and a special thank you to Casey Hanson for adding me to this

evening's agenda. My name is Tabitha White and I am here on behalf of green Ellsworth to discuss the city of Ellsworth tree ordinance and Arbor commission it mandates

### **Tabitha White**

a little about me and my unique qualifications to be standing here in front of you this evening with this ask. I was born and raised here in Ellsworth. I have been a licensed arborist for 13 years. I graduated from the University of Maine in Orono with a bachelor's in forestry. After graduation, I was the planting coordinator for the city of Boston for five years, I moved to New York City for a job as a procurement forester where I was in charge of procurement and distribution of all the street trees for the city of New York from 2013 to 2016. And with the opportunity of buying my childhood home, I moved back home to Ellsworth, where I worked as the procurement and yard manager for Atlantic landscape construction. I am currently partnered with the garden artisans and Trenton where I continue to procure and sell trees. And since 2017, I have volunteered as an expert in urban forestry and arboriculture for green Ellsworth. I became the Chair of the tree subcommittee, which is a subgroup of the land action team specifically focused on increasing our source tree canopy and developing an urban forestry plan for the community. And I am happy to report to council that Ellsworth has been designated as a Tree City USA for the second year in a row. And to date much of us this activity has led to our tree city status to date. I'm sorry to date, much of our activity has led to our tree city status, which has been led by green Ellsworth volunteers and our partner organizations the Ellsworth Garden Club, and Frenchmen Bay Conservancy. And as with many other local communities who have enjoyed such a designation communities a smallest Castine is largest Bangor, the city of Ellsworth needs to take more of a role in the leadership role when it comes to planting and maintenance of trees on the city streets and public spaces. If we are going to be able to maintain our Tree City USA status, we want and create and maintain the kind of community its citizens want. We need to have a designated tree commission professionally qualified tree stewards and plans for the management of city trees. And lucky for us the city does have a tree ordinance chapter 43 dating back to the 1990s. You can refer to the copy of this ordinance in your packets. And section one provides for an arbor commission of nine people It charges them with overseeing the planting maintenance and pruning of trees on the streets and elsewhere in the community. Section two talks about developing a master tree plan focused on guiding planting and maintenance on an ongoing basis. And section three discusses what constitutes abuse and mutilation of city trees and what can be recovered from the vandalized or by the city. Currently, however, the ordinance this ordinance has been overlooked as the city has neither a commission nor a plan. This failure to follow through with what is mandated in this tree ordinance is definitely not because of a lack of public interest or because of a lack of the public's failure to prioritize our Urban Canopy. In fact, retreating our city streets maintaining existing trees and enhancing the city's tree canopy figure figured prominently as high priorities for elsewhere citizens in over 40 Green Ellsworth consultations with the community around sustainability goals. As noted with the accomplishments list in the handouts, the community has also demonstrated its willingness to engage in activities to move the dial forward with our Urban Canopy. It has been the community that has surveyed and mapped Ellsworth downtown core for existing trees and possible new tree locations. It has been the community who raised \$20,000 to plant 13 trees at City Hall to prune the existing crab apples at City Hall, which you'll see photographs of in your handouts as well. And that \$20,000 went to plant trees at the old Rite Aid on High Street. And to the city's credit there, they supplied the heavy machinery and labor hours that helped to make this High Street project a success. And as someone who regularly prices, jobs that uses heavy machinery and

labor, I can attest to the value that our public works department brought that day with its people and equipment. It's been the community that broke ground at the Jordan homestead tree nursery in 2022, where we have planted 160 trees out of 500 plan for this nursery, all of which are designated for the Ellsworth downtown downtown core It's been a community through green Ellsworth has developed and regularly updates recommended plant lists for specific types of plants such as trees, shrubs, and perennials for types of properties residential, commercial public, and for a wide variety of habitats sunshade wet dry roadway foundation plantings etc. And it's been the community and community in the context of green Ellsworth that has developed a draft plan that could be adapted as a master tree plan as the second item in the Tree ordinance. This plan can help jumpstart this commission fulfill the requirements of the ordinance help us maintain maintain our tree city status and help us to booster to bolster the content relating to our Urban Canopy in the Comprehensive Plan. The city would obviously need to make a public call for interests and serving in such a commission but as an indication of possible interest and expertise. In our handout we have included a list of nine very well qualified candidates who have indicated a willingness to serve on the Ellsworth Arbor commission. As with the green house retreat committee, this can be expected to be a very hands on commission. People generally genuinely, genuinely prepared to take leadership, develop groups of volunteers to assist in the management of Urban Canopy and organize projects and events in aid of that effort. Most particularly, they would also assist with grant applications and fundraising. At the back of your handout, you can have a look at a fundraising brochure that was created in the 90s as an indication of what the government commission could accomplish today. And 2021 and 2022. The Ellsworth community nonprofits were the ones applying for Project canopy grants that have funded tree plantings and irrigation for the tree nursery. But we need the city to apply for every year just as many other main communities to which helps them these communities to fund their own urban forestry programs. In 2022, the inflation reduction acts allocated an unprecedented \$1.5 billion to invest in our urban greening through the tree plantings and other efforts across the country. This money which we can access through this state's project canopy program is a large part of the answer to the often proclaimed how do we fund this question. Rather than being an added burden for the city. Staff that Arbor commission could be a model for how Commission's can lighten the load for staff with access to volunteer aka three professional expertise. And a team of community members prepared to take leadership and getting the job done well and contributed in contributing to the long term beauty and sustainability of our community, such as Commission has, has the capacity to multiply a staff members time and expertise by nine. Ellsworth is naturally a Tree City, it exists because of the trees that grew here and the industry that generated when all the land was cleared of trees. The people who had come to live here realize that Ellsworth wasn't a very pleasant place to live. So as many communities do, they planted beautiful street trees that were for years one of the most memorable and appealing things of our city. When those trees were all lost in the 70s and 80s, from Dutch elm disease, citizens realized they needed to plant again and do a better job of caring for the trees. This led to the tree ordinance the chapter 43 and an initial group designated as the arbor commission. Some planting occurred and there was but there was no long term follow through with maintenance and when significant and and when significant investment in trees was made in the refurbishment of High Street. Nearly all all of the trees died because of a number of factors, but most particularly because there were no qualified arborist within the city staff and volunteer commissions to be responsible for developing and overseeing a plan for planting and long term maintenance that works. I want to point out a few other mistakes that were and continued to be made by not having an arborist oversight. In this picture behind me. You can see

an arborist would have known that during this initial install. The tree would interfere with the flag call in the future, which is today and it has become an issue before the city. Do we remove the tree? Do we move the flagpole? Both are expensive and totally were avoidable. An arborist would know that these tree guards must be removed before they struggle they strangle and kill these trees which will be soon an arborist would know that this is a mulch volcano and it can lead to the decline and death of a tree. Now more than ever, we are faced with more serious threats of our existing tree canopy. There is a real car Current and future threat of new diseases, invasive pests and invasive trees. Now more than ever, we need the benefits of trees, that includes their beauty. And I refer to the photos of the crab apples and bloom this year around City Hall, which was the recent green Ellsworth and citizen effort. However, we also need the cooling and warming effects of trees, we need their green infrastructure capacity to moderate stormwater runoff. A great example being birch Avenue, their ability to mitigate air and water pollution as well as the potential to reduce damage to city streets and infrastructure. We need to do this kind of work all over Ellsworth. So council members, I am asking for you to advise the city manager to take steps immediately to constitute the arbor commission, beginning with a public call for interested and qualified participants. Their first task should be the development of an urban forestry management plan, and a plan for grant applications. Thank you all again. for your time this evening. I really appreciate it. Any questions?

**Gene Lyons**

So most trees look like they have the power line? Like right directly above them? Oh, yeah. How's that gonna work?

**Tabitha White**

Wow, that's a really great question. Actually, we can make it so that the right trees get planted in the right places, we never want to plant a shade tree that's gonna grow to 100 feet under powerlines, we can control that. And we can make sure that that doesn't happen in the future. I have a whole set of guidelines already. I have been doing this for a long time. I want to bring my expertise back to the city. And I know a lot of other people want you to

**Gene Lyons**

I just saw that. So like it's like, Oh,

**Tabitha White**

I know, the awful pruning that they do with those. Yeah. And it makes it even more dangerous. So it's a it's a waste of money, a waste of our resources. I don't want to waste our money or our resources.

**Casey Hanson**

Is this something that even requires a motion or not really, because there's already an ordinance? Just a request, or do we need to vote on something?

**Dale Hamilton**

I think it's a request to to start the process in terms of informing the community at some point, the council will have to formally appoint that could the commission so I think we can ask that the manager

to start the process in terms of getting interests in. And then we'll go from there, once you have named becomes important.

**Tabitha White**

Thank you very much. Thank you.

**Casey Hanson**

Thanks, then we just need to bring back those

**Glenn Moshier**

I might also suggest that we take a look at this ordinance 1991 was a lot of time ago, a lot has changed. So

**Dale Hamilton**

why don't we put it on the July carried forward this item and put it on the agenda? Unless there's a let's put it on the agenda for an update. And then we can make a decision in terms of where it needs to go from there.

**Mary Blackstone**

I'm sorry, I could just mention that one of the first things that the commission could do is to revise its own ordinance. And perhaps you'd get the expertise there to work for you.

---

**Dale Hamilton**

Thank you. Okay, Item 20 Council comments. If you wish to make a comment.

**Dale Hamilton**

I do have I want to make one quick comment. I know it's like, be quick. I just wanted to respond to it earlier comment major and citizens comment. I completely understand personal opinion. But opinion does not translate into fact. And so I personally take offense to it being labeled that there was an illegal act that took place among the council with the decision around the police headquarters. That was the decision of five to vote it was followed by you can be disagreement in terms of whether or not some of the public felt there was enough information available. That that can be certainly discussed. But as far as it being an illegal act that was an opinion made by an individual. My opinion is it was absolutely not an illegal act and the courts have made that decision and upheld that. So I just think it's important that if you have an opinion, express your opinion, but to put a label behind it, I think is really unfair. And particularly in the situation where there was another lease approved that evening as well. I have yet to hear any kind of reaction about that lease, although it was not the same sum of money. If the purpose was as was presented by this individual this evening. Why was that not put on the table? So I think I think we should be careful in in throwing stones and labeling. We can have disagreement and their approach, you know, pursuing it any way that somebody feels, that's fine. taking it to court. That's fine. It was not an illegal act. And that is an absolute fact. Anyone else? Motion to adjourn.

**Michelle Beal**

So moved.

**Gene Lyons**  
Second.

**Dale Hamilton**  
All in favor.