

**Town Council Meeting
DRAFT Minutes
June 18, 2012**

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm.

Roll Call

Councilors Payne, Rodden, Varney, Pierce, and Orestis were present and answering roll call.

Councilor Farber was absent.

Pledge of Allegiance

Councilor Pierce led those present in the pledge of allegiance.

Town Clerk Ellen Planer swore in new Councilor Sean Mahoney.

The Council adjourned to caucus.

Caucus

The Council returned from caucus at 7:00 pm

Item 1 Organizational Meeting

Item 1 (a) Election of Town Council Chairperson.

Councilor Pierce moved to elect Councilor Varney as chair; Councilor Rodden seconded. Motion carried 6-0.

Item 1 (b) Election of Town Council Vice-Chairperson.

Councilor Pierce moved to elect Councilor Rodden as vice-chair; Councilor Payne seconded. Motion carried 6-0.

Item 1 (c) Order to appoint members to the Council Finance Committee.

Councilor Pierce moved to appoint Councilors Mahoney, Orestis, and Farber to the Finance Committee; Councilor Rodden seconded. Motion carried 6-0.

Item 1 (d) Order to appoint members to the Council Ordinance Committee.

Councilor Pierce moved to elect Councilors Payne, Rodden, and Mahoney to the Ordinance Committee; Councilor Rodden seconded. Motion carried 6-0.

Item 1 (e) Order to appoint members to the Community Development Committee.

Councilor Pierce moved to elect Councilors Pierce, Payne, Rodden to the Community Development Committee; Councilor Rodden seconded. Motion carried 6-0.

Item 1 (f) Order to appoint members to the Council Appointments/Personnel Committee.

Councilor Pierce moved to elect Councilors Pierce, Farber, and Orestis to the Appointments/Personnel Committee; Councilor Rodden seconded. Motion carried 6-0.

Item 1 (g) Order to appoint Council members to serve as liaisons to various boards and committees.

Councilor Pierce moved to appoint the slate of liaisons; Councilor Rodden seconded. Motion carried 6-0.

Committee

Conservation Commission
Economic Improvement Committee
Trails Advisory Committee (FTAC)
Harbor/Waterfront Committee
Human Services Committee
Library Board of Trustees
Long-Range Planning Advisory Committee
Open Space Sub Committee
Parks and Community Programs Advisory Committee
Recycling & Energy Advisory Committee
School Board
Veterans Memorial Committee
Shellfish Conservation Committee

Liaison

Councilor Orestis
Councilor Farber
Councilor Mahoney
Councilor Farber
Councilor Rodden
Councilor Varney
Councilor Pierce
Councilor Mahoney
Councilor Orestis
Councilor Farber
Councilor Mahoney
Councilor Orestis
Councilor Payne

Item 1 (h) Order to appoint a Council member to serve on the County Budget Advisory Committee.

Item 1 (i) Order to appoint one representative and one alternate to the ECO-Maine Board of Directors.

Item 1 (j) Order to appoint representatives to the General Assembly of the Greater Portland Council of Governments and to designate one as Falmouth's representative on the Executive Committee.

Item 1 (k) Order to appoint two members to serve on the METRO Bus Board of Directors.

Item 1 (l) Election of a representative to serve on the MMA Legislative Policy Committee.

Item 1 (m) Order to appoint a representative from the Council as a liaison to the Tidewater Advisory Council.

Item 1 (n) Order to appoint a Council member (and the Town Manager) to serve on the METRO Coalition.

Councilor Pierce moved to appoint liaisons to Items h-n as a slate; Councilor Rodden seconded. Motion carried 6-0.

<u>Board</u>	<u>Liaison</u>
County Budget Advisory Committee	Councilor Payne
ECO-MAINE Board of Directors	Councilor Rodden
GPCOG	Councilor Orestis
Metro Board of Directors	Councilor Rodden
MMA Legislative Policy Committee (every other year)	Councilor Orestis
Tidewater Advisory Council	Councilor Rodden
Metro Coalition	Councilor Pierce

Public Forum

No members of the public spoke at public forum.

Item 2 (a) Consent Agenda) Order to certify the State Primary Election and the Municipal Election results.

Item 2 (b) (Consent Agenda) Order to approve the minutes of the May 14, 2012, Town Council Meeting.

Item 2 (c) (Consent Agenda) Order to approve the minutes of the May 30, 2012, Town Council Meeting.

Councilor Pierce moved the consent agenda; Councilor Rodden seconded. Motion carried 6-0.

Item 3 Public Hearing and Order relative to a new victualer/food service license for Della's Dogs.

Chair Varney opened the public hearing; there was no public comment.

Councilor Pierce moved to approve the order; Councilor Rodden seconded. Motion carried 6-0.

Item 4 Presentation on an invasive plant species program and order to approve a supplemental appropriation of \$18,000 (\$10,000 from unassigned fund balance and \$8,000 from grant resources) to finance a pilot program, said supplemental appropriation will be for Fiscal Year 2013.

Mel Dickenson, Chair of the Conservation Commission, said invasive species are one of the four focus issues of the commission. The invasive species working group has set up several test areas at the Bucknam Road Fire Station to evaluate different control measures. They have developed a multi-

dimensional action plan. The plan will develop specific control strategies for Falmouth, build partnerships with other groups that focus on invasive species, and develop techniques to monitor their progress. They will be working in conjunction with the Open Space Committee as they have identified invasives on several open space properties. They have developed \$8000 in external funding to support this program. They have hosted a public awareness event at the library and developed a flyer, copies of which he provided to the Council. Invasive species are often planted in people's backyards, and from there can spread through the local environment. They are a threat to native plant life, as they outcompete native species. It has been shown that invasive species like barberry and honeysuckle can harbor more tick larvae, which has been shown to increase incidence of Lyme disease.

Nancy Lightbody of the Conservation Commission emphasized that they are looking at terrestrial invasive species only, not water plants. There are many invasive species in Falmouth. They focused on six of them in the flyer, but there are more of them. They have put together a comprehensive, multi-faceted plan; it will take significant time. The plan has two components: education and remediation. They were at the polls and have held events at the library. Their future plans include a flyer in the Forecaster, spots on local TV, and local weed watchers. Remediation is an ongoing effort. They have established three tracks of study land at the Bucknam Road Fire Station to discover the best way to eradicate bittersweet. They are trying three different treatments: two are different types of herbicide and one is by mechanical means only. This is a three year study; they are already seeing results. They are looking at partnering with the school system and using a beetle to control purple loosestrife; this particular beetle only eats that type of plant. They continue to map the town and use the Falmouth Conservation Corps volunteers to monitor and control invasives on the Town's open space properties. They are working with Maine Audubon, U Maine Cooperative Extension, professionals in the industry (Lucas Tree and Skillins, for example) and others, but it will take years of a sustained, ongoing effort. They have already raised \$7,690 but could use some assistance from the Town for equipment, supplies, and to solicit matching funds.

Councilor Pierce asked about outreach to surrounding communities and what the coordinator would be doing.

Bob Shafto, Open Space Ombudsman, said he spoke with Cumberland about it, but the problem is so great in Falmouth, and their resources are so limited, that reaching out to other communities would be too much. Each community is in a different place right now. The coordinator's job would be to keep track of the project, develop media, organize people to do the actual control work, etc.

Councilor Payne asked if there was a better way to get this done. He was concerned that they were establishing something that would continue and need to be funded each year. He thought this should be within the normal operating budget in the Parks and Public Works Dept. or even with the Cooperative Extension.

Councilor Orestis wondered if it could be moved over to Parks if it was successful this year.

Mr. Dickenson said it could; they believe this is an issue that is worth addressing. They are developing best management practices for Falmouth. It isn't clear at this point whether this would become a more permanent part of the Town's budget.

Councilor Orestis asked if they would review the impacts of it after a year.

Mr. Dickenson said yes; they are trying to attack this on as many fronts as they can.

Councilor Rodden complimented them on the brochure. She thought a big picture way of getting at this problem was to get a state-wide ban on the importation of these plants.

Ms. Lightbody said that is one approach; Commission members have met with garden stores, who said their preference was to do it on a voluntary basis.

Councilor Rodden would be interested to hear from the local garden stores. She thought, if all the other states are doing it, and the general public doesn't know these plants are dangerous, it is a perfect opportunity for the government to step in and make a difference. She would like to see the Commission talk with both the local stores and their State representatives.

Ms. Lightbody said the stores are trying to educate their customers. She said, to Councilor Orestis, that they are doing some mapping and they can review that in a year to evaluate their progress.

Caleb Hemphill of the Conservation Commission said he and two others received their master license to apply herbicides to municipal property to control invasive species at the Riverpoint property. They received a grant to do that. They have attacked an extensive infestation of honeysuckle, multi-flora rose, barberry and Asiatic bittersweet. 10-15 years ago the fields were mowed regularly. Since then, the fields have been abandoned, and the invasive plants have spread. Unless specific and drastic action is taken, they will outcompete and kill the local plants. Falmouth has a good opportunity here.

Mr. Dickenson said the Maine Association of Conservation Commissions will be working this issue at the state level, to bring this to the attention of the state legislature.

Councilor Mahoney said the coordinator on the open space side of things has been able to leverage money from the local, state and federal levels. He thought this position would be looking for other resources to supplement what the Town contributes.

Ms. Lightbody confirmed that this is the case.

Councilor Payne pointed out that the Town has a lot of acreage in open space now that they are responsible for. If they add additional acreage, the management costs associated with that is going to go up. He thought they should think about what those costs might be in the future.

Councilor Mahoney understood that any acquisition of land by the Town includes the cost for stewardship of that land. The Town is leveraging a lot of free labor in the town; they need to have adequate resources to steward the Town-owned lands. The Town has been doing a great job; trails are marked and well-built.

Mr. Shafto said it does cost money to manage the properties; the Town added \$5000 to an account this year to do that, they have used \$2500. They have leveraged \$150,000 over the last 5 years for management; there is money out here for these activities. It impresses people that Falmouth is doing community-based conservation, which is more common in other states. Some of the Town conservation properties are under siege from invasives; they could lose the use of Riverpoint to some of these plants.

The amount of volunteer time that they get is huge. In the last couple years Maine Audubon has been working to eradicate invasives from their property, even though they are surrounded by invasives on properties all around them. It won't take as long to treat the Town properties; it may take only a few years to get them under control. Educating the public will take longer.

Chair Varney pointed out that the middle and high school students have to do community service and this might be a good opportunity.

Councilor Rodden moved to approve the appropriation; Councilor Pierce seconded.

Councilor Pierce was comfortable to pilot it for one year, on the hope they can balance this with less Town funds next year. The Town has a proven track record with the Conservation Commission.

Councilor Orestis would like to see tangible results in a year.

Motion carried 5-1 (Payne).

Item 5 Update on the start of the Amtrak Downeaster train and railroad crossing upgrades along the Pan Am Railways line to maintain/expand a "Quiet Zone."

Town Manager Nathan Poore discussed the history of the quiet zone. The Town will lose its quiet zone if improvements are not installed. The option the Council chose was a divider system, with metal poles between the traffic lanes. It will cost \$133,000 for the four intersections in the entire project. They are slated to begin construction soon in order to be ready for the first Downeaster run in November. Officer Kevin Conger has reached out to hundreds of community members, including the schools and day care centers, to educate people on railroad safety.

Councilor Rodden asked if Officer Conger was going to specific neighborhoods, like Birkdale. She suggested neighborhood meetings in those areas where children are more likely to be crossing the railroad tracks.

Mr. Poore said they have been to the Rotary Club, American Legion, Vacationland Driving School, and the Middle School. They haven't been to the neighborhoods.

Item 6 Public Hearing on amendments to Chapter 6, Article 6, Section 6.68, of the Falmouth Town Ordinance that will change the overall maximum levels of assistance for the General Assistance program and incorporate the FY 2013 "Temporary" Housing. These two amendments are necessary to address two programmatic changes enacted by the Legislature on April 12, 2012.

Chair Varney opened the public hearing; there was no public comment.

An order was scheduled for July 9.

Councilor Pierce moved to add an item to the agenda, Councilor Rodden seconded. Motion carried 6-0.

Item 6a Resolution recognizing the Falmouth Historical Society.

Mr. Poore explained that the historical society is having a grand reopening and dedication of their barn. It is an all-day event.

Councilor Pierce moved the resolution; Councilor Payne seconded. Motion carried 6-0.

Item 7 Discussion about future Council agendas.

Mr. Poore discussed upcoming Council agendas. He spoke about misinformation regarding the costs of the METRO and a recent, unauthorized posting to the Town's website. The website issue has been corrected.

There will be no Council meeting on August 13. The Council retreat will be August 3 at Town Hall.

Adjourn

Councilor Payne moved to adjourn; Councilor Pierce seconded. Motion carried 6-0.

Meeting adjourned 8:07 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Melissa Tryon
Recording Secretary