

MPIC Minutes for April 24th, 2024

Attendance: Dave Golden, Amber Kumpulanian (Chair), Patience Hartley, Nick Zeo, Jessica Sizer, Brad Brothers (Town Manager)

Meeting began at 6:02pm

The committee welcomed Brad Brothers. Brad gave a little about his background and experience.

He asked the committee to tell him a bit more about what they do and also who they have spoken with. The committee filled him in on their mission and also what they have accomplished so far.

Amber stated that they would like a standing yearly meeting with the town council to review and update their findings. Former town manager Ryan McNutt had suggested November but Brad wanted to move it until March/April. That way the report could be used for budgeting.

Amber asked Brad what his priorities were for the town. Brad said his first order of business was to review and update internal policies and procedures. He said the department heads are fantastic but they all do things little differently and he would like to see more cohesion in processes. This would allow the town to function more efficiently. He also wants to work on the hiring process, to bring in more candidates that would stay longer. Nick Zeo brought up how we have had several conservation heads that have not stayed long enough to see things through. Dave Golden brought up how the departure of Linda Leduc had left a big gap. The committee also mentioned the job of stormwater coordinator and how it has been bounced around.

Next, Brad would like to see the consolidation of the water departments. It needs to happen to benefit the residents of Palmer. The committee shared with him their findings when they spoke to the superintendents of both Palmer and Three Rivers Water. The committee was unable to meet with Thorndike and Bondsville departments in person, though they tried numerous times.

Brad's next goal would be to bring the departments together more often to work on shared goals. He said our individual department heads are very strong but he would like to see monthly meetings where everyone who has a stake is in the room together. Several committee members mentioned instances when there were oversights due to miscommunications. They all agreed it would be a great idea to bring everyone together more regularly.

For his last two goals Brad wants to work on rebranding Palmer, to take advantage of the upswing in momentum with rail coming. He looks at the job the new school superintendent Matt Francis has done, with his "Why Palmer" campaign and thinks that is just what we need. He does want to look into regionalizing schools, to pool assets and get more services for the kids in town. Amber and Patience shared their experiences in the schools with their children as mostly positive.

The committee agreed to meet on May 22nd.

The meeting ended at 7:43pm