



City of Concord

City Council

Meeting Minutes - Draft

Monday, June 5, 2017

7:00 PM

City Council Chambers
37 Green Street
Concord, NH 03301

Non-public session in accordance with RSA 91-A: 3, II to discuss the City Manager's Annual Evaluation to begin at 5:30 p.m.

1. Call to Order

Action: Mayor Bouley called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Roll Call.

Present: 14 - Councilor Candace Bouchard, Mayor Jim Bouley, Councilor Byron Champlin, Councilor Mark Coen, Councilor Amanda Grady Sexton, Councilor Allan Herschlag, Councilor Fred Keach, Councilor Linda Kenison, Councilor Jennifer Kretovic, Councilor Gail Matson, Councilor Dan St. Hilaire, Councilor Stephen Shurtleff, Councilor Brent Todd, and Councilor Robert Werner

Excused: 1 - Councilor Keith Nyhan

4. Approval of the Meeting Minutes.

Action: Councilor St. Hilaire moved approval of the May 25, 2017 Finance Committee meeting minutes. The motion was duly seconded and passed with no dissenting votes.

5. Agenda overview by the Mayor.

6. Finance Committee Work Session.

Action: Mayor Bouley indicated that there are three items he has heard throughout the budget session by the Council. Referencing Appendix C on page 574, Police, he noted that one of the items requested was number 716 Community Service Aide position for \$29,330. He thinks this is something that they should follow through with and fund explaining that police officers are stretched thin and have a lot of tasks to perform while they are on duty. This position would be able to take away some of the menial tasks that an officer would have to perform. He proposed paying for this by increasing the attrition, located on page 572 in Appendix B, by

the \$29,330 making that new amount a total of \$119,330. He explained that by increasing the attrition dollar, they don't raise the tax rate and it pays for itself.

The second change he proposes would be from the same portion of the budget within the program request summary, page 576 number 679, weekend sidewalk plowing. The request from the department was for \$39,090 and would allow for some of the heavily traveled sidewalks, that didn't get plowed, to actually get plowed on the weekend. Referencing page 92 under general overhead, he indicated that the proposed budget under compensation adjustment is \$445,525 and suggested reducing this amount by the \$39,090 leaving the new amount as \$406,435 for FY18; it would be revenue neutral and they would not have to increase the tax rate.

He stated that the last item he proposes is within the capital budget. He explained that there were two projects that were moved up to FY18 - the Mountain Road project for stormwater drainage and the golf course. The golf course number was \$810,000 and he indicated that, thanks to Councilor Coen, what was suggested is to not do the entire irrigation system but to focus on what the real problem is. It is his understanding that one of the critical pieces currently is the pump house. He proposed the amount of \$145,000 as opposed to the \$810,000 noting that he believes that putting in a new pump is a wise move. He added that, according to the Deputy City Manager-Finance, it would be an approximate \$8,000 debt service payment for next year which he feels is a much reasonable cost.

Councilor Shurtleff moved to adopt the three items as outlined by the Mayor. The motion was duly seconded.

Councilor Herschlag wonders if there is a way to use that one percent - that 19 1/2 percent in the unassigned fund balance to bring it down to 18 1/2 percent - use this in some manner for some of the payments of debt service on the capital projects this year. He asked how this would impact the tax rate, if at all, and if this would actually be a wise decision to do.

Mayor Bouley noted that he considered that but didn't want to do it again this year because the concern is that they really want to keep as good a bond rating as they possibly can and didn't want to send a signal to the bond rating agency that they were somehow going to rely on this money. He indicated that maybe in some future year they can go back a relook at again when it's a little greater.

Councilor Herschlag indicated that they are looking at one percent but bringing it down to Council's goal of 18 1/2 percent from 19 1/2 percent is over \$570,000. He noted that he is concerned about placing additional burdens on their community members.

City Manager Tom Aspell noted that he believes Councilor Herschlag's question is whether it can be used for bond payments. He responded that the answer is that they could but they don't want to; the reason being is that those bond payments are principal interest payments essentially part of the operating budget which will mean a higher tax rate increase the following year; whatever dollars they spend for principal interest payments this year, they would then have to replicate next year. He noted that they don't want to create a trend that the bonding agency would look at. He explained that what they would want to do, if they feel the urge to spend these dollars, is to spend them at a one time capital cost.

Councilor Herschlag inquired whether there is a way to avoid going over their target rate and making it difficult to have access to those funds. Mr. Aspell responded yes indicating that this is something that he will explain later.

Councilor Herschlag recused himself from voting on issues related to the Penacook Community Center due to a conflict of interest.

Councilor Shurtleff's motion passed with no dissenting votes.

The Council came out of meeting as the Finance Committee to meet as the Council.

Public Hearings

- 7A. Resolution fixing and determining the amount of money to be appropriated by the City of Concord for the fiscal year 2018 ending June 30, 2018.

Action: Councilor Coen inquired in regards to the procedure of the public hearings.

Mayor Bouley explained that the purpose of public hearings is to solicit as much information from a person testifying as they possibly can to make sure that they are sharing their thoughts and making sure that the Council can ask questions to the person testifying.

There being no Council objection, City Clerk Janice Bonenfant read the titles of all

four public hearings.

Mayor Bouley opened the public hearings for items A through D.

Public Testimony

Roy Schweiker, resident, noted his concern with the leaf vacuuming program not making it until the end due to the weather. He suggested bringing one of the weeks from the spring into the fall at essentially no additional charge to improve leaf collection in the city. He explained that his complaint about the water is the minimum charge for water; he cut his water consumption in half but his water bill remained the same because the city charges for a minimum of two units of water. He suggested two possible solutions: change the minimum to one unit instead of two units; low water users receive a bill every other month so the meter is only read half as much and send out half as many bills - the city wouldn't be incurring expenses so they can reward the individuals a lower rate.

Mr. Schweiker indicated that he feels that the General Services Department should become a seven day a week department because there are a lot of projects that would be easier and more efficient to accomplish during the weekend because of less traffic. He further pointed out that the Parking Division does not have staff during the evening and weekends and suggested having one police officer position funded out of the parking fund to write tickets during these times.

Mr. Schweiker noted his concern with trash blocking sidewalks on his street noting that he feels that there is an immense difference in city services rendered between downtown and the rest of the city. He feels that the city should normalize services and if downtown wants a higher level of service, the city needs to find a way that they can pay for it other than taking money out of the general tax revenue. He suggested removing the \$30,000 for Intown Concord because it's a special interest group for the downtown only. Lastly, in regards to homeless shelters, he feels that they need to revamp the shelter system so that people that stay in the shelter pay if they can afford it; if they can't afford it, they can do some work there such as shoveling, etc.

Councilor St. Hilaire moved to recess this meeting to June 26th. The motion was duly seconded.

Councilor St. Hilaire explained that the state hasn't voted on their budget yet and,

although they don't expect any changes, he feels that it's still a factor that they need to consider before Council votes on their budget.

Councilor Coen asked what would happen if the state budget doesn't change much at all and what would happen if there is a radical change; would they be looking at potential downshifting of costs to the city that they wouldn't be expecting that would cut into the city's budget.

Councilor St. Hilaire responded that the one thing he has learned is one can never count on what's going to happen across the street. He stated that they don't know what's going to happen; they can't undo what they would do tonight and feels that it's a wise course of action to delay the vote.

Councilor Herschlag noticed that the school district has asked the state to contribute for their conversion to natural gas and inquired whether the city has approached the state for their conversion.

Mayor Bouley responded that he has and explained that the school district becomes eligible through the funding source and is something that the city is not eligible for.

The vote to recess the meeting until June 26th passed with no dissenting votes.

- 7B. Resolution amending the amount of money to be appropriated by the City of Concord for the Fiscal Year 2018 ending June 30, 2018. (Not previously distributed)

Action: Public hearing for this item taken with item A. Public hearing recessed until June 26, 2017.

- 7C. Resolution for the bonded projects within the Capital Budget for Fiscal Year 2018 (July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018) hereby authorizing and approving the expenditure of \$9,894,000 and authorizing the issuance of \$9,894,000 in bonds and notes for various capital projects. (Revised resolution and revised worksheet submitted)

Action: Public hearing for this item taken with item A. Public hearing recessed until June 26, 2017.

- 7D. Resolution for annual capital closeout and repurposing of capital project funds; together with a report from the Senior Accountant.

Action: Public hearing for this item taken with item A. Public hearing recessed

until June 26, 2017.

Public Hearing Action

8. Resolution fixing and determining the amount of money to be appropriated by the City of Concord for the fiscal year 2018 ending June 30, 2018.
Action: No action taken on this item. Action recessed until June 26, 2017.
9. Resolution amending the amount of money to be appropriated by the City of Concord for the Fiscal Year 2018 ending June 30, 2018. (Not previously distributed)
Action: No action taken on this item. Action recessed until June 26, 2017.
10. Resolution for the bonded projects within the Capital Budget for Fiscal Year 2018 (July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018) hereby authorizing and approving the expenditure of \$9,894,000 and authorizing the issuance of \$9,894,000 in bonds and notes for various capital projects. (Revised resolution and revised worksheet submitted)
Action: No action taken on this item. Action recessed until June 26, 2017.
11. Resolution for annual capital closeout and repurposing of capital project funds; together with a report from the Senior Accountant.
Action: No action taken on this item. Action recessed until June 26, 2017.

New Business

Comments, Requests by Mayor, City Councilors

Councilor Champlin thanked the volunteers who were present on Saturday to help support the Friends of White Park and to help beautify the park. He further thanked Parks and Recreation for their support and Brochu Nurseries and Cole Gardens for donating a number of the plantings that were used at White Park.

Councilor Kenison thanked the Fire and Police Department for their participation in a day of education for the children and parents at the Children's Place.

Councilor Kretovic announced that the city is always looking for people that are interested in "adopt a spot". She indicated that anyone interested can reach out to the Parks and Recreation Department.

Councilor St. Hilaire thanked the City Manager and General Services for putting up the flags for Memorial Day and changing the lights.

Councilor Bouchard indicated that she wants to follow up with a conversation she had with the City Manager concerning the widening of I-393. She noted that she is beginning to hear from businesses on Loudon Road that have concerns with one of the options and feels that it could be a negative impact. As the state moves forward, she hopes that the city looks at these so that they don't end up with a plan that hurts some of their biggest taxpayers within the city.

Councilor Herschlag thanked Tom Prescott for his open house and for opening up his museum that contains two Concord Coaches and childrens sled. He thanked the Abbott-Downing Society for also bringing over their vehicles.

Comments, Requests by the City Manager

Action: City Manager Tom Aspell indicated that the Deputy City Manager-Development has been working with someone and expects another donation for flags and banners that will be coming forward to Council next week.

Adjournment

The time being 7:47 p.m., Councilor Kretovic moved to adjourn the meeting until June 26th and enter into non-public session in accordance with RSA 91-A: 3, II to discuss the City Manager's Annual Evaluation. The motion was duly seconded and passed with no dissenting votes.

A true copy; I attest:

*Michelle Mulholland
Deputy City Clerk*