



City of Concord

City Council

Meeting Minutes - Draft

Monday, December 9, 2024

7:00 PM

City Council Chambers
37 Green Street
Concord, NH 03301

Non-meeting in accordance with RSA 91-A:2, I (a), strategy and negotiations with respect to collective bargaining followed by a non-public in accordance with RSA 91-A:3, I (m), consideration of whether to disclose minutes of a nonpublic session to begin at 5:30 PM.

Present: 14 - Councilor Stacey Brown, Mayor Byron Champlin, Councilor Nathan Fennessy, Councilor Jeff Foote, Councilor Amanda Grady Sexton, Councilor Michele Horne, Councilor Fred Keach, Councilor Jennifer Kretovic, Councilor Judith Kurtz, Councilor Karen McNamara, Councilor Jim Schlosser, Councilor Kris Schultz, Councilor Ali Sekou and Councilor Brent Todd

Absent: 1 - Councilor Paula McLaughlin

Mayor Champlin called the meeting to order at 5:32 PM.

Councilor Kretovic moved to enter a non-meeting in accordance with RSA 91-A:2, I (a), strategy and negotiations with respect to collective bargaining, followed by a non-public session in accordance with RSA 91-A:3, I (m), consideration of whether to disclose minutes of a nonpublic session. The motion was duly seconded by Councilor Kurtz and passed with no dissenting votes. Councilor Brown was not present for the non-meeting with respect to collective bargaining.

At 6:38 PM, the non-meeting for legal consultation ended and the non-public session in accordance with RSA 91-A:3, I (m) began.

At 6:51 PM, Councilor Kretovic moved to exit the non-public session. The motion was duly seconded by Councilor Kurtz and passed with no dissenting votes. In public session, Councilor Kurtz moved to seal the minutes of the non-public session. The motion was duly seconded by Councilor Todd and passed with no dissenting votes.

At 6:52 PM, there being no additional Council business, Councilor Kretovic moved to adjourn. The motion was duly seconded by Councilor Grady Sexton and passed with no dissenting votes.

1. Mayor Champlin called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.
2. Invocation.
3. Pledge of Allegiance.
4. Roll Call.

Present: 14 - Councilor Stacey Brown, Mayor Byron Champlin, Councilor Nathan Fennessy, Councilor Jeff Foote, Councilor Amanda Grady Sexton, Councilor Michele Horne, Councilor Fred Keach, Councilor Jennifer Kretovic, Councilor Judith Kurtz, Councilor Karen McNamara, Councilor Jim Schlosser, Councilor Kris Schultz, Councilor Ali Sekou, and Councilor Brent Todd

Excused: 1 - Councilor Paula McLaughlin

5. Approval of the Meeting Minutes.

November 12, 2024 City Council Draft Meeting Minutes

Action: Councilor Grady Sexton moved approval of the November 12, 2024 meeting minutes. The motion was duly seconded by Councilor Kretovic and passed with no dissenting votes.

6. Agenda overview by the Mayor.
7. Resolution proclaiming December 2024 as Capital Region Food Program Month.

Action: Mayor Champlin read the resolution proclaiming December 2024 as Capital Region Food Program month.

Capital Region Food Program Chair Elena Alois and Vice Chair Jennifer Carleton discussed the Holiday Project and thanked the City Council. They noted that donations can be made online at www.capitalregionfoodprogram.org.

- 7A. Library Foundation Presentation.

Action: Wendy Follansbee and Jeanie West, both volunteers of the Concord Public Library Foundation, thanked City Council for the new Penacook Branch of the Concord Public Library and discussed work performed by the Foundation.

****Consent Agenda Items****

Action: Mayor Champlin noted that item 23 was pulled from the consent agenda for discussion. Councilor Grady Sexton moved approval of the consent agenda. The motion was duly seconded by Councilor Kurtz and passed with no dissenting

votes.

Referral to Traffic Operations Committee

8. Request from Keith Curley seeking review of potential improvements to reduce vehicular speeds and improve visibility of a crosswalk located at the Mountain Road / Fernald Street intersection.

Action: Item was referred to the Traffic Operations Committee.

9. Request from Trevor Berry for review of a crosswalk located at North State Street and Lake Street, as well as vehicular speeds on Lake Street.

Action: Item was referred to the Traffic Operations Committee.

Items Tabled for January 13, 2025 Public Hearings

10. Ordinance amending the Code of Ordinances, Title IV, Zoning Code; Chapter 28, Zoning Ordinance to further revise certain provisions, which were previously modified by Ordinance #3168 on August 12, 2024, pertaining to conditional use permits for obstruction of the State House Dome and maximum height limitations in certain portions of the Central Business Performance District and Opportunity Corridor Performance District, as well as to amend other additional sections of the Zoning Ordinance as recommended by the Planning Board; together with a report from the Deputy City Manager - Development.

Action: This ordinance was moved to set for a public hearing.

11. Ordinance amending the Code of Ordinances, Title V, Administrative Code; Chapter 35, Classification and Compensation Plan, Article 35-2, Compensation Plan, Schedule D, Elections Specialist; together with a report from the Director of Human Resources.

Action: This ordinance was moved to set for a public hearing.

12. Resolution appropriating the sum of \$17,265 to assist the Library's mission in providing a variety of equitable services to patrons at the Concord Public Library and accepting the sum of \$17,265 in donations from the Concord Public Library Foundation for this purpose; together with a report from the Library Director.

Action: This resolution was moved to set for a public hearing.

13. Resolution authorizing the City Manager to submit an application for grant funds in the sum of \$750,000 to the Community Development Block Grant Fund program, appropriating the sum of \$750,000 to support CATCH Neighborhood Housing's

redevelopment at 30 East Side Drive, and accepting the sum of \$750,000 in Community Development Block Grant Funds for this purpose; together with a report from the Assistant Director of Community Development.

Action: This resolution was moved to set for a public hearing.

14. Resolution adopting an Anti-Displacement and Relocation Policy Statement and Procedures, in support of the City's Community Development Block Grant application to the New Hampshire Community Development Finance Authority to support CATCH Neighborhood Housing's Redevelopment Project at 30 East Side Drive, increasing the affordable housing units from the existing 14 units to between 20 and 24 new affordable housing units to support independent living and housing opportunities, including services for adults with learning and developmental disabilities; together with a report from the Assistant Director of Community Development.

Action: This resolution was moved to set for a public hearing.

15. Resolution appropriating the sum of \$3,049,000 as a transfer to reserves and authorizing the use of \$3,049,000 from Fiscal Year 2024 General Fund Assigned Fund Balance for this purpose; together with a report from the Deputy City Manager - Finance.

Action: This resolution was moved to set for a public hearing.

16. Resolution appropriating the sum of \$54,000 in the General Fund for furniture, equipment, and training; and authorizing the use of \$54,000 in Reserve Funds for this purpose.

Action: This resolution was moved to set for a public hearing.

17. Resolution appropriating the sum of \$150,000 for the Concord Public Library chilling unit replacement subproject (CIP #551) and authorizing the issuance of bonds and notes in the amount of \$150,000 for this purpose; together with a report from the General Services Director.

Action: This resolution was moved to set for a public hearing.

18. Resolution appropriating the sum of \$40,000 for conducting illegal drug related investigations and accepting the sum of \$40,000 in grant funding from the New Hampshire Department of Safety - Law Enforcement Opioid Abuse Reduction Initiative grant for this purpose; together with a report from the Deputy Chief of Police.

Action: This resolution was moved to set for a public hearing.

19. Resolution appropriating the sum of \$16,000 for the purchase of equipment to assist the Concord Police Department and the Central New Hampshire Special Operations Unit in search and rescue operations and accepting the sum of \$16,000 in grant funds from the New Hampshire Department of Safety - State Homeland Security for this purpose; together with a report from the Deputy Chief of Police.

Action: This resolution was moved to set for a public hearing.

20. Resolution appropriating the sum of \$40,000 in the General Fund for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Justice, and Belonging work and authorizing the use of \$40,000 from General Fund unassigned fund balance for this purpose; together with a report from the Deputy City Manager - Finance.

Action: This resolution was moved to set for a public hearing.

Consent Reports

21. Diminimus gifts and donations report from the Library Director requesting authorization to accept gifts and donations totaling \$1,457.88, as provided under the pre-authorization granted by City Council.

Action: This consent report was approved.

22. Diminimus gifts and donations report from the Human Services Director requesting to accept a monetary gift totaling \$800, as provided under the pre-authorization granted by City Council.

Action: This consent report was approved.

23. Beaver Meadow 2025 Senior Membership rate correction report from the Deputy City Manager - Finance. (Pulled from consent by Councilor Brown.)

Action: Item was pulled from consent for discussion.

24. Report from the City Solicitor regarding the Assistant City Prosecutor Position.

Action: This consent report was approved.

25. Report from the Fire Chief, on behalf of the Public Safety Board, recommending that City staff explore potential alternatives for best practices for waste collection within Concord's unhoused community.

Action: This consent report was approved.

26. Report from the General Services Director regarding the Hall Street Wastewater Treatment Plant Dewatering Project Change of Scope.

Action: This consent report was approved.

Consent Resolutions

27. Resolution authorizing the City Manager to apply for and accept up to \$45,000 from the NH Department of Environmental Services for Household Hazardous Waste Collection and Special Project grants; together with a report from the General Services Director.

Action: This consent resolution was approved.

28. Resolution appropriating the sum of \$9,546.17 in funding for overtime/backfill costs associated with trench rescue training and accepting the sum of \$9,546.17 from the Department of Safety Homeland Security Grant Program for this purpose; together with a report from the Deputy Fire Chief.

Action: This consent resolution was approved.

29. Resolution authorizing the City Manager to apply for and accept grants prior to City Council authorization when the grant is deemed to be in the best interest of the City by the City Manager; together with a report from the Deputy City Manager - Finance.

Action: This consent resolution was approved.

30. Resolution repurposing the sum of \$35,311.23 from the Fiscal Year 2023 Police Department Elevator Replacement subproject (CIP #484) and \$47,800.99 from the Fiscal Year 2024 Police Department Roof Replacement subproject (CIP #484) for use in the Library Facility Improvements project (CIP #551); together with a report from the General Services Director.

Action: This consent resolution was approved.

Appointments

31. City Manager's Proposed Appointments to the Heritage Commission: Carol Durgy Brooks and Dr. Bryant Tolles, Jr.

Action: These appointments were approved.

End of Consent Agenda

Public Hearings

- 32A. Resolution appropriating the sum of \$500,000 for the construction of a new skatepark at Kiwanis Riverfront Park (CIP #60) and accepting the sum of \$500,000 of Land and Water Conservation Fund grant funds for the same purpose; together with a report from the Parks & Recreation Director. (Public testimony submitted.)

Action: City Manager Aspell indicated that in FY 2022 funds were approved to create a new Park Master Plan for Kiwanis Riverside Park and the Everett Arena. In late FY 2022, a new park master plan was approved and in FY 2023 funds were approved by City Council for the design and permitting of the complex. In the new park master plan, there is a new larger skateboard park in the general area of the former fire training area. At their November 2023 meeting, City Council authorized the City Manager to apply for a Land and Water Conservation Grant for \$500,000. This report and resolution are to accept the grant award of \$500,000. The Land and Water Conservation Grant has a 50/50 match requirement. The City will be working with the nonprofit Concord Skatepark Association and community partners to help raise the match requirement. City Manager Aspell asked City Council to accept the grant award, noting that the project would not be moving forward with construction until all matching dollars are received. The City has four years to complete the project and it can be extended by an additional year with agreement by LWCF. As part of the acceptance of the grant award, the City will be required to comply with the Buy America/Build America requirements and land must be used forever for public recreation purposes.

There being no discussion, Mayor Champlin opened the public hearing. There being no public testimony, the Mayor declared the hearing closed.

- 32B. Resolution appropriating the sum of \$405,000 for Police Department retention payments for sworn police officers and authorizing the use of General Fund balance of \$405,000; together with a report from the Deputy Chief of Police.

Action: City Manager Aspell indicated that this appropriation is part two of a temporary police officer retention program as a stopgap measure to reduce future employee loss. This retention program will aim to reward current sworn employees who have taken on a drastically increased workload during this staffing crisis. This retention program is designed to slow the turnover rate which will allow the Department time to recover from its current staffing crisis.

General Council discussion took place regarding the effectiveness of the first Police Department retention appropriation. Chief Brad Osgood addressed Council indicating that he felt the first appropriation reduced the number of Police Officers lost in comparison to previous years.

Mayor Champlin opened the public hearing.

Alan Robidas, Ward Five resident, small business owner, and Battalion Chief within the Concord Fire Department, representing himself and not the Fire Department, spoke in strong support of the appropriation.

Councilor Sekou spoke about the need to make additional retention changes to ensure better work life balance for employees.

There being no additional public testimony, the Mayor declared the hearing closed.

- 32C. Resolution appropriating the sum of \$160,000 in the General Fund as a transfer out to capital for structure preservation of the Concord Stables, authorizing the use of General Fund Unassigned Fund Balance for this purpose, appropriating the sum of \$160,000 in the Concord Stables Redevelopment Project (CIP #664), and authorizing the use of \$160,000 for this purpose as a transfer from the General Fund; together with a report from the Director of Special Projects & Strategic Initiatives.

Action: City Manager Aspell indicated that the Concord Stables Building is located at 111.5 Warren Street. The facility was constructed circa 1905 to serve as the City's Department of Public Works. Following the completion of the Combined Operations and Maintenance Facility (the "COMF") located at 311 North State Street in 1990, the Stables Building and associated land were conveyed to the Concord School District in the mid-1990s, who, in turn, developed the property into a parking lot to support Concord High School.

On November 29, 2021, the City reacquired the historic former stables building, together with 0.52 acres of land and nine parking spaces, from the Concord School District, for the purpose of redevelopment. Potential uses include a museum and storage facility for horse drawn wagons, carriages, as well as other vehicles which were manufactured by the former Abbot Downing Company. The Abbot Downing Company was based in Concord, and was famous for its iconic "Concord Coach"; a horse drawn stage coach which was instrumental in overland transportation during the 19th and early 20th centuries.

The City desires to renovate the former Concord Stables building for adaptive reuse, which will initially include the removal or mitigation of hazardous materials prior to construction. Due to the presence of hazardous materials, the site is classified as a "Brownfield", and is eligible for potential grant funds from the State and Federal governments. In accordance with recent City Council approvals, City Administration will be applying for clean-up grants through the US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA); however, if awarded, funding will not be available until Fiscal Year 2026. In the meantime, the building is vacant and deteriorating due to aging roof materials, as well as vandalism.

City Staff regularly monitors the building, and has identified roof leaks that could lead to further issues in the building, including mold. In addition, City staff has had run-ins with trespassers that regularly break into the building to use the space. Staff has concerns for the potential impacts to the historic building from this illicit use. Staff requests funding to place security cameras and a new wireless fire alarm, and for improvements to the entry points, including new doors and plywood at windows, to deter break-ins. In addition, interim roofing repairs will reduce further deterioration pending additional funding for hazardous material mitigation and renovation.

Councilor Brown asked for an accounting of the \$160,000. Deputy City Manager Matt Walsh indicated that the City has two on-call construction managers/general

contractors that were selected through a competitive process, and further stated that the pricing was derived from conversations with those contractors.

The Mayor declared the hearing open. There being no public testimony, Mayor Champlin declared the hearing closed.

- 32D. Resolution appropriating the sum of \$73,000 for the purpose of off-setting personnel costs for the Police Department to assign an officer to the Drug Task Force and accept the sum of \$73,000 in grant funding from the State of New Hampshire Attorney General's Drug Task Force for this purpose; together with a report from the Police Department.

Action: Deputy Chief of Police John Thomas addressed Council indicating that, if approved, this appropriation would off-set costs associated with the Police Department assigning a sworn officer to the Drug Task Force for the time frame of the date of appointment through 6/30/2025.

General Council discussion took place regarding the appropriation and this program. Council members noted their appreciation of the years of service for Deputy Thomas who will be retiring from the City of Concord after 31 plus years of service at the end of December, 2024.

The Mayor declared the hearing open. There being no public testimony, the Mayor declared the hearing closed.

- 32E. Ordinance amending the Code of Ordinances; Title II, Traffic Code; Chapter 18, Parking, Article 18-1, Stopping, Standing and Parking, Section 18-1-6 (a) Schedule I, Chapter 18, Parking, Article 18-1, Stopping, Standing and Parking, Section 18-1-8, Parking Time Limited in Designated Places, Schedule III, and Chapter 18, Parking; Article 18.1, Stopping, Standing and Parking; Schedule VII, Bus and Taxicab Stands to modify parking requirements and bus stop locations on Canal Street and Fisherville Road in Penacook; together with a report from the Assistant Director of Community Development.

Action: Assistant Director of Community Development Tim Thompson addressed Council, providing an overview of the changes as outlined within the ordinance. Mr. Thompson indicated that the first proposed ordinance change establishes a bus stop on Canal Street, no-parking areas and 10 hour parking time limits for both the parking lot public spaces and the on-street spaces on Canal Street. He further noted that the second change within the ordinance, per a TPAC recommendation, is the relocation of a bus stop across from the Tanager Way project on Fisherville Road.

Mayor Champlin opened the public hearing. There being no public testimony, the Mayor declared the hearing closed.

- 32F. Ordinance Amending the Code of Ordinances, Title V, Administrative Code; Chapter 31, Purchasing and Contract Procedure, Article 31-1, Purchasing Procedure, Section 31-1-3, Purchasing Procedures; together with a report from the Purchasing Manager.

Action: City Manager Aspell provided an overview of the report before Council, indicating that purchasing dollar amount thresholds were last amended in 2017. He further noted, that since that time, there has been significant change in market conditions with a steep rise in prices for supplies, materials, equipment and services. City Manager Aspell noted that City departments often find it difficult to obtain three quotes from qualified service providers. Increasing the purchasing threshold would save time and money for user departments and purchasing staff. City Manager Aspell indicated that several other NH municipalities similar in size to Concord successfully use higher thresholds for these types of purchases.

Mayor Champlin opened the public hearing. There being no public testimony, the Mayor declared the hearing closed.

- 32G. Resolution authorizing the City Manager to submit an application in an amount of up to \$25,000, appropriating the sum of \$25,000 to conduct a planning and feasibility study for Families in Transition to perform an analysis of potential space for additional low-income housing at 9 Odd Fellows Avenue and 5 Market Lane, and accepting the sum of \$25,000 in Community Development Block Grant funds for this purpose; together with a report from the Assistant Director of Community Development.

Action: Public hearings for item 32G and 32H were held in conjunction.

Assistant Director of Community Development Tim Thompson addressed Council, indicating that Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds are available to municipalities through the NH Community Development Finance Authority. Up to \$500,000 annually is available for economic development projects, up to \$500,000 for public facility projects, up to \$500,000 for housing projects, and up to \$500,000 for emergency activities. Up to \$25,000 is available per planning study grant. All projects must directly benefit a majority of low and moderate income persons.

This is a proposed application to the Community Development Finance Authority for up to \$25,000 in CDBG Planning Study Funds. Of the grant funds, up to \$3,500 will be retained by the City for administrative costs associated with the project, up to \$21,500 of the funds will be subgranted to Families in Transition to determine the feasibility of renovating unused/underutilized community and commercial space at Families in Transitions' properties at 9 Odd Fellows Avenue and 5 Market Lane into two to three additional living units.

Mr. Thompson indicated that, in terms of the anti-displacement and relocation policy statement and procedures, this plan outlines measures, under the Uniform Relocation Act, required for CDBG projects that involve any displacement or relocation of persons (or businesses). If the City were to undertake a CDBG project which involved displacement or relocation they would follow this plan. The plan outlines the measures they would take to find comparable, suitable housing for persons (or businesses) displaced or relocated. No displacement or relocation is anticipated as this is a Planning Study.

Mayor Champlin opened the public hearing. There being no public testimony, the Mayor declared the hearing closed.

32H. Resolution adopting an Anti-Displacement and Relocation Policy Statement and Procedures in support of the City's Community Development Block Grant application to the New Hampshire Community Development Finance Authority to support Families in Transition's Planning Grant to perform an analysis of potential space for additional low-income housing at 9 Odd Fellows Avenue and 5 Market Lane; together with a report from the Assistant Director of Community Development.

Action: Public hearings for item 32G and 32H were held in conjunction.

Public Hearing Action

33. Resolution appropriating the sum of \$500,000 for the construction of a new skatepark at Kiwanis Riverfront Park (CIP #60) and accepting the sum of \$500,000 of Land and Water Conservation Fund grant funds for the same purpose; together with a report from the Parks & Recreation Director. (Public testimony submitted.)

Action: Councilor Fennessy moved approval. The motion was duly seconded by Councilor Kretovic and passed with no dissenting votes.

34. Resolution appropriating the sum of \$405,000 for Police Department retention payments for sworn police officers and authorizing the use of General Fund balance of \$405,000; together with a report from the Deputy Chief of Police.

Action: Councilor Grady Sexton moved approval of the resolution. Councilor Brown indicated she was recusing herself from voting on this item, as her spouse is a Concord Police Officer. The motion was duly seconded by Councilor Kretovic.

Councilor Fennessy indicated his support for the motion while noting he feels additional measures, other than continued financial bonuses, should be considered specific to recruitment and retention as a means to ensure the City attracts and retains candidates who are going to be great long-term officers in Concord. Councilor Fennessy further stated he feels like this conversation should begin with the Public Safety Board.

Councilor Keach spoke in support of Councilor Fennessy's comments, indicating he also agrees that additional improvements specific to recruitment and retention should be considered.

Councilor Grady Sexton, Chair of the Public Safety Board, indicated that, at their last meeting, conversations began about addressing recruitment and retention efforts more holistically for both Police and Fire employees.

Councilor Sekou noted his agreement with continued conversations regarding recruitment and retention improvements for the City's Police and Fire Departments.

Councilor Kurtz spoke in support of continued conversations specific to recruitment and retention improvements for staff within the Police Department. Councilor Kurtz requested that the Public Safety Board, in conjunction with the Police Department, present some sort of report to Council specific to these ongoing discussions. Councilor Grady Sexton indicated that, on an annual basis, the Police and Fire Departments present annual reports to both the Committee and the City Council, and indicated that updates specific to improvements in recruitment and retention would be provided within those reports, likely in March or April.

Following additional discussion about the appropriation, as well as discussion in support of citywide recruitment and retention improvements, the motion to approve the resolution passed with no dissenting votes.

Action: The motion was duly seconded and passed with no dissenting votes.

35. Resolution appropriating the sum of \$160,000 in the General Fund as a transfer out to capital for structure preservation of the Concord Stables, authorizing the use of General Fund Unassigned Fund Balance for this purpose, appropriating the sum of \$160,000 in the Concord Stables Redevelopment Project (CIP #664), and authorizing the use of \$160,000 for this purpose as a transfer from the General Fund; together with a report from the Director of Special Projects & Strategic Initiatives.

Action: Councilor Kretovic moved approval of the resolution. The motion was duly seconded by Councilor Kurtz and passed with one dissenting vote.

36. Resolution appropriating the sum of \$73,000 for the purpose of off-setting personnel costs for the Police Department to assign an officer to the Drug Task Force and accept the sum of \$73,000 in grant funding from the State of New Hampshire Attorney General's Drug Task Force for this purpose; together with a report from the Police Department.

Action: Councilor Kretovic moved approval of the resolution. Councilor Brown recused. The motion was duly seconded by Councilor Todd and passed with no dissenting votes.

37. Ordinance amending the Code of Ordinances; Title II, Traffic Code; Chapter 18, Parking, Article 18-1, Stopping, Standing and Parking, Section 18-1-6 (a) Schedule I, Chapter 18, Parking, Article 18-1, Stopping, Standing and Parking, Section 18-1-8, Parking Time Limited in Designated Places, Schedule III, and Chapter 18, Parking; Article 18.1, Stopping, Standing and Parking; Schedule VII, Bus and Taxicab Stands to modify parking requirements and bus stop locations on Canal Street and Fisherville Road in Penacook; together with a report from the Assistant Director of Community Development.

Action: Councilor Todd moved approval. The motion was duly seconded by Councilor Kretovic and passed with no dissenting votes.

38. Ordinance Amending the Code of Ordinances, Title V, Administrative Code; Chapter 31, Purchasing and Contract Procedure, Article 31-1, Purchasing Procedure, Section 31-1-3, Purchasing Procedures; together with a report from the Purchasing Manager.

Action: Councilor Fennessy moved approval. The motion was duly seconded by Councilor McNamara and passed with no dissenting votes.

39. Resolution authorizing the City Manager to submit an application in an amount of up to \$25,000, appropriating the sum of \$25,000 to conduct a planning and feasibility study for Families in Transition to perform an analysis of potential space for additional low-income housing at 9 Odd Fellows Avenue and 5 Market Lane, and accepting the sum of \$25,000 in Community Development Block Grant funds for this purpose; together with a report from the Assistant Director of Community Development.

Action: Councilor Kretovic moved approval. The motion was duly seconded by Councilor McNamara and passed with no dissenting votes.

40. Resolution adopting an Anti-Displacement and Relocation Policy Statement and Procedures in support of the City's Community Development Block Grant application to the New Hampshire Community Development Finance Authority to support Families in Transition's Planning Grant to perform an analysis of potential space for additional low-income housing at 9 Odd Fellows Avenue and 5 Market Lane; together with a report from the Assistant Director of Community Development.

Action: Councilor Kretovic moved approval. The motion was duly seconded by Councilor McNamara and passed with no dissenting votes.

Reports

41. Resolution authorizing the City Manager to accept a donation of real estate from Stephen Duprey / 2 Granite Place, LLC, located at Rumford Street and Penacook Street; together with a report from the Deputy City Manager - Development. (Not previously submitted.)

Action: Deputy City Manager - Development Matt Walsh provided a brief overview of this item, indicating that Mr. Duprey has offered to donate 27.92+/- acres of land located at the intersection of Rumford and Penacook Streets. As part of his offer, Mr. Duprey has requested that the City eventually divest of the donated property, or a portion thereof, for development. Mr. Walsh indicated that prior to accepting the donation, title for the subject property would need to be reviewed to determine if it is acceptable to the City. Mr. Walsh further indicated that due to certain income tax considerations, the transaction must be completed on or before December 31, 2024. Mr. Walsh indicated that if the transaction could not be completed by year end, the transaction would likely need to wait until this time next year.

Following brief discussion, Councilor Keach moved approval of the resolution. The motion was duly seconded by Councilor McNamara and passed with no dissenting votes.

New Business**Unfinished Business**

42. Resolution appropriating the sum of \$10,308,000 in the Beaver Meadow Golf Course Club House & Buildings Project (CIP #107) for the construction of a new facility and related improvements, and authorizing the issuance of bonds and notes in the sum of \$10,308,000 for this purpose; together with a report from the Deputy City Manager - Finance. (Presentation and proforma submitted.) (Public testimony received.) (Revised presentation submitted.) (Additional public testimony received.)

Consideration of Items Pulled from the Consent Agenda

23. Beaver Meadow 2025 Senior Membership rate correction report from the Deputy City Manager - Finance. (Pulled from consent by Councilor Brown.)

Action: Councilor Brown spoke in strong support of leaving the 2025 Senior membership rates as approved by City Council in August 2024, and not approving the report which suggests reducing them by \$100 annually.

Councilor Kretovic moved approval of the report. The motion was duly seconded by Councilor Keach and passed with a roll call vote.

Yes: 11 - Mayor Champlin, Councilor Fennessy, Councilor Foote, Councilor Grady Sexton, Councilor Keach, Councilor Kretovic, Councilor McNamara, Councilor Schlosser, Councilor Schultz, Councilor Sekou, and Councilor Todd

No: 3 - Councilor Brown, Councilor Horne, and Councilor Kurtz

Excused: 1 - Councilor McLaughlin

Consideration of Suspense Items

Sus1 Referral to the Transportation Policy Advisory Committee

Communication from Alissa Jelley requesting consideration be given for traffic safety improvements at the intersection of Broadway and South Main Streets in Concord.

Action: Councilor Kretovic moved to suspend Council rules and consider an item not previously advertised. The motion was duly seconded by Councilor Keach and passed with no dissenting votes.

Councilor Schlosser spoke in support of this referral and consideration of traffic improvements at this intersection.

Councilor Todd suggested that, in addition to referring this item to the Transportation Policy Advisory Committee, consideration be given to also referring it to the Traffic Operations Committee.

Councilor Keach moved approval of the referral to the Transportation Policy Advisory Committee and the Traffic Operations Committee. The motion was duly seconded by Councilor Kurtz and passed with no dissenting votes.

Sus 2 Proposed Agreement between Granite United Way and the City of Concord.

Action: Councilor Schlosser moved to suspend Council rules and consider an item not previously advertised. The motion was duly seconded by Councilor Kurtz and passed with no dissenting votes.

Mayor Champlin spoke in support of this agreement between the Granite United Way and the City of Concord to support the Steering Committee on Concord's Plan to End Homelessness to provide fiscal sponsorship services for purposes of supporting initiatives of the Committee and the hiring of a full-time project manager to work in a joint cooperative effort in combating the sources and impacts of homelessness within the City of Concord.

Councilor Schlosser spoke in support of this agreement and encouraged members of City Council to support this item.

Following brief Council discussion, Councilor Kurtz moved to approve the proposed agreement. The motion was duly seconded and passed with no dissenting votes.

Sus3 Non-Public Meeting Minutes

Action: Mayor Champlin asked that consideration be made to consider an item not previously advertised, explaining that consideration should be made to unseal and approve non-public meeting minutes relating to discussions between the City of Concord and Kevin Lacasse of New England Family Homes regarding the Monitor Way Project.

Councilor Schultz moved to suspend the rules and consider suspense item 3. The motion was duly seconded by Councilor Grady Sexton and passed with no dissenting votes.

Councilor Todd moved to unseal and approve non-public meeting minutes relating to discussions between the City of Concord and Kevin Lacasse of New England Family Homes regarding the Monitor Way Project during the following non-public meetings: September 12, 2022, November 14, 2022, December 12, 2022, June 12, 2023, August 14, 2023, September 11, 2023, June 10, 2024 and October 15, 2024. The motion was duly seconded by Councilor Fennessy and passed with no dissenting votes.

Comments, Requests by Mayor, City Councilors

Councilor Kretovic provided an update on snow making at the Beaver Meadow Golf Course reminding residents that cross county skiing, ice skating and snow shoeing are all winter activities residents can enjoy at the Golf Course.

Councilor Todd reminded residents that the new Penacook Branch of the Concord Public Library is now open at 76 Community Drive. Councilor Todd indicated that fencing around the perimeter of the construction site of the new Canal Street Riverfront Park is coming down sometime next week. He further stated that on Monday, December 16, 2024, at noon, there will be a River Park walk which will provide a tour of the new park. Councilor Todd wished all residents Happy Holidays.

Councilor Horne spoke about the great programming options now available at the new Penacook Branch Library.

Councilor McNamara noted that the recent Parade of Lights was a welcome new addition to seasonal downtown activities within the City.

Councilor Brown plugged the movie, the Ride Ahead, now playing at the Red River Theatre, noting that it was produced by Concord resident Sam Habib and his father Dan.

Councilor Kurtz thanked the General Services Department for their work specific to snow removal, while reminding citizens to pay attention to parking bans while traveling safe during winter storms.

Councilor Grady Sexton reminded families that the Concord Parks & Recreation Department has open gym hours during the upcoming school vacation week.

Councilor Schlosser noted that he was holding a quarterly ward seven resident meeting at the West Street Ward House on December 10, 2024 at 7:00 PM.

Councilor Sekou expressed his appreciation and support of the Police Department referencing his recent participation in the Department's ride along program.

Councilor Foote thanked soon to be retiring City employees John Thomas, Jim Major and Brian Levesque on their years of service to the City, congratulating them on their upcoming retirements.

Mayor Champlin recognized and thanked Concord resident Brian Blackden for the job he did organizing the recent Holiday Parade on the Heights.

Mayor Champlin spoke in support of the Parade of Lights event held on Main Street, thanking Jessica Martin of Intown Concord for organizing the event.

Mayor Champlin updated members of City Council on the City's DEIJB process, noting that the City received four proposals in the second round of the RFQ. One was from a NH consortium of three organizations, the other three were from out of state.

The DEIJB executive committee (the Mayor, Mayor Pro Tem Sekou and Councilor Kretovic) selected three finalists, developed a series of questions to be asked of each finalist, and directed staff to conduct interviews as is standard procedure in vetting vendors. The same questions were asked of each vendor in the same order. After the interviews, the executive committee met with the City Manager to review the staff evaluation and ranking of each vendor.

The DEIJB core/executive committee unanimously selected Racial Equity Group (REG) of Irving, Texas, as our first choice. Racial Equity Group has a team that has worked together for several years with a number of communities, including the Cities of Melrose and Newton, Massachusetts, the Towns of Lincoln and Melrose, Massachusetts, and the Town of Windsor, Vermont. Racial Equity Group is also currently working with the Massachusetts Municipal Association to conduct a DEI maturity index of the 351 municipalities throughout Massachusetts.

Upon their selection, Racial Equity Group's sealed bid for the project was opened and was found to be consistent with the target set in the RFQ; subsequently, City staff negotiated a contract with REG.

The full DEIJB committee is scheduled to meet on December 10th with Bird Guess, President and CEO of REG, to familiarize themselves with REG and its facilitation process.

Mayor Champlin indicated that he would like to make clear his position on the recently-erected display on the City Plaza that has been in the news.

He indicated that he was disappointed that the City did in fact support issuing a permit to the Satanic Temple for this holiday display, though he understand their reasoning. He stated that, as the Council knows, his preference was to deny the permit and accept the risk of the threatened lawsuit.

Mayor Champlin further stated that he opposed the permit because he believe this request was made not in the interest of promoting religious equity, but in order to drive an anti-religious political agenda. He further stated that he does not respond well to legal extortion. Mayor Champlin stated he did not appreciate that this application was apparently endorsed by a State Representative from Newmarket who directed the Satanic Temple's request to the State House, which in turn deflected the request to the City. He noted that some on social media have celebrated the Satanic Temple's display as a victory for religious pluralism and a reflection of our growing diversity as a community,

indicating his disagreement with that. He further stated that he felt this was about an out-of-state organization cynically promoting its national agenda at the expense of the Concord community.

Mayor Champlin noted that, by definition, the Satanic Temple is not a religion. The Oxford English Dictionary defines "religion" as a "Belief in or acknowledgement of some superhuman power or powers (esp. a god or gods)" On the contrary, the stated purpose of the Satanic Temple, which its website says has been in existence all of 11 years, is to "preserve and advance secularism," which is in fact the antithesis of religion. Religious pluralism is, indeed, alive and well in Concord. Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism and other world religions that have served millions over millennia-are important parts of our community fabric. Most have made significant and deeply appreciated contributions to this city in community service and spiritual care. So if there is divisiveness in this issue, it is deliberately generated by the Satanic Temple in an attempt to promote its agenda during the holiday season. It's Seven Tenets, many of them commendable, are a smoke screen to provide an air of legitimacy for its deliberately provocative and disturbing effigy. In fact, considering its impact on Concord's holiday spirit, a more appropriate choice of effigy for the Satanic Temple would have been the Grinch.

In light of the issues raised by this organization's application, Mayor Champlin noted that, in the near future, he would be appointing an ad hoc committee to review City policies on unattended displays on City Plaza, with a goal of having a defined policy in place before next December.

Comments, Requests by the City Manager

Adjournment

Action: There being no additional Council business, Councilor Foote moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:08 PM. The motion was duly seconded and passed with no dissenting votes.

Information

Inf1 September 17, 2024 Traffic Operations Committee Meeting Minutes.

Action: Information item received and filed.

Inf2 September 26, 2024 Transportation Policy Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes.

Action: Information item received and filed.

Inf3 September 30, 2024 Parking Committee Draft Meeting Minutes.

Action: Information item received and filed.

Inf4 October 1, 2024 Architectural Design Review Committee Meeting Minutes.

Action: Information item received and filed.

Inf5 October 3, 2024 Heritage Commission Meeting Minutes.

Action: Information item received and filed.

Inf6 October 9, 2024 Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes.

Action: Information item received and filed.

Inf7 October 9, 2024 Trails Subcommittee Meeting Minutes.

Action: Information item received and filed.

Inf8 October 15, 2024 Committee for Concord's Plan to End Homelessness Draft Meeting Minutes.

Action: Information item received and filed.

Inf9 October 16, 2024 Joint work session Planning Board and ADRC Meeting Minutes.

Action: Information item received and filed.

Inf10 October 16, 2024 Planning Board Meeting Minutes.

Action: Information item received and filed.

Inf11 November 4, 2024 Concord Public Library Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes.

Action: Information item received and filed.

Inf12 November 14, 2024 Joint Golf Course Advisory Committee and Ad-Hoc Beaver Meadow Building Committee Draft Meeting Minutes.

Action: Information item received and filed.

Inf13 November 18, 2024 Fiscal Policy Advisory Committee Draft Meeting Minutes.

Action: Information item received and filed.

Inf14 November 20, 2024 Community Development Advisory Committee Draft Meeting Minutes.

Action: Information item received and filed.

A true copy: I attest:

*Janice Bonenfant
City Clerk*