



# City of Concord

## City Council

### Meeting Minutes - Draft

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Thursday, June 25, 2015

6:00 PM

City Council Chambers  
37 Green Street  
Concord, NH 03301

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1. Call to Order.

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Roll Call.

**Present:** 15 - Councilor J. Allen Bennett, Councilor Candace Bouchard, Mayor Jim Bouley, Councilor Byron Champlin, Councilor Mark Coen, Councilor Amanda Grady Sexton, Councilor Allan Herschlag, Councilor Fred Keach, Councilor Gail Matson, Councilor Jan McClure, Councilor Keith Nyhan, Councilor Dan St. Hilaire, Councilor Stephen Shurtleff, Councilor Brent Todd, and Councilor Robert Werner

4. Agenda overview by the Mayor.

#### **June 25, 2015 Public Hearings**

- 5A. Resolution fixing and determining the amount of money to be appropriated by the City of Concord for the fiscal year 2016 ending June 30, 2016.

There being no Council objection, the titles for public hearing items A through F were read together.

The Mayor opened the public hearings for items A through F.

#### **Public Testimony**

Peter Bloomfield, Concord Steam, encouraged Council to hold off on the conversion from steam to gas until they have an opportunity to make the rebuild of their existing plant a reality. He looks forward to working out their long term steam contract with city staff.

Mayor Bouley read in the paper that Concord Steam was looking to invest \$17 million into the new facility. He inquired whether they are investing anything into the distribution system. Mr. Bloomfield responded that there will be some upgrades and repairs to the distribution system.

Ellen Groh, Concord Coalition to End Homelessness Executive Director, indicated that the money they are seeking from the city would be used to increase their hours at the resource center and have a case

worker on duty the whole time to be able to problem solve to help find a place for somebody that evening. She noted her concerns with the city not having a cold weather shelter stating that they are advocating for it but since it doesn't seem likely, they have to ramp up all the other components to keep people safe this winter. She asked for Council's support of the \$10,000 being requested so that they can increase their case worker support.

Councilor Nyhan inquired as to how many hours they foresee the \$10,000 covering for case workers. Ms. Groh responded that she believes it is six months of an additional 20 hours per week; they are currently opened 9 to 11 and they could be opened 9 to 5 from November to April.

Councilor St. Hilaire asked what the entire budget is for the whole program that is being run. Ms. Groh replied that their budget is in constant growth; they have almost doubled their budget from last year. She stated that they are currently looking at a \$200,000 budget - they are at a time of great growth.

Councilor St. Hilaire inquired as to how much of this has already been fundraised or that they have received grants for. Ms. Groh explained that they had a superfest that was \$30,000; they are waiting on \$70,000 worth of fundraising; they received \$25,000 from Granite United Way; and they received \$25,000 from the NH Charitable Foundation.

Councilor Herschlag asked if they look to house those with a Concord connection first. Ms. Groh indicated that they have a list of 25 people that have been homeless within Concord for over a year (long term); it's based upon length of time homeless and how vulnerable one is. Their mission is to house the most chronically homeless people first.

Councilor McClure thanked the Concord Coalition to End Homelessness for all they do for the homeless. She asked what the percentage is for those that are in the category of potentially having other options in cold weather. Ms. Groh responded that this is hard to answer because when there was a cold weather shelter, nobody tried hard to find another alternative. She explained that the individuals working at the cold weather shelter were all volunteers and saw their mission as providing a place for anyone who needed it and didn't see their mission as being case workers who would do diversion. Ms. Groh stated that this would be a shift for Concord; all of the other agencies that are working on ending homelessness talk of shelter diversion as being an important piece that has been overlooked by shelters.

Councilor McClure asked if they are basing their program on the experience elsewhere. Ms. Groh responded yes. Councilor McClure asked if they know whether the population here has alternate options. Ms. Groh responded no and feels that the populations in the cold weather shelters have shifted. She doesn't have the statistics but the number who stayed for the first time this year would be very high - a lot of people just pass through.

Councilor McClure asked whether the services that they intend to provide for the diversion program will be geared towards the Concord residents or for all that come. Ms. Groh responded that they serve everyone who comes through the door.

Councilor Champlin noted his understanding is that the reason that the housing first is focusing on the long term homeless is because those are the individuals who take up the largest bed time in the cold weather shelter, the greatest use of emergency services at the hospital, and the greatest police services. Ms. Groh responded yes explaining that this is the reason that they and the federal government are focusing on the long term homeless people; they cost the most to any community.

Councilor Keach questioned whether they currently receive any federal funding. Ms. Groh responded no indicating that they have applied for state funding but haven't been able to apply for federal funding.

David Frydman, resident and board member for the Concord Coalition to End Homelessness, indicated that there has been great progress on many of the steps identified within the plan. He noted that they currently have plans toward diversion and other options. He urged Council to support adding the additional \$10,000 to help the homeless within the community.

Councilor Herschlag indicated that it is his understanding that if housing first is going to work, the case worker component is extremely important and inquired whether this is something that they have funded already and that they anticipate having funding. He asked if the \$10,000, if approved, will go towards housing first model or go towards the resource center. Ms. Groh replied that the \$10,000 from the city would go towards the case worker that is currently at the resource center. She explained that the case worker for the housing first model is a separate person that will be hired once they hear about the two grants that they applied for this specific purpose.

Councilor Herschlag asked whether the housing first model be able to move forward if the funding wasn't available for the case worker. Ms. Groh responded no explaining that it can't move forward without a case worker.

Mayor Bouley questioned when they would be notified of the awarding of the grants. Ms. Groh responded that she believes it would be within the next one to four months.

Roy Schweiker, resident, feels that part of the \$10,000 being requested by the Concord Coalition to End Homelessness should be set aside for city services such as the rental of hotel rooms and for police and fire support/transport. He does feel that this is a much better plan than what was previously done. He feels that the city should repurpose the Parking Enforcement Officers for the downtown area by giving them rotating shifts all hours of the week. In regards to the red carpet crew, Mr. Schweiker feels that this is a mistake.

Honore Murenzi, New American Africans, spoke in support of funding \$10,000 to the New American Africans organization.

Alex ?? spoke in support of funding \$10,000 to the New American Africans

Becky Field, resident and New American Africans board member, spoke in support of New American

Africans for funding of \$10,000 from the City of Concord. She noted that Council has received letters of support from other individuals including Nastia Vanyukevych, Evelyn Aissa, Candace Dale and Jim Snodgrass. Ms. Field indicated that the staff and volunteers of New American Africans work long hours on a very limited budget to respond to the needs of refugees. She noted that New American Africans is an important part of making Concord a welcoming city and feels that they deserve the city's support of \$10,000.

Councilor Bouchard noted that Project Second Start has an ESL class and asked how the New American Africans ESL program is different from this one. Mr. Murenzi explained how Project Second Start's ESL class is different from theirs.

Councilor Herschlag inquired whether they are a 501(c)(3) organization. Mr. Murenzi responded that they recently became one.

Councilor Champlin pointed out that there are a lot of languages and dialects spoken in Africa inquiring whether the population of New American Africans in Concord is compact enough for all those languages/dialects to be represented. Mr. Murenzi responded that many Africans speak three to four languages within Africa so someone would be able to communicate.

Councilor Herschlag questioned what the money would be used for. Mr. Murenzi responded that it would be used towards transportation.

Mayor Bouley noted that Lutheran Social Services is now known as Ascentria and inquired as to how much they support the New American Africans financially. Mr. Murenzi responded that they do not support the organization financially and that they do not receive any dollars from them; Ascentria only provides money for settlement within the area.

City Manager Tom Aspell indicated that there are 15 to 20 families the Congo that are going to be arriving in Concord in 2015. He clarified that Ascentria assist the families when they first arrive here for a limited period of time, for approximately three months. Thereafter, they do not provide the assistance.

Ms. Field explained that Ascentria Care Alliance is one of the settlement agencies that the state department works with through the UN bringing in refugees. She stated that New American Africans is supporting those families that are past that three month time period.

There being no further public testimony, the Mayor closed the hearings.

- 5B. Resolution amending the amount of money to be appropriated by the City of Concord for the fiscal year 2016 ending June 30, 2016. (Not previously distributed)

Public hearing for this item taken with public hearing item A.

- 5C. Resolution for the bonded projects within the Capital Budget for Fiscal Year 2016

hereby authorizing and approving the expenditure of \$16,894,425 and authorizing the issuance of \$16,894,425 in bonds and notes for various capital projects. (Revised resolution submitted)

Public hearing for this item taken with public hearing item A.

- 5D. Resolution for annual capital closeout and repurposing of capital projects funds; together with report from the Senior Accountant. (Revised page three of the resolution submitted)

Public hearing for this item taken with public hearing item A.

- 5E. Ordinance amending the Code of Ordinances, Title I, General code; Chapter 1, Government Organization, amending Schedule I of Article 1-5, Fees, Fines and Penalties, Water Rates. (Revised Ordinance submitted)

Public hearing for this item taken with public hearing item A.

- 5F. Ordinance amending the Code of Ordinances, Title I, General Code; Chapter 1, Government Organization, amending Schedule I of Article 1-5, Fees Fines and Penalties, Sewer Rates. (Revised Ordinance submitted)

Public hearing for this item taken with public hearing item A.

### **June 25, 2015 Public Hearing Action**

6. Resolution fixing and determining the amount of money to be appropriated by the City of Concord for the fiscal year 2016 ending June 30, 2016.

Councilor Todd moved approval. The motion was duly seconded.

Councilor Herschlag stated that this budget vote is extremely frustrating for him and feels that voting for this budget continues down the path of shifting more and more costs to the residential property owner; voting against the budget only delays the inevitable and will add even greater costs due to delayed maintenance in the future. He noted his concern with the state continuing to downshift costs to the communities. He indicated that he feels that using special tax districts to jump start redevelopment has its place; what the city can not afford to do is create special tax districts and incentives when there is no return to the community, school district and country for an extended period of time. Councilor Herschlag stated that, as a City Council, they must be more cognizant of how projects they approve effect the taxes their community pays. He noted that City Administration does an excellent job of managing the city's tax dollars and putting together a responsible budget. He believes that as they move into a new fiscal year that they need to look at a new model to determine when it is appropriate for the city to become involved in a project. He stated that he has no choice but to do the responsible thing and vote to approve this

budget but feels in the future when they approve projects that invest public dollars in public private partnerships it is essential that they not only consider the curb appeal of these projects, but whether they will actually contribute to expanding their tax base; public dollars spent on economic development must benefit all of the stakeholders. (Full written testimony on file at the City Clerk's Office)

Councilor St. Hilaire moved to place \$10,000 into the budget directed towards the Concord Coalition to End Homelessness. The motion was duly seconded.

Councilor St. Hilaire indicated that Council has always appropriated \$10,000 for related items directly towards housing for the winter. He stated that he'd be remiss if he didn't say that the Mayor has personally done so much work getting other private donors to help out. He noted that it's moving to another phase which doesn't mean that they just walk away from their responsibilities as members of a community and of a governing body.

Councilor Nyhan suggested that they remove \$2,500 each from the Friends Program and the Edna McKenna House and move it to the Coalition to End Homelessness and also remove \$2,500 from the city's contingency fund for a total of \$7,500 for the coalition. He suggested removing another \$7,500 from the city's contingency to fund the NAA.

Mayor Bouley indicated that they had set aside \$10,000 for the past three to four years for the cold weather emergency shelter. He believes that what Councilor St. Hilaire was asking for in his motion was to take that and give it directly to the Concord Coalition to End Homelessness for the purposes of diversion to help those individuals who might the short term stays find places to go while the long term individuals would be helped by the program identified for housing first. He noted that he doesn't think it's a good idea to take money away from the McKenna's House or the Friends Program. He pointed out that the Friends Program is the only organization in Merrimack County that serves families and their budget has been reduced by \$80,000 and they are in a very difficult situation. He appreciates the idea of trying to find dollars for the New American Africans as well.

Councilor St. Hilaire appreciates Councilor Nyhan's suggestion because it's always a good idea to try to see what they can do to shift funds in the budget to fund priorities. In this instance, he noted that it would take money from one pot just to give it to another pot. He spoke in support of funding the McKenna's House indicating that they not only help the homeless but also help individuals that have substance abuse problems.

Councilor Champlin noted his agreement with the Mayor and Councilor St. Hilaire. He stated that the homeless situation is so large that they really need to adopt a comprehensive approach; all the pieces are important.

Councilor Herschlag noted his concerns without the city's \$10,000 contingency and whether the city going to wind up providing additional funds therefore impacting the Human Services budget. He is not sure if that \$10,000 contingency should be moved out of the Council's budget or if they should add an additional \$10,000 for the coalition.

Mayor Bouley noted that they will comply with state law and fulfill their obligations but if the city can receive help from an organization such as the coalition to diverse some of these individuals, it forms a nice partnership with the city and the coalition.

Councilor Todd noted his support of Councilor St. Hilaire's motion. He feels that there is a priority/obligation that the Council has to work towards assisting in solving some of these crucial social problems.

Councilor Champlin clarified that there are homeless shelters in the city including the McKenna's House and the Friends Program shelter. He noted that what they are talking about is an overflow shelter in the winter; 34 beds have been used by the same long term homeless and the other 26 beds have been used by people passing through.

Councilor Werner supports Councilor St. Hilaire's motion. He feels that this is a moral obligation and feels that they need to figure out how to do more in terms of providing resources. He stated that it's a small investment to meet a very significant need.

Councilor Nyhan indicated that his suggestion was a way to try to fund both agencies. He doesn't want to exclude one at the expense of another. If they can fund the coalition for the full \$10,000 then count him in but he would also like to find a way to see if they can fund the other organization.

Councilor Shurtleff asked if he was correct that if Councilor St. Hilaire's motion prevails then the budget would be open to further amendment to fund another non-profit.

Mayor Bouley feels that moving \$10,000 to the Concord Coalition to End Homelessness is the responsible thing to do and does create an opportunity to continue to move forth with a plan and come closer to a goal of finding housing for people that need housing. Referencing 10-2, general overhead, within the budget, he

pointed out that the contingency line has \$100,000 and suggested that this can be reduced to \$95,000 to support the New American Africans with \$5,000. He realizes that \$5,000 is not the full amount that is being requested but feels that its a good start.

Councilor St. Hilaire's motion to place \$10,000 into the budget directed towards the Concord Coalition to End Homelessness passed with no dissenting votes.

Councilor Bouchard moved to place \$5,000 into the budget to the New American Africans. The motion was duly seconded and passed with no dissenting votes.

Councilor Herschlag noted that he is in support of Councilor Bouchard's motion.

Councilor Champlin noted that although there are not many of the African residents within his ward, the future of their children has been a great concern for him. He feels that this is a great step forward to help address those concerns.

Councilor Bouchard indicated that the New American Africans organization not only provides assistance to individuals arriving from Africa but the also provide assistance to people arriving into Concord from other countries.

Councilor Bouchard's motion to place \$5,000 into the budget to the New American Africans passed with no dissenting votes.

Citing Rule 6A, the Mayor indicated that he will not be voting on the Crisis Center of Central New Hampshire as well as Councilors Grady Sexton and Bouchard. Councilor Champlin will not be voting on dues for the Chamber of Commerce. Councilor Bennett will not be voting on the dues for the New Hampshire Municipal Association. Within the Prosecutor's budget, Councilor Grady Sexton will not be voting the AmeriCorps budget.

The motion to adopt the resolution passed with no dissenting votes.

7. Resolution amending the amount of money to be appropriated by the City of Concord for the fiscal year 2016 ending June 30, 2016. (Not previously distributed)

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

8. Resolution for the bonded projects within the Capital Budget for Fiscal Year 2016 hereby authorizing and approving the expenditure of \$16,894,425 and authorizing the issuance of \$16,894,425 in bonds and notes for various capital projects. (Revised resolution submitted)



Councilor St. Hilaire moved to substitute the revised resolution with the one previously submitted. The motion was duly seconded and passed with no dissenting votes.

Councilor St. Hilaire moved approval of the revised resolution. The motion was duly seconded and passed on a roll call vote.

**Yes:** 15 - Councilor Bennett, Councilor Bouchard, Mayor Bouley, Councilor Champlin, Councilor Coen, Councilor Grady Sexton, Councilor Herschlag, Councilor Keach, Councilor Matson, Councilor McClure, Councilor Nyhan, Councilor St. Hilaire, Councilor Shurtleff, Councilor Todd, and Councilor Werner

9. Resolution for annual capital closeout and repurposing of capital projects funds; together with report from the Senior Accountant. (Revised page three of the resolution submitted)

Councilor St. Hilaire moved to substitute page three of the resolution with the revised page three. The motion was duly seconded and passed with no dissenting votes.

Councilor Champlin moved approval of the resolution. The motion was duly seconded and passed with no dissenting votes.

10. Ordinance amending the Code of Ordinances, Title I, General code; Chapter 1, Government Organization, amending Schedule I of Article 1-5, Fees, Fines and Penalties, Water Rates. (Revised Ordinance submitted)

Councilor St. Hilaire moved to substitute the revised ordinance with the one previously submitted. The motion was duly seconded and passed with no dissenting votes.

Councilor St. Hilaire moved approval of the revised ordinance. The motion was duly seconded and passed with no dissenting votes.

11. Ordinance amending the Code of Ordinances, Title I, General Code; Chapter 1, Government Organization, amending Schedule I of Article 1-5, Fees Fines and Penalties, Sewer Rates. (Revised Ordinance submitted)

Councilor St. Hilaire moved to substitute the revised ordinance with the one previously submitted. The motion was duly seconded and passed with no dissenting votes.

Councilor St. Hilaire moved approval of the revised ordinance. The motion was duly seconded and passed with no dissenting votes.

**Comments, Requests by Mayor, City Councilors**

Councilor Todd announced that the Penacook Farmers Market has begun and open Mondays 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at the historic Rolfe House and Barn located at 11 Penacook Street in Penacook.

Councilor Herschlag indicated that there was an issue with traffic with the sidewalk repairs by Rumford Street. He announced that issue has been resolved very quickly due to the steps Administration took.

Mayor Bouley indicated that Council received a correspondence from Robert Washburn raising an important question and point with regard to the vote Council took at their June 8th meeting to set the issue of a fountain for the Main Street Project for a public hearing. Mr. Washburn pointed out that Councilor Champlin is the Chair on the Chamber Board and the Mayor feels that it is worthwhile to reconsider the action on this vote.

Councilor Champlin clarified that he serves on the Greater Concord Chamber of Commerce Board without compensation as a volunteer; the Chamber, itself, has no financial interest in a fountain. He stated that it appears that he has the appearance of a conflict of interest and should have recused himself from that vote.

Councilor Shurtleff moved reconsideration of the vote. The motion was duly seconded and passed on a voice vote with two dissenting votes from Councilors Herschlag and Keach.

Councilor St. Hilaire moved to set the fountain item for a public hearing to be held on July 13th. The motion was duly seconded.

Following discussion in regards to conflicts of issue, the motion to set for a July 13th public hearing passed on a voice vote. Councilor Champlin recused himself from voting.

Mayor Bouley thanked everyone that showed up and participated in the budget meetings. He applauded the staff and Council for coming up with a very responsible budget. He stated that it's unfortunate that 3.1 percent of the increase comes from two sources: health insurance and the downshifting cost of retirement. They have done an incredible job of continuing to provide a very high quality level of services to the citizens. He is proud of many parts of this budget including moving forth to take care of those streets back in the neighborhoods.

Mayor Bouley indicated that Council has already taken an unanimous vote of satisfactory for the City Manager's evaluation. He stated that before him this evening is the negotiated contract to be voted upon.

Councilor Nyhan moved approval of the City Manager's contract. The motion was duly seconded.

Councilor Nyhan indicated that he feels that the Manager has done a spectacular job over the past year.

Mayor Bouley noted that he feels that the City Manager does an incredible job and feels that this contract is reflective of a good balance. He thanked Mr. Aspell for all that he does for the city.

The motion to approve the contract passed with no dissenting votes.

### **Comments, Requests by the City Manager**

### **Consideration of Suspense Items**

### **Adjournment**

The time being 8:02 p.m., Councilor Bennett moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was duly seconded and passed with no dissenting votes.

*A true copy; I attest:*

*Michelle Mulholland  
Deputy City Clerk*