



City of Concord

Fiscal Policy Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes - Draft

Monday, March 21, 2022

4:30 PM

City Hall
41 Green Street, 2nd Floor Conference
Room

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 4:35 PM.

2. Roll Call

Present:

City Councilors - Keith Nyhan (Chairman), Byron Champlin, Candace White Bouchard, Amanda Grady Sexton and Mayor Jim Bouley.

City Staff - Thomas Aspell, Jr., City Manager; Brian LeBrun, Deputy City Manager - Finance; Carlos Baia, Deputy City Manager - Development; Katie Graff, Assistant Finance Director; Bob McManus, Director of OMB; Rebekah Dougherty, Budget Analyst; David Cederholm, City Engineer; Crayton Brubaker, Local Government Management Fellow; and Sue Stevens, Executive Assistant.

Excused: City Councilors Fred Keach and Gail Matson.

3. Approval of Meeting Minutes

A motion was made and seconded to approve the draft minutes from the February 22, 2022 meeting. The motion passed with a unanimous voice vote.

4. Stormwater Utility

City Engineer David Cedarholm gave a presentation regarding the City's need for additional funding for stormwater drainage improvement projects. Funding is needed for the operation and management of the City's current drainage system, which is old and quite extensive; as well as for capital improvement projects to improve the performance of the drainage system. Mr. Cedarholm explained that a feasibility study for a stormwater utility fund was completed by the engineering firm Tighe & Bond in February 2020. A stormwater utility fund would allow the City to collect a fee from property owners, outside of their property taxes, for the operation and maintenance of the City's stormwater system. The fee would be

based on a property's amount of impervious coverage, which is a measure of how much stormwater a property generates. By having a separate fund, outside of property taxes, the City would be able to collect fees from tax-exempt properties as well. Currently, tax exempt properties, which represents about 24% of all impervious cover in the city, benefit from the municipal drainage system at no cost. Mr. Cedarholm explained that a stormwater utility fee that is based on the amount of impervious cover, or how much stormwater a property generates, rather than as a portion of their property valuation, would be a more equitable way to distribute the costs; and it would provide for sustainable, dedicated funding for proactive stormwater management.

Chairman Nyhan asked if there were any other communities in New Hampshire that have a separate stormwater utility fund. Mr. Cedarholm indicated that there were not, that the City of Concord would be the first community in the state to do so; but that there are many communities in New England that have done so. Mr. Cedarholm noted that many of the communities in other states that have created a stormwater utility fund have done so in order to meet requirements of the federal government's MS4 stormwater regulations. There are about 60 communities in New Hampshire, Concord not being one of them, that are governed by MS4 regulations.

Councilor White Bouchard suggested the City look into possible federal funding opportunities that support stormwater infrastructure.

Chairman Nyhan asked Mr. Cedarholm what the next steps would be if the City Council were to approve this proposal. Mr. Cedarholm indicated that the next step would be to hold some public meetings for taxpayers. He noted that there are funds remaining in the feasibility study budget that could be used to have Tighe & Bond help with outreach to the community.

There was a considerable amount of discussion, with the committee members expressing concern about adding another fee and increasing costs for property owners. The committee thanked Mr. Cedarholm for his well done presentation and indicated that they will take it under advisement for possible consideration at a future date.

5. Proposed Budget Schedule and Guideline Revisions

The committee reviewed the proposed FY 2023 Finance Committee budget review schedule and guidelines. Committee members expressed concern that the

proposed budget review schedule may not allot enough time to get through all the budgets, but agreed to leave the schedule as proposed, keeping in mind that we will need to be flexible throughout the process and potentially add some additional meetings. The FY 2023 Finance Committee budget review and schedule and guidelines will be on the April agenda for the full City Council to review and vote on.

6. Other

The committee discussed ambulance billing. Staff from the Fire Department will be in attendance at the April FPAC meeting to continue this discussion.

The committee also discussed the Fire Department's proposal to purchase a new ambulance - with a big question being how much the addition of a new ambulance would improve response times and what the cost/benefit ratio would be.

7. Adjournment

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn. The motion was approved with a unanimous voice vote and the meeting adjourned at 6:13 PM.