

City of Keene
New Hampshire

FINANCE, ORGANIZATION AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, June 8, 2017

6:30 PM

Council Chambers

Members Present:

Mitchell H. Greenwald, Chair
Carl B. Jacobs, Vice-Chair
Thomas F. Powers
Terry M. Clark
Bettina A. Chadbourne

Staff Present:

City Manager Medard Kopczynski
Thomas Mullins, City Attorney
City Clerk, Patty Little
Asst. City Clerk, Terri Hood
Purchasing and Contract Manager, Jeffrey Titus
Airport Manager, Jack Wozmak

Chair Greenwald called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

1) Alps Building Christian Fellowship Lease - Airport Department

Airport Manager, Jack Wozmak stated the Alps Building has been vacant for a long time. It has been shown to interested parties quite a few times in the last month and trying to apply the historic rent structure to this building is difficult (\$600 in rent, \$400 in real estate taxes and operating expenses). The Christian Fellowship church has expressed interest in using the building as a youth center. However, the entity does not have sufficient funds to meet the \$600 rental obligation. Mr. Wozmak stated he has worked with the FAA to rent this building at below market value based on community benefit. He also stated he has worked with the Town of Swanzey to help the Church achieve a tax-exempt status, which has been granted. Staff's suggestion is to rent this space to the church for \$250 giving the city some money coming in from an otherwise vacant building. He added the city has not put too many resources into it. The taxes the city paid for the building was only \$10 a year.

Chair Greenwald asked for the lease term. Mr. Wozmak stated it would be a one year lease with a 30-day notice of termination should there be an aviation purpose that should come up. The Chair asked whether there were any options beyond a year. Mr. Wozmak stated there are options for renewal but this language has not yet been drafted. Chair Greenwald stated he would like this not to be an option. The Chair stated he is concerned why a building such as this cannot be rented for a business purpose with all the efforts staff has put into it. Mr. Wozmak stated staff will continue to look for better options for the property – those options won't stop.

Councilor Jacobs asked about tax payments. Mr. Wozmak stated this entity will not pay taxes as they have received a tax-exempt status from the Town of Swanzezy. The Councilor asked about language which says “*no airport revenue to support capital or operating expenses of this space*”. Mr. Wozmak stated this was standard language which indicates if there is revenue it can’t go outside aviation related expenses – this is because of continued grant obligations.

Councilor Chadbourne asked how long this property has been vacant. The City Manager stated it has been about six years since this property was leased. The Manager felt this property was not located in an area that is very attractive for a business.

Councilor Clark made the following motion which was seconded by Councilor Powers.

On 5-0 vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to enter into a lease of the former Alps/Hillside Pizza building with the Christian Life Fellowship Church.

2) Departmental Presentation - Administrative Support for Boards and Commissions – City Clerk's Office

City Clerk Patty Little was the next speaker to address the Committee, accompanied by Assistant City Clerk Terri Hood. Ms. Little stated she and the Assistant City Clerk were present to do a Departmental presentation on the City’s Minute Taking Program and allocation of staff in support of City boards and commissions. She noted the concept of department presentations is a new program which was put in place in 2017 at the suggestion of Councilor Jones. Initially, the City started bringing board and commissions before the Standing Committees to talk about their current initiatives. Councilor Jones felt it would be interesting to also hear from departments. Hence, starting in 2017, in alternate years there will be presentations from departments made before Standing Committees so the Council can learn more about what staff in the various departments are focused on.

Ms. Little started by noting that minutes are a permanent public record created by the City. We are obligated under state law to create m, and there is a minimum standard under the statute which needs to be met. However, the City has gone beyond that and has put in place standards depending on the type of Committee. As an example, minutes for an advisory committees might be less comprehensive, while minutes for a statutory board like the Zoning Board of Adjustment which requires the content be very complete. Minutes are created not only to meet a statutory requirement but they are also meant to create a record as to why the City Council made the decision it did. The real value will be ten to fifteen years from now when someone wants to know the reason behind a decision. Minutes also provide a transparency for the public; many people read our minutes to understand decisions that are made.

Ms. Little continued that the City’s records on minutes goes back to 1753 (when minute language was colorful). In the 60’s and 70’s they started becoming more factual but did not contain much content. In the last ten years they have grown in content, a lot more information is being captured. Prior to professional minute takers, city staff captured minutes. Ms. Little noted before the time of Pat McQueen in 1980, minutes were not captured, they were more in

the form of reports (single page with a line or two of comment followed by a motion). She talked about the process Mr. McQueen followed in creating minutes which process went through until his retirement.

Following that, the responsibility switched over to department heads on a rotating schedule. Ms. Little stated this was a challenge for department heads to take minutes because they were also presenters of agenda items at meetings. In 1999 the City transferred to the current professional minute taking program managed at that time by the Code Enforcement Department. This has increased the professionalism of the record. Ms. Little then turned the presentation over to Ms. Hood.

Ms. Hood noted the City Clerk's office took over this program in 2007 and at that time they used the City of Lebanon as a model. They had minute takers and staff liaisons who served each Board; these two groups of people worked in tandem to serve the different Bodies. Since the Clerk's office took over the program a few changes have been made; policies have been codified, Administrative Directives have been drafted for minutes, and how the program would actually run. The purpose of the Administrative Directives is to provide staff liaisons guidance as to how to use minute taking services and to know they are meeting statutory requirements, layout some formatting standards, and provide training programs for new minute takers. New Minute Takers spend a day with staff, go over certain documents, meet with the City Attorney (to go over rules of order, conduct etc.) and the IT Department (to go over technical issues). The Clerk's office has also worked with Committee Chairs and staff liaison's to make sure they have ergonomic work stations at meetings, and that they are located in a place where they can see and hear what is going on at meetings. Ms. Hood noted that minute takers are taking on a more active role in meetings, assisting the board with issues with motions, determining quorum, and procedural issues.

As the minute taking program has evolved it has become necessary to have a better system in place to submit, review and file minutes as well as tracking meeting schedules. In 2010, the department moved away from an email and spreadsheet system for tracking minutes and schedules into a custom database created in house which helps with these functions and this system also helps track Boards and Committee members and feeds this information to the public website.

In 2012, the City Manager John MacLean wanted to know how much time full-time staff was spending on supporting these public bodies. From that review, there was some analysis as to whether work from some of these public bodies could be absorbed by another public body, or whether work could be shifted to other staff such as minute takers. Some of the work which shifted to minute takers included the Granicus Parsing of meetings video recorded in the Council Chamber. Most recently minute takers took on the role of assisting staff liaisons with edits which come from Boards and Committees, filing final minutes in the Clerk's Office and posting them online for the public.

Ms. Hood then went over the current staffing of the minute taking team and their roles. Currently there is a team of five minute takers: Krishni Pahl who has been with the program since 2000 and covers some of the more challenging boards like the Finance Committee, the

Planning Board, and the Joint Committee; Mary Lou Hall who has been with the program since 2008 covering the PLD Committee, Heritage Commission and the Martin Luther King/Jonathan Daniels Committee; Katie Kibler and Jennifer Clark, who have been with us for about a year with Katie covering the MSFI Committee, Conservation Commission and HDC; and Jennifer covering HDC, City College Commission and Partner City; and Ayshah Fox, a fairly new minute taker who covers some of the City's Advisory Boards.

These five individuals on a monthly basis cover the three standing committees, 16 Boards and Commissions, and 3 to 6 Ad-Hoc and Special Committees that come up throughout the year. These five individuals produce about 400 sets of minutes a year and their combined effort equals that of a full-time position. Ms. Hood noted the value they bring to the City and extended her appreciation to the Minute Takers.

Ms. Little addressed the Committee again and stated the same directive to review City staff support of boards and commissions which came out in 2012 from the City Manager has come up again this year from the current City Manager in his budget presentation. The Planning Department which serves about 11 Bodies is very stressed and the Manager would like to get an idea as to how that Department can be assisted.

Ms. Little stated staff has developed a survey which would go out to all Boards and Commissions and would be on the agendas for each board with the exception of the Standing Committees over the next two months. There would be a second survey which goes out to Board Chairs with questions for example *"what have you done that has been implemented or a report that has been adopted which shows tangible effort"*.

The survey to be completed by all Board members would ask questions about what Board members can do for themselves which would give relief to staff. Once all surveys are complete the Manager, Mayor and Chairs would schedule a meeting to review the responses. Some of the suggestions being provided are that boards meet less frequently, eliminating a Board if the work is being done by another Body, and combining Boards. The goal is to focus staff attention on other dire needs and to address the growing list of staff initiatives from the Council. Ms. Little assured the Committee this work won't happen in a vacuum it would be part of a larger discussion. This concluded the Clerk's presentation

Chair Greenwald complimented City Clerk staff for their flawless work. He also thanked Krishni Pahl for her outstanding efforts as the Minute Taker for the Finance Committee. The Chair asked whether staff would be able to estimate the cost of minute taking per minute (this to include staff liaison time as well). Ms. Little stated staff would work on this information for the Chairman. Ms. Little noted for every hour of meeting time it takes two hours of minute taking work.

Councilor Jacobs asked what Granicus Parsing means. Ms. Little stated if someone was to login to the Granicus video recording system online and if a specific section is clicked on, that particular portion of the video can be viewed. This is referred to as "parsing".

The Councilor asked about the different standards for different Bodies the Clerk had referred to. Attorney Mullins explained there are levels of risk and as the risk goes up the level of detail goes up. This level of risk starts at the Zoning Board and goes down – the ZBA is the Board in the City that is most likely to wind up at the Superior Court. The same would be the case with the Planning Board where the risk is slightly less. The Councilor felt in that case the transcription and review of certain minutes could cost more. Ms. Little agreed.

Councilor Chadbourne stated she finds detailed minutes to be helpful in understanding the content of an item. The Councilor talked about her time as minute taker and felt the experience of a minute taker could also affect the pricing.

Councilor Powers asked whether Granicus is considered a record. Ms. Little stated it is not considered an official record but is a record the City plans on retaining, although there is no statutory requirement to retain these recordings. The Attorney agreed the minutes become the official record. The Councilor clarified these are not verbatim minutes. Ms. Little agreed and added some cities like Manchester do require verbatim minutes. Attorney Mullins talked about an incident at a Zoning Board level where a minute taker testified in Court, stating her minutes were improperly changed which required parties to file statements with the Attorney General's Office; minutes being changed after the fact is not looked at favorably.

Councilor Clark stated when he prepares for a meeting, he does a lot of research using the minutes done in the past and the concise nature of the minutes helps a lot. He did urge staff to retain the Granicus recordings which can also help clarify a lot of information.

Councilor Powers made the following motion which was seconded by Councilor Chadbourne.

On 5-0 vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends the acceptance of the presentation on administrative support for boards and commissions as informational.

3) Relating to Purchasing - Ordinance O-2017-11

Purchasing and Contract Services Manager Jeffrey Titus addressed the Committee next and began by distributing a document pertaining to this Ordinance change.

Rules for City Purchases Sec 2-1332 – This is based on recommended changes to recognize new requirements to the federal single audit act. These changes are outlined in the recent letter from the city's auditor. Mr. Titus called the Committee's attention to item 7 which has been added to recognize the recommended federal guidelines with respect to grants funded with federal funds.

The new language for item 7 reads as follows:

For grants funded with federal funds the city will take all necessary affirmative steps to assure that minority businesses, women's business enterprises, and labor surplus area firms are used when possible (2 C.F.R sec 200.321) procurement requirements shall be in accordance with

established purchasing thresholds as follows: (unless federal requirements are most stringent, city guidelines will apply);

Mr. Titus explained the only change that would require a more stringent approach is listed under the section where the guidelines are lowering the quote threshold to under \$3,000. Under current city guidelines quotes are required for purchases that fall between \$5,000 - \$20,000

The other change is under Sec 2-1340, Sale of Surplus Materials and Equipment –This change would increase the single item or lot valued between \$5,000 to \$10,000 to reflect what is seen for most book values of vehicles.

Mr. Titus went on to say when every surplus item comes up for sale, the city goes through a process. Part of the process is to ascertain what the book value is and a Request for Approval is created and sent to the City Manager. What is being noticed now is the average book value is going beyond \$5,000 and if the city didn't make this adjustment there would be more visits before the Council as it would exceed what the City Manager can approve under his authority.

Councilor Jacobs felt the first change in item 7 seems discriminative if the city was seeking out those particular groups, even though he stated he understands the purpose. Mr. Titus stated the main purpose is to make sure these various groups have access to bids and access to these funds. Chair Greenwald asked if a female owned business bids on a contract and is tied with another firm the contract would be awarded to the female owned business, and asked whether this was the intention. Mr. Titus agreed the intention is that everyone has access to these types of funds.

Councilor Jacobs asked what *labor surplus area firm* meant. Attorney Mullins stated his understanding is that things like union wage scale aspects will be included in contracts. The Attorney added these are things the city would put in place anyway, but the federal government would like the Council to approve things of this nature and make them part of an ordinance.

Councilor Powers referred to the term "*single item or lot*" and asked whether surplus fleet is considered to be a lot. Mr. Titus stated online these are usually posted as individual items. For instance however, the library might want to sell some furniture, this would be considered a "lot" but they are listed individually within the lot. The Councilor asked about the auction process. Mr. Titus stated a particular vehicle is first taken offline, replaced with another one. Fleet Services then strips the vehicles of things the city would like to retain, such as radios, lights, decals, plates etc. Purchasing then collects information of the vehicle, photographs are taken and a list is compiled. Purchasing then values the item based on online sites such as Kelly Blue Book. Permission to sell this item as surplus is then obtained from the Manager. The item is then listed on an online site as well as internally for a department to purchase. There are times when a certain item would also need to be trashed. Police Department items are listed usually on propertyroom.com for vehicles publicsurplus.com is used (this site is tied to the City purchasing website).

Councilor Jacobs made the following motion which was seconded by Councilor

FOP Meeting Minutes
January 14, 2016

On 5-0 vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends adoption of Ordinance O-2017-11A as amended.

The meeting adjourned at 7:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Krishni Pahl, Minute Taker