

ADOPTED

City of Keene
New Hampshire

COLLEGE CITY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

Monday, September 25, 2017

4:00 PM

Mountain View Room, KSC

Members Present:

Darryl Masterson, Co-Chair
Bart Sapeta, Co-Chair, City Councilor
Phil Jones, City Councilor
Bettina Chadbourne, City Councilor
Chris Cusack
Dottie Morris
Joshua Jarvis, Alternate
Robin Picard
Marcia Kayser
Kelly Ricaurte
Dick Berry
Paula Jessup
Bryanna Weigel

Staff Present:

Tara Kessler, Planner (left at 5:20 pm)
Kim Schmidl-Gage

Members Not Present:

1) **Call to Order**

Co-Chair Sapeta called the meeting to order at 4:06 PM. Guests included Bethany Priest, property manager at Arcadia; Meg McIntyre, an education reporter with the Keene Sentinel; Regina Wright, a citizen of Keene and manager/property owner of Wright Rentals; and, Interim KSC President, Dr. Melinda Treadwell.

2) **Approval of Minutes – August 28, 2017**

Councilor Chadbourne noted a correction on page 4, last sentence, under Adjournment, the meeting was adjourned by Co-Chair Sapeta.

Ms. Kayser suggested the reference to the historical society on page 3, be removed since the event had already taken place.

Councilor Chadbourne made a motion to approve the minutes of August 28, 2017 as amended. Ms. Kayser seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

3) **Discussion with Keene State College President Dr. Melinda Treadwell**

Co-Chair Sapeta began the discussion by explaining that the CCC was established in 2014, right before the incident that occurred with the Pumpkin Festival. He explained that there has been some confusion regarding the origination of the CCC. Co-Chair Sapeta said that President Huot and Mayor Lane recognized the importance of the collaboration between the City and KSC, and decided to establish the CCC. During that time the CCC has had several charges brought before

the Commission from President Huot and Mayor Lane. Co-Chair Sapeta reported that in response to those charges the CCC has already issued two reports. He explained that the CCC was in the process of creating another report that addresses two new areas of focus, Revitalization of Neighborhoods and Inclusiveness and Diversity, which President Huot and Mayor Lane directed the Commission to address.

He explained that the CCC spent a lot of time finding information on both topics and then decided to create two subcommittees. He reported that a draft of recommendations from the Diversity and Inclusiveness Subcommittee has been reviewed by the Commission. Co-Chair Sapeta said that recommendations from the Neighborhood Revitalization Subcommittee would be presented at a later time in today's meeting.

Co-Chair Sapeta explained that there was a change in leadership at KSC and thanked Interim KSC President Dr. Melinda Treadwell for attending the meeting.

Co-Chair Sapeta welcomed President Treadwell to the meeting.

President Treadwell thanked everyone for their time and contributions to the CCC. She began the discussion by explaining that she has been invested in the region for over 22 years and knows the importance of the relationship between the City and KSC. President Treadwell said that she could not more strongly state her support for the work of the CCC. She said that her support of the CCC would continue and that KSC would continue to work with the CCC to ensure that KSC is holding up its responsibility as a strong member of the community, as an economic entity and as a neighbor. She explained that her commitment is to understand where there are questions, where there are needs and to address those issues as the President of KSC.

President Treadwell said that it is in her interest to be transparent and that she would be happy to answer any questions related to the CCC. In addition, she said that she would be happy to answer any questions outside of the CCC outside of the format of the meeting to the best of her ability. She explained that if she was unable to answer a question, she would have to get back to the members.

President Treadwell said that it was important for the CCC to understand that KSC's purpose was to move forward with a sustainable plan. She reported that there was a balanced budget this year and that KSC was moving toward a fully balanced budget next year. President Treadwell said that KSC was faced with a budget that had a built in deficit. She reported that KSC had met that budget, closed the deficit and now has a plan to get to a balanced budget next year. In addition, she said that KSC has new enrollment strategies, physical containment strategies and stewardship plans in order to make KSC a vital and continuing entity in Keene. She said that her responsibility is to execute that plan.

President Treadwell said that the leadership team at KSC was in the process of determining the right size for KSC. She said that leadership has also recognized that enrollment is smaller than it was 5 years ago. President Treadwell said that KSC will close the gap to get to a balanced budget, of \$2.5 million, by next year.

President Treadwell moved the discussion to express how grateful she was to be involved in the deliberations with the community for both Pumpkin Festivals. She wanted to reiterate that she has said from the beginning that KSC will stand in support of whatever the City chooses to do. She explained that KSC will plan and will do everything within their power to work together with the City of Keene. She said that she has voiced her concerns and respects the vote of the City

Council. President Treadwell stated that they will do everything they can to inspire students to model what is the best of KSC during both of the pumpkin festivals. She reiterated that KSC would be fully engaged at both festivals.

President Treadwell said in regards to the CCC specifically, she is not only committed to the work of the commission but also recognizes how important the connection is between the City and KSC. She said the responsibility she has as a leader of KSC is to ensure KSC is living up to their expectations as a good leader, a neighbor and also living up to the expectations of the community. President Treadwell said that she will count on the CCC to give her an understanding of where KSC is succeeding and falling short.

She expressed the importance of the work of the CCC in regards to neighborhood revitalization. President Treadwell expressed that it was important for the CCC to help her understand the issues with the neighboring property owners near the campus. She emphasized the importance of the role Ms. Picard held at KSC, as Coordinator of Student and Community Relations. President Treadwell said that it was important for students to understand the standards and expectations of KSC. In addition, President Treadwell said that students must also understand what it means to be a good neighbor. She said that the work of the Neighborhood Revitalization Subcommittee was extremely important and she requested to hear more from the reports from the subcommittee. She noted that this information would be helpful when determining the residential life plan at KSC and helpful when determining the right mix of on-campus and off-campus housing.

President Treadwell said that she has had some experience with building an inclusive community while working at Antioch University. She requested a member from Antioch be able to join the Inclusiveness and Diversity Subcommittee because she believes that it is a much broader initiative than just KSC. In addition, she said that she believed that it is also important for River Valley Community College, Antioch and other institutions and other institutions to be a part of these conversations. She asked the CCC to consider broadening that charge.

She expressed the importance of the Inclusiveness and Diversity Subcommittee and commended their work. President Treadwell reported that there were students of color at KSC that had hate speech directed toward them in the City and that it was terrible and tragically sad. She said that KSC does work with the Keene Police Department and Ms. Morris to develop a plan of action when these types of matters occur. President Treadwell said that KSC students of color and from other nations attend KSC to get an education and it is important to ensure their well-being.

President Treadwell continued to explain that by involving other organizations and businesses it would create more awareness. President Treadwell said that a city inspiring to be inclusive and diverse should ask certain questions. What does a diverse and inclusive city look like? What are we doing as a City?

President Treadwell said that she had spent the last couple of weeks thinking about the point that she was trying to make about the Pumpkin Festival. She explained that her point was that there was a lot of time focusing on one event. She said that she understood that the event has both logical and emotional components to it but that there was no discussion that there would be two events of the same nature within 10 days of each other. President Treadwell noted that the region should watch how it was using its resources. In addition, she said that there was no discussion on other ways to celebrate the culture of the Monadnock Region. She asked if the CCC or some other entity could have a committee that looked at events that celebrated the community and then develop a calendar of events to promote. President Treadwell recommended using groups such as Arts Alive, Hannah Grimes, local colleges, and businesses to help celebrate the culture, heritage

and all of the wonderful things in the Monadnock Region. She noted that there was no common dialogue or calendar that currently existed and that there was a need to communicate more coherently to market the colleges, business and various enterprises in the community. President Treadwell said that this was a discussion that she was planning on having with Mayor Lane. In addition, she said that she did discuss this idea with Let It Shine.

In closing, President Treadwell said that KSC will continue to thrive and be robust. She noted that KSC was not weak and reiterated that they have closed the gap between enrollment and expenses. She said that she fully believes in the work of the CCC and that it was a must for her to hear any concerns in order to be responsive.

Co-Chair Masterson said that it has been said that KSC was looking at having 70% of the student population living on campus. He asked if that was something President Treadwell still saw as a target number. President Treadwell replied that was a number that would need to be revisited. She said that she has asked the residential life and the student government to reevaluate the capital plan. Specifically, she said the residential life plan. She explained that there has always been a goal to have 70% of students living on campus. President Treadwell reported that KSC is launching a task force to determine the right size for KSC. She noted that number would be somewhat north of the current number and that the task force would be completing that report in the next two months. She said that once that number was set, they would develop a strategy to achieve that number and look at the housing percentage of on-campus living. She said that the goal was to work more purposefully, instead of investing in bricks and mortar. In addition, she said that the focus was more on developing local partnerships with local property owners in order to make sure there is the right mix of on-campus and off-campus housing that met the needs of the students. President Treadwell noted that KSC would focus on the entry class and second year students to achieve the goal of 70% of students living on campus. President Treadwell stated that 70% is going to be hard number to maintain but they will engage that number purposefully. She stated that once that number was determined by the task force, she would report back to the CCC and discuss what that number means for the housing stock.

Councilor Chadbourne asked for the current percentage of students that live on campus. President Treadwell replied that that she did not want to misquote that number and would report her findings back to the CCC for the next meeting. She explained that all first year students are required to live on campus and that the number dropped by 50% for second year students. She noted that the number drops even further for upperclassmen.

Councilor Chadbourne said that the enrollment at KSC was approximately 3,800 and asked if President Treadwell foresees that number to continue to drop. President Treadwell replied that the demographic decline at KSC is approximately 17% lower than the demographic decline in the region. She said that the demographic decline right now should be at a 7.4% decline. President Treadwell noted that KSC has been working with a 24% decline over the last five years. She stated that there is a margin of students available that KSC is not drawing. President Treadwell said that they want to set a target number that is both appropriate for the infrastructure of KSC as well as the City. She said that the target number would be somewhere between 4,000 and 5,000 students. However, she did state that 5,000 was too high of a number to have in order to achieve the academic experience wanted by students.

Councilor Jones referred to a presentation that was held a few years ago by Dr. Leversee that discussed KSC's capital improvement projects and development along Winchester Street and Marlboro Street. Councilor Jones said that since that time, the demographics have changed and asked for an update on KSC Capital Improvement Plan. President Treadwell said that KSC was in the

midst of their 5-year Capital Plan that included residential life and campus investment. She stated that there should be an update on that report before October 18, 2017 and would be happy to come back to the next CCC meeting with an update.

Mr. Berry asked if there was a plan with the scholastic programs. President Treadwell said that she and the faculty have discussed a number of studies of what is the right academic portfolio for KSC and what has been decided is that they need to do something based on these studies. She said that they were looking at an academic organization that will allow KSC some to create some space for growth in new areas that are currently not offered as well as invest in programs that are currently held. She said that KSC has not changed their academic offerings in the past decade. President Treadwell said that KSC's lead communication is around their incredible computer science program. She said that this program is looking at issues of gamification, cyber security and other exciting areas of computer science. She said that KSC needs to freshen their brand to communicate these exiting areas of study.

President Treadwell discussed how the liberal arts is viewed as not being as valuable to prepare students for the workforce. She said that on the other side of the coin the schools that are rated the highest, based on student employability, are the liberal arts institutions. She noted that this was exactly what KSC offers. President Treadwell said that her challenge is to articulate that KSC is a very effective liberal arts institution school that prepares students for career transition.

Mr. Berry discussed the Marlboro Street rezoning area and one of the things that came from that rezoning was that it would be nice to have incubator facilities. He said that it is important to do something to attract jobs that are for-profit organizations as opposed to nonprofit organizations. He noted that it seems that nonprofit organizations are dominating the City at this time. President Treadwell said that KSC works with the HIVE program at Hannah Grime. She explained that the concept of the HIVE program is to create an incubator space for concepts and that there is implicit commitment that KSC will serve as an incubator for future economic development.

President Treadwell thanked the CCC and said that she would report back to the CCC when she receives an update on the Capital Master Plan. In addition, she said that she would also get the numbers of students by each class.

Ms. Kayser said that she would contact River Valley Community College to see if there was any interest in anyone joining the Diversity and Inclusiveness Subcommittee. Co-Chair Sapeta stated that a member of Antioch has already participated in the Diversity and Inclusiveness Subcommittee. In addition, he said that the CCC will determine if there is interest to form a subcommittee for the celebration of community events. Ms. Jessup asked if Mayor Lane could be included in a future CCC meeting to discuss this as part of the CCC charge. She noted that it would be important to have input from both President Treadwell and Mayor Lane.

Ms. Kayser stated that in her opinion there should be some framework to do some problem solving after a crisis, for healing purposes. She noted that there was nothing in the City to help with intervention crisis and healing response.

Co-Chair Masterson said that as a resident of Keene and as a neighbor to the KSC campus, he wanted to commend the work of Ms. Picard. He said that she does an amazing job and is always responsive.

Councilor Jones reported that the City Council passed resolution R-2017-35 that is about diversity and inclusiveness. He noted that the resolution was beautifully written by the City Attorney. Councilor Jones said that he requested Mayor Lane send a copy of the resolution to the CCC for informational purposes.

Ms. Jessup recommended that KSC put forth to the community the importance of the City and College working as one. She explained how negative attention directed toward KSC would have an impact on the community. Ms. Jessup said that there is a need to have more positive light on the KSC campus which would in return help the college grow as well as benefit the City. President Treadwell said that one of her priorities was to tell stories about the beauty of KSC and articulate what the college offers. She noted that this is really important to her, personally.

Councilor Jones asked President Treadwell keep in mind when talking to Mayor Lane that there has been a lot of opportunity for businesses to come to Keene who do not come because there has not been the right kind of workforce. He said that some of that has to do with the curriculum at the various colleges. Councilor Jones said that was something he thought President Treadwell should be aware of when talking to Mayor Lane.

The CCC thanked President Treadwell for her time and sharing all of the updates at KSC.

4) **Subcommittee Updates**

a.) Neighborhood Revitalization-

Co-Chair Sapeta asked the CCC to review the draft recommendations created by the Neighborhood Revitalization Subcommittee. He reported that the subcommittee would meet in the next 2 to 3 weeks to further edit the draft.

Co-Chair Sapeta asked the CCC to take a few minutes to review the draft.

Co-Chair Sapeta said that it was important to understand the that purpose of the draft was to make suggestions. He explained that subgroups can make suggestions but the CCC has to vote on these recommendations.

Co-Chair Sapeta referred the CCC to the draft and noted that the draft was a collection of suggestions presented by various stakeholders who met with the group over the last few months. The suggestions are listed by short term, medium term and long term.

He referenced a short term suggestion, that stated, "Explore an option for establishing ordinances that regulates large/excessive gatherings on private property". Co-Chair Sapeta reported that Mayor Lane would be introducing a disorderly housing ordinance. He said that the CCC needs to think about how it can contribute and make this ordinance a success for students, landlords and the City at large. Co-Chair Sapeta said that there is an opportunity for the City to develop a robust ordinance and that the CCC needs to think about how to respond. He explained that there will be public hearings and that the CCC should be at the forefront.

Ms. Wright, owner of Wright Rental Properties, Keene, NH, recommended that the City title the ordinance something besides "Disorderly" because it sends a heat wave to every landlord in Keene. She said if the objective is to reduce the size of parties on private property, she did not think there would be a landlord that would have an issue. Ms. Wright suggested naming the ordinance something else such as group control. Councilor Chadbourne recommended that Ms. Wright's suggestion is heard before the MFSI.

Ms. Wright said that when the KFD and the KPD came and spoke to the landlords they used a certain number of people to be allowed on the property at one time. She said that the landlords were told to let their tenants know that number. She noted that number was a problem and that she tells her tenants 10 or 15 people is all she wants to see at her houses. Mr. Masterson said that he agreed with putting a positive name on the ordinance. He recommended that the City Council hear this recommendation.

Ms. Wright said that with the old code, the ramifications to property owners were a huge issue. She said that neither the fire department nor the police department had controls over that code, so to penalize the property owners, misses the logic.

Ms. Kessler said that she would be happy pass Ms. Wright's feedback onto to the City Attorney and Mayor Lane who would be drafting the ordinance. She noted that there this not yet an ordinance before the Council. Once an ordinance is submitted there would be a public hearing and opportunities for public comment. Ms. Kessler took Ms. Wright's contact information and stated that she would email Ms. Wright when the Ordinance is introduced and the public hearing date is set. Ms. Wright thanked Ms. Kessler. Co-Chair Sapeta recommended the CCC draft a letter from the CCC to City Council in response to the ordinance, to express concerns or recommendations.

Co-Chair Sapeta referred to the medium goals listed on page 3 of the draft, "Research opportunities to enact laws, ordinances, policies and programs that encourage rental property owners to provide exceptional service and safe living environment to the tenants, reduce violations and need for service calls". He said that there were people who discussed free of charge, mandatory registration/licensing of rental properties with the City. In addition, he said that there was also a suggestion to have free of charge, mandatory initial rental property inspection and yearly inspection by unit, not building. Co-Chair Sapeta said that the CCC would need to have a discussion based on these suggestions.

Co-Chair Sapeta referred to the long term goals on page 4, he explained that there is a lot of general information regarding the development of properties for long term success. He discussed Ordinance 79E, which is establishing a zone within the City that will have some incentive for tax breaks for people who want to develop properties that are perceived as under used.

Ms. Kessler explained that 79E is a tax abatement program where the state has allowed communities to adopt this program locally. She explained that it would be up to the City to determine what structures and what areas of the City it would apply. Ms. Kessler noted that it could be applied to commercial and/or residential properties. She said that the City has yet to adopt this program locally and that it has not yet defined boundaries for where 79-E might apply. One of the areas that the City is focusing on is the Marlboro Street corridor and the zones that have been rezoned for business growth. She reported that the public hearing for the Marlboro Street re-zoning changes would be at the City Council meeting on October 5, 2017 at 7 PM. Ms. Kessler said that she would follow-up with more information regarding 79E as it becomes available.

Ms. Wright stated that she was a landlord that puts a lot of money back into her properties because she wants them to look nice. She said that if she was an absentee landlord that put her money back into her pocket and had a trashy looking place it was not right for an absentee landlord to be eligible for 79E. She said that she would be upset if an absentee landlord received additional money to help paint the outside of their house. Ms. Kessler said that Ms. Wright's statements was helpful feedback. She noted that this was something that the City would consider when crafting the ordinance for 79E. Ms. Kessler noted that it would be an

program, where applicant would first have to qualify. She noted that the City was in process of studying the program and how it would apply to Keene.

Co-Chair Sapeta asked Ms. Kessler if there could be a PowerPoint presentation discussing 79E for the next CCC meeting. Ms. Kessler replied in the affirmative.

Councilor Jones referred to the medium goals of the draft where it stated free of charge registration. He stated that the City does not have the resources for that program. He noted that there is a program within KSC, where rental properties can register. Councilor Jones noted that this was free of charge and that it seemed to work.

In addition, Councilor Jones stated that the reference to free legal counsel would have to come from outside the City. He explained that the job description for the City Attorney strictly prohibits this from occurring. Chadbourne suggested rewording that section of the draft so that it does not imply there is free legal counsel with the City. She recommended the wording be changed to “engaging local attorneys that would offer pro bono”. Ms. Weigel suggested setting something up with local law schools.

Ms. Picard stated that she appreciated the comments of Councilor Jones. She explained that the subcommittee puts forth recommendations and ideas. She said that it is not meant to say what is or what is not important, but if it is important, the subcommittee should figure out how to get it done. Ms. Picard said that the idea is to not limit thinking.

Co-Chair Sapeta referred the group to the footnote at the bottom of page 4, under medium goals. He explained that there was a link to the City of Boston, where it explains how the City of Boston has a mandatory registration of rental properties, which is free of charge. Co-Chair Sapeta explained that by having this registration, the City of Boston would know what was available for in the city for rental properties.

Ms. Weigel referred to the medium goal, “Provide options for free legal counsel services related to rental property agreements/violations to off-campus students”. She stated this was a great idea for students who are having issues with their landlords who are not being responsive. Ms. Weigel said that a lot of off campus students would appreciate this service.

Ms. Priest, property manager at Acadia Apartments, Keene, NH stated that she sends the students home with an unsigned lease to go over with their with parents. She explained that she goes over every point of the application with the students so there is no confusion with the lease.

Ms. Picard said that she suggests students hire an attorney to look over the lease, before signing a rental agreement.

Co-Chair Sapeta referred to medium goal, “Free of charge, unified sample cover page lease agreement language developed in coordination between the City of Keene and Keene State College”. He said that the recommendation was to have a front page that lists the important features with a lease rather than having to read 25 pages of a lease. He noted that this was something that would be helpful for the landlords as well.

Ms. Weigel asked if there was something that could be done with the littering that occurs on off campus properties. She said that she walks through Blake Street and sees beer cans and broken glass everywhere. Ms. Picard recommended contacting Code Enforcement where they could address the issue with students.

b) Inclusiveness & Diversity

Co-Chair Sapeta tabled the review of the draft of Building and Inclusive Community for the next meeting. Ms. Schmidl-Gagne and Ms. Kessler will be formatting the document in order for all the edits to be merged into one document.

Ms. Kayser reported that the subcommittee had met since the last CCC meeting and there was a wonderful event called Shadows Falls North that was hosted by Vicki Pitman at the Colonial Theater. She said that the subcommittee discussed holding an event that focused on indigenous people as well as other events of this nature to the KSC campus. She said that Ms. Pittman suggested planning events such as a screening of Lost Boundaries and holding an event that focused on black history in Keene. Ms. Kayser recommended engaging the Keene Historical Society and the Keene Public Library for these events.

Councilor Jones requested that when the Resolution R-2017-35 is sent from Mayor Lane through Ms. Kessler that it be assigned to the Inclusiveness and Diversity Subcommittee. Co-Chair Sapeta agreed with Councilor Jones request.

Ms. Kayser asked how the CCC should go about having different events in order to be more independent so they do not have to ask permission each time. Ms. Jessup suggested having Mayor Lane and President Treadwell together at the next CCC meeting to go all of these questions, especially with the change of the KSC President. The CCC agreed to invite both Mayor Lane and Dr. Treadwell to the next CCC meeting.

Ms. Ricaurte suggested Mayor Lane give an opening at one of the events to show City's support to raise visibility for inclusiveness and diversity.

Co-Chair Sapeta asked the CCC to review both drafts from the subcommittees and to continue thinking about any suggestions for the next meeting

8.) Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Monday, October 23, 2017 at 4:00 PM in the 2nd Floor Conference Room of the City Hall.

9.) Adjourn

Hearing no further business, Co-Chair Sapeta adjourned the meeting at 5:52 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Jennifer Clark, Minute Taker

Reviewed and edited by,
Tara Kessler, Planner