

City of Keene
New Hampshire

FINANCE, ORGANIZATION AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, April 23, 2015

6:30 PM

Council Chambers

Members Present:

Mitchell Greenwald, Chairman
Kris E. Roberts
Terry M. Clark
Thomas Powers
Randy Filiault

Staff Present:

City Attorney, Thomas Mullins
Asst. City Manager/Human Resources
Director, Beth Fox
Finance Director Steve Thornton
Police Captain Steve Russo
Recreation Programmer, Megan Spaulding
Fire Chief, Mark Howard
Asst. Public Works Director, Donna
Hanscom
IMS Director, Rebecca Landry

Kendall Lane, Mayor

Councilors Present:

Carl B. Jacobs

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

**1. MEMORANDUM: Parks, Recreation and Cemeteries Director -
Acceptance of Donation for Mural at Recreation Center**

Recreation Programmer, Megan Spaulding stated that this \$950 donation from the Putnam Foundation is the last piece of the funding for the mural program, which is now fully funded. She stated that she would like to take the opportunity to extend the department's appreciation for those who have made a donation toward this mural project. The organizations that have made a donation towards the project includes: C&S Wholesale Grocers, Savings Bank of Walpole, the Cheshire Medical Center and the Putnam Foundation. Ms. Spaulding indicated that the department welcomes the community this week to participate in the painting between the hours of 10 am to 4 pm.

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

On a vote of 5-0, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to accept a donation of \$950.00 from the Putnam Foundation to create a mural in the multipurpose room at the Recreation Center.

2. COMMUNICATION: Attorney Howard Lane/Trustee of the Stacey Ward Cole Trust - Donation of Land

Asst. City Manager/Human Resources Director, Beth Fox stated that her understanding is that this process needs to go through review by a few committees. Ms. Fox explained that this is about 100 acres of land behind Rocky Brook Motel close to the Roxbury town line. The land is presently in current use and is forested land. She suggested that this item be put on more time to allow Attorney Lane to be present.

Chair Greenwald explained that the Stacey Ward Cole Trust is donating the City a parcel of land next to Route 101 and Branch Road. He indicate that the City would need to do due diligence in evaluating the liability the City would incur by accepting this land but added that he is sure the Conservation Commission will be glad to accept this property.

Councilor Clark clarified that a portion of this property is buildable. City Attorney Mullins agreed and stated that it has 50 feet of frontage on Branch Road. The Councilor asked how much taxes the City receives. Attorney Mullins stated that it is fairly low and amounts to about \$5,000 because of the current use status. He went on to say that based on the trust language if the City refuses the property, the property will be sold and the proceeds will go to the Thompson School.

Councilor Roberts asked that a map of the property be provided to the Council.

Councilor Powers asked whether the City is under any time restraint. Attorney Mullins stated that he wasn't sure how the Probate process works but felt that the City is likely to have a couple of months but if there is an issue with time staff will come back before the Committee.

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

On vote of 5-0, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee placed this item on more time and referred the item to the Conservation Commission for their review. In the meantime, staff is directed to do the necessary review in preparation for this item to come back to Committee.

3. MEMORANDUM: Fire Chief- Acceptance of Donation

Fire Chief Mark Howard stated that the department has received a donation in the amount of \$20 from Ms. Constance Paine in memory of retired Call Captain Jack Denis.

Councilor Roberts made the following motion which was seconded by Councilor Filiault.

On a vote of 5-0, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to accept a donation from Ms. Constance Paine in the amount of \$20.00.

4. MEMORANDUM: Fire Chief- 2013 Homeland Security Grant Award HazMat Allocation

Chief Howard stated that the second donation is in the amount of \$9,577.93 for the specific purchase of a Midland Emergency Response Kit. He explained that this is a specialized kit used for rail cars. The Chief noted that even though the City does not have a rail car that runs through the City, within the City's response district area as a HazMat Team there are several railways. They include the North Walpole to White River corridor. In addition, this would allow the City to assist other teams in the Nashua, Manchester areas.

Chief Howard explained that this is from a 2013 grant, which the State wanted to strategically place kits throughout the State and for auditing purposes they asked that the City apply for said funds.

Councilor Roberts asked whether this donation could be because more oil and propane are transported by rail. Chief Howard stated that this is not because of the crude oil issue the country is facing and this kit won't work on those types of cars but it will work on other pressurized vehicles. He added that the department is following closely the issue with crude oil.

Councilor Clark asked about the maintenance costs related to equipment such as this. Chief Howard stated that for instance they have kits that are used for chlorine spills that were purchased about 20 years ago and are still within the crates they were purchased in and the department frequently trains with them. He indicated that if one of these kits were to be damaged based on the State's RSA, it would be billed out for the incident and the City won't have to replace it within its budget. He added that because this is a grant funded item, it falls off depreciation after seven to ten years and the State wouldn't expect the City to replace it.

Councilor Filiault made the following motion which was seconded by Councilor Roberts.

On a vote of 5-0, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to accept a grant in the amount of \$9,577.93 from the 2013 State of New Hampshire Homeland Security Program (SHSP) for the purchase of a Midland Emergency Response Kit.

5. MEMORANDUM: Fire Chief- Advance Life Support Intercept Transport Agreement

Chief Howard stated this item is in reference to the Intercept Life Support one year Agreement with the local communities. Chief Howard stated that staff was before the Finance Committee regarding the different charges that were outlined in this agreement. Of the ten communities the City spoke to five who chose to continue with this service, and five chose not to. The discussion with Swanzey and Richmond took a lot longer, and staff met with the Fire Chief and the Town Administrator and those two towns also decided not to move forward. Currently only five communities are being served.

Based on that the City of Keene review committee for this item was reconvened to further review the budget, and the Fire Chief called for lowering of his budget to nearly half the amount. The cost being proposed was based on call volume, decrease in overtime, and wear and tear on the vehicle.

The Chief then went over the proposed contract containing changes in the following areas:

- 1. Updating all dates in contract to reflect new term of contract.*
- 2. #7 was added into the agreement in the case that we provide ALS care when the transport is provided by another service.*

Chief Howard noted that this was something that was included in the old agreement. In most cases when the City responds with an ambulance they transport the patient to the hospital in the same ambulance. He indicated that this was added in for patient safety reasons. Should Keene meet a town half way they wouldn't want to transport a patient from one ambulance to the other. This would still allow Keene to bill for services but not at the same rate should they have to transport.

- 3. Attachment A Fee Schedule: Adjustment in budget from a \$20,300 budget to \$10,150 budget. The cost to each town is still based on 50% flat fee and 50% based on population.*

Reflection of the new fees based on the changes to the budget.

- 4. Attachment B- we have also added back in the ALS Fee Schedule the Intercept Fee of \$391.67. This fee would be used when we provide the ALS care, however the transport is provided by another service.*

This is if Keene provides the ALS but not the ambulance.

Councilor Roberts asked for clarification that for those towns that opted out they wouldn't have any advanced life support. Chief Howard stated that last year with all the towns Keene was serving Keene was providing a secondary service, which meant that they all had listed another agency as their primary response. However, in some instances the City of Keene was still being called and for the five that chose not to sign an agreement, Keene

will not be responding. However, if one of these towns runs short on ambulances because they are responding to a multi-vehicle accident then Keene would respond.

Councilor Powers noted that this is a one-year agreement and asked whether there was a plan to increase the time. Chief Howard stated that because last year's process was new and he does not have a year's worth of data he would like to have one more year.

Councilor Filiault asked if one of the towns were short, would a Medic from Keene then have to respond. Chief Howard stated that for those towns that are aware of the system, this could be a loophole but it is something Keene is tracking and just because they call for an ambulance a paramedic is not automatically sent. Councilor Powers clarified that if an ambulance responded at a paramedic level the City would be paid at that level. Chief Howard answered in the affirmative.

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

On a vote of 5-0, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to negotiate and execute the new one year Advanced Life Support Intercept Transport Agreements.

6. MEMORANDUM: Assistant Public Works Director - 2015 Asset Management Planning Grant

Assistant Public Works Director Donna Hanscom stated that the State is offering communities a grant to create an Asset Management Plan for their drinking water mains. There is a 50% match that is required which can be in funds or labor. Councilor Roberts noted that the City has on average about 30 water mains and asked how much does this cost in labor should there ever be an issue. Ms. Hanscom stated that it varies depending on the time of year. She indicated that they would be working on the most deteriorating pipe and it would be more of a data analysis project.

Chair Greenwald asked how staff time is calculated for this project; actual hours or loaded hours. Ms. Hanscom stated that it would be loaded hours.

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

On a vote of 5-0, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to apply for, execute, and implement a water distribution system Asset Management Planning grant up to \$15,000 from the NH Department of Environmental Services with City staff time to be used as the City's matching contribution.

7. MEMORANDUM: Police Captain - Grant - NH Highway Safety Agency Grant - DWI Patrols

Police Captain Steve Russo stated that this item is in reference to a grant in the amount of \$8,736 to conduct twenty, one-officer DWI enforcement patrols in six-hour shifts during the period between May 1st and September 15th. The enforcement has usually been on Thursday, Friday, Saturday and during holiday periods.

Chair Greenwald asked when the no hand held cell phone law goes into effect. Captain Russo stated that it goes into effect on July 1st. The Chair asked whether there would be any publicity about this. Captain Russo stated that the State has a Distracted Driver Program this week and he had put out some flyers about this new law that goes into effect. There will be more flyers in other areas as well as a message on the website. The Chair asked whether there are any enforcement efforts planned. Captain Russo stated that he was not aware of any but the department will have as many officers as they can out patrolling during the May through September period to assist the State.

Councilor Roberts made the following motion which was seconded by Councilor Filiault.

On a vote of 5-0, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to accept \$8,736.00 in reimbursement funding from the New Hampshire Highway Safety Agency to fund DWI enforcement patrols in the City of Keene.

8. MEMORANDUM: Assistant City Manager/Human Resources Director - Life Insurance and Long Term Disability Insurance

Assistant City Manager/Human Resources Director Beth Fox stated that the City's contract with Hartford Life expires on June 30th. The City worked with its broker IPG to obtain a quote and received seven quotes. This resulted in Anthem Liability offering the lowest cost for combined coverage for a multi-year contract for a period of three years.

Ms. Fox noted that the long-term disability component through Anthem and Hartford are comparable in cost and this coverage is approximately \$38,000 per year for either company. The real savings is on the life insurance; Anthem is \$9,500 per year and comes with some benefit enhancements such as accidental death and dismemberment as well as life benefit for public service personnel. She indicated that staff's recommendation is that the City accepts the combined quote from Anthem.

Councilor Clark asked whether these were savings over what the City was paying right now or is it that Anthem is not going to raise its rates as much as Hartford. Ms. Fox stated that these are savings over what the City is currently paying which is about \$38,000 for both these lines of coverage and with the new quote there will be a savings on the life portion.

Councilor Filiault made the following motion which was seconded by Councilor Roberts.

On a vote of 5-0, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to enter into a new multi-year

contract with Anthem Life Insurance Company to administer the City's life and long term disability insurances.

9. ORDINANCE: O-2015-04- Traffic, Parking and Public Ways

Parking Project Manager, Gary Lamoureux stated that he would like to give a brief overview about what is being done relative to parking. He indicated that there has been a lot of discussion about parking garages and the lack of parking. He indicated that many people think parking services is just enforcement. Enforcement is one aspect of parking services. Maintenance is another component of parking services. Parking services pays for 50% of the maintenance while the rest is done by Public Works.

Mr. Lamoureux went on to say that the parking services would like to operate just on the meter revenue and not violations but that is not realistic. He added that the violations are merely for compliance reasons and not for the purpose of raising revenue. He indicated that they do work a lot with the downtown group.

Mr. Lamoureux then went over the comments from the last meeting:

City employee parking to the City Hall deck – Mr. Lamoureux explained when employees were utilizing the Wells Street deck the District Court was still utilizing City Hall and the deck was being use for that purpose. When the District Court did move out the City looked at the parking needs of the Court downtown. What the City was able to do was to open up 37 spaces at City Hall, open up parking behind the old Middle School and also open up 56 spaces at the Wells Street deck.

Parking issues because of the new fire station – Mr. Lamoureux stated that once parking was created on street and reserved spaces were created for employees there was a net increase of 13 spaces in this area. There were five spaces removed from Middle Street once construction was completed but three spaces that used to be reserved on Washington Street was also turned over to public parking. When the library project was completed nine spaces were opened up. Hence, the entire north end did receive additional spaces.

Park Mobile – This program became active on a limited basis in January 2014. In April 2014 it was active for remainder of the City. He indicated that this program is working well. In January 2014 when the program first started the City saw 21 transactions but by the end of the year the City saw 964 transactions. This year for the first three months there have been 1,481 transactions which equals \$1,104. He added that cards advertising park mobile are being circulated all throughout the City as well as being included with violation tickets.

Length of time at meters– One of the new businesses that had concern about the two hour limit was referred to long term parking that exists outside of the downtown area.

Personnel – In 2012 there were five full-time employees. Today there are two full-time employees with nearly 80 hours of operation on the street but this has now been changed to two part-time employees working 34 hours each and a full-time employee working 40 hours, which bring the operation time on the street to 108 hours. By changing the two full-time employees, the City was able to eliminate some of the benefit load.

Chair Greenwald asked who pays for the person who does the downtown maintenance. Mr. Lamoureux stated that it is split between the parking fund and the general fund.

Mr. Peter Bradshaw of Greenbriar Road thanked Mr. Lamoureux for the answers provided for some of the concerns that were raised last time. He stated that what he would really like to see what the net profit and loss for each deck was. Mr. Bradshaw stated that he understands that there is a net increase of 13 spaces in the Winter Street area but felt it is still hard to find a space.

Mr. Bradshaw went on to say that he recalls that there were about 40 metered spaces at the Court House parking lot before this property was reconstructed but these have all disappeared and wasn't sure where they were all made up. Mr. Lamoureux stated that when this lot was changed there were still 11 public spaces that could be utilized. There were also library staff that used to park in this lot, those personnel are now at the Gilbo East lot.

It was noted the lot behind the Middle School is owned by the City and hence there is no cost for City staff to use this lot. Mr. Bradshaw also brought up the issue of City employees parking downtown in public spaces. He asked for explanation in costs between Mr. Lamoureux's contract position and the police supervisor's position that used to exist. Mr. Thornton stated that the police lieutenant position that used to exist cost the City about \$130,000 (with benefits), and Mr. Lamoureux's position pays about \$44,000 and because this is a contract position there are not benefits attached to it.

Ms. Dorrie O'Meara who owns property in Keene referred to the Petition that was turned in at the last meeting and noted the number of people who were against this increase to rates. She stated that if everyone who signed the petition were present tonight, it would be standing room only. Ms. O'Meara stated that it is difficult to get people to the downtown just with the \$5 tickets and anything more will be that much harder to deal with. She indicated that most merchants are paying these tickets because they feel bad for their customers and extending the enforcement time will make people not want to visit downtown.

Ms. O'Meara went on to say the City needs to stop spending money it doesn't have. She also talked about the City vehicles that are parking downtown and using up public spaces and felt this needs to stop right away. Chair Greenwald assured Ms. O'Meara that the City Manager is going to be addressing the City employees parking downtown. Mr. Lamoureux added that if an employee was stopping in to drop something off at City Hall for a few minutes it probably would not be a good use of their time to park behind the Middle School and walk to City Hall but this type of parking won't be for long periods of time. Councilor Powers stated that most communities don't allow city vehicles in public parking spaces.

Mr. Bradshaw referred to page 2 of the handout Mr. Lamoureux circulated to the Committee. He noted that in FY15 there is a large increase in operating expenditure from \$861,999 (FY14) to \$963,545 and then to \$1,052,531 in FY16. Mr. Thornton explained that FY15 to FY21 are projections and the expenses are being inflated by 2% a year in enforcement and .5% a year in maintenance areas. FY14 to FY15 the large portion in FY15 is the reimbursement to the Police Department for services they provide to the parking division. There is also an increase in the overhead allocation for services such as Finance, IMS, City Clerk and City Attorney. There has also been an increase to maintenance activity at the two decks. Mr. Bradshaw asked if rates were going to be increased then why there is a projected decrease to revenue. Mr. Thornton stated that one of the reasons is the rehabilitation being planned to the Wells Street deck and to the Commercial Street lot. Mr. Lamoureux added that these projections do not show the increases being proposed.

Councilor Roberts stated that if the police supervisor is not being paid anymore what reimbursement costs are now being paid to the Police Department. Mr. Lamoureux stated that this year that portion was \$67,000 for prosecution, maintaining toll logs, issuing tickets and dispatch services – this is a 50/50 split between the Police Department and parking services.

Mr. Thornton added that the upper section of the columns in the handout does not indicate the revenue increases but the lower portion does.

Councilor Roberts noted that even with the new plan from FY16 – FY20 there is still going to be a loss of nearly \$252,000. Mr. Thornton agreed. Councilor Roberts pointed out that if there is a major problem that comes up with the parking division, spending the fund balance down would leave the City short on funds available to address such an issue.

Ms. O’Meara stated that she was confused why the parking division was still paying the Police Department. Chair Greenwald stated that parking services is an independent fund and the Police Department is part of the general fund. Mr. Lamoureux indicated that all the money taken in by parking services is not part of the tax base, whereas the general fund comes from the tax base. Parking Services operates as a separate fund and when the Police Department performs services for parking they are reimbursed by parking services.

Chair Greenwald asked why if the proposed changes are added in at the bottom of FY16, the amount still shows as a negative. Mr. Thornton stated that last spring when staff came before the Finance Committee they were proposing a much larger increase to meter revenue but then it was suggested that staff come back with a phase in approach. Hence, a smaller increase is being proposed for the first year with the idea that they will come back with another smaller increase in FY18 and then again in FY21. Councilor Clark expressed surprise at the other increases that were going to be happening and did not recall anything that was going to be more than 75 cents. Mr. Lamoureux stated that in March 2014 staff proposed 75 cents on the street, 50 cents in the lots with a 25 cent minimum for the meters. At that time, the Council asked for a softer approach and what is proposed is a three-phased

approach to have a more solid fund. The other increases are yet to be approved by the Council in FY18 and FY21.

Councilor Powers stated that he is concerned about taking fund balance to cover operations. He added that he supports the concept but was not sure what the end game was and hence was not ready to move forward with it tonight.

Councilor Filiault stated that there are portions of the proposal that he can agree with such as the increase to meter rates, handicap violation and leased fees. What will have a negative impact is the increase to fines from \$5 to \$10, especially with downtown competing with the chains and Colony Mill being heavily invested in. He noted he also has concerns with moving the enforcement time from 5 pm to 7 pm.

The question is how we fix this shortfall. He noted that the Council recently voted to a \$5 fee to be added to registration fees which will bring in about \$100,000 annually. The Councilor suggested that if \$100,000 of parking expenses could be moved from the parking fund to the general fund, this \$100,000 could cover that. Secondly, two years ago the City Manager indicated that the temporary position in parking services was because of a situation at the Fire Department. This position has now gone on for two years and this needs to be looked. The third item was the waiving of a \$1,200 fee last week at the Council meeting and hoped one of the Councilors who voted in favor of this would reconsider as contemplated by Rules of Order and put this \$1,200 back in the parking fund. He noted that the City does not have \$1,200 to give away. Councilor Filiault stated that he too is in agreement of City vehicles not using public spaces downtown.

A motion made by Councilor Clark that the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee to amend Section 94-94 under Restrictions from 9 am to 7 pm to 9 am to 6 pm.

The Mayor noted that a motion for adoption needs to be made before an amendment can be proposed.

A motion was made by Councilor Clark that the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee adopt O-2015-04. The motion was seconded by Chair Greenwald.

A motion was made by Councilor Clark that the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee amend Section 94-94 under Restrictions from 9 am to 7 pm to 9 am to 6 pm. The motion died for lack of second.

Mr. Lamoureux stated that what he is hearing is information about what's going to happen with staffing and felt if that was the case then the City Manager needs to be involved in this discussion. He did not see a reason to move forward on this item tonight and felt it can wait until more information is obtained.

Councilor Clark withdrew his motion to adopt O-2015-04. Chair Greenwald withdrew his second.

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Councilor Powers stated that he would like information about the overall direction the Manager has for this function of the City, information regarding a parking garage in the future, and more information on the \$67,000 pay back to the Police Department.

Councilor Roberts stated that he doesn't agree with putting this item on more time as he felt each time there is discussion about this item, there will be something else that would come up. He noted that there is nothing in here about the parking garage and felt that everything he is hearing is about maintaining the status quo for the next six years. He felt what is before the Committee is just a "bandaid" fix.

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

On a vote of 3-2, The Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee put this item on more time. Councilor Filiault and Councilor Roberts voted in opposition.

The meeting adjourned at 8:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Krishni Pahl, Minute Taker

Additional Edits by,
Terri M. Hood, Assistant City Clerk