

City of Keene
New Hampshire

FINANCE, ORGANIZATION AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, January 14, 2021

6:30 PM

Remote Meeting via Zoom

Members Present:

Thomas F. Powers, Chair
Stephen L. Hooper, Vice-Chair
Terry M. Clark
Raleigh C. Ormerod

Members Not Present:

Michael J. Remy

Staff Present:

Elizabeth A. Dragon, City Manager
Thomas P. Mullins, City Attorney
Fire Chief, Mark Howard
Finance Director, Merri Howe
Asst. City Manager/HR Director, Beth Fox
Public Works Director, Kurt Blomquist
City Engineer, Don Lussier
Parks, Recreation and Facilities Director,
Andy Bohannon
Human Service Manager, Natalie Darcy
Asst. Public Works Director/Solid Waste
Manager, Duncan Watson

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

1) Adopt A Bench Donation - Ashuelot River Park - Parks, Recreation and Facilities Director

Parks, Recreation and Facilities Director Andy Bohannon addressed the committee and stated this item is for a donation of a bench from Jane Nolan to be located at the Ashuelot River Park. Mr. Bohannon noted the price of this bench is \$1350 the past benches were at a price of \$1250 which he noted was because of increase in pricing as well as installation. Councilor Hooper asked for the size of the bench. Mr. Bohannon stated the benches won't be six feet long, but it will be similar to what exists at the park at this time.

Councilor Clark asked how many more spaces are left where public can donate benches. Mr. Bohannon stated within the pergola there are three spaces left and around the park itself there are a total of five spaces left.

Councilor Hooper made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Clark.

On 4-0 roll call vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommend that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to accept the donation of \$1,350.00 from Jane Nolan to purchase a bench to be placed in the Ashuelot River Park.

2) FEMA Grants for City Hall Generator - Parks, Recreation and Facilities Director

Mr. Bohannon stated in 2018 the City applied for a grant through FEMA to replace a generator at City Hall. He noted the City has been working with FEMA on this grant for the past 2 ½ years providing them with the necessary information they requested. FEMA recently advised the City that it will be more than another year or so before funding can be approved for this grant.

As a result, staff decided to withdraw from this grant and were encouraged by the State to apply for another grant for which the City could receive funding immediately. However, this grant was different in that it was not a 95/5 match but rather 50/50 match up to \$75,000. When the first grant was submitted the generator was at a price of approximately \$80,000, but time and specifications have changed and the price is now close to \$100,000. Mr. Bohannon stated this still is a good savings and will enable the City to carry forward the money which was previously allocated.

Mr. Bohannon proposed a change to the language for the motion that was proposed by FEMA to add the following to the end of the motion: *in the amount of \$75,000 with a 50% match and to move forward with the application.*

Councilor Ormerod asked for the life of the current generator and asked how often it has been used. Mr. Bohannon stated it is not used often, but it is used when City Hall loses power. He added it has served its useful life and added it is a 20 year generator. Councilor Powers recalled a day in the fall of 1995 when a small generator that was serving the City Hall went up in smoke. The Councilor felt the current generator is passed its useful life and added it does exercise itself without a load on a weekly basis.

Councilor Clark asked what is used to operate this generator. Councilor Powers thought it was a diesel operated generator. Mr. Bohannon added what the City has now is a 100-watt generator and the new one would be 120-watts. The Councilor asked whether this generator can be traded in. Mr. Bohannon stated staff could certainly look into this. He indicated the City is working with a contract through Hamblet Electric to service the generator and he will look into the trade-in option.

Attorney Mullins noted in the background notes it is stated as “cost share of up to \$75,000” and asked whether the words “up to” would be necessary for the motion. Mr. Bohannon stated it is a 50% match that is up to \$75,000 and the City cannot exceed \$75,000 of the grant. The Attorney asked whether the cost could be less than \$75,000. Mr. Bohannon answered in the negative. The Attorney agreed the motion as being proposed would be acceptable.

Councilor Hooper made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Clark.

On 4-0 roll call vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommend that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to enter into and accept an Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the State of New Hampshire for the replacement of the City Hall Emergency Generator in the amount of \$75,000 with a 50% match and to move forward with the application.

3) Acceptance of Donations - Human Services Manager

Human Service Manager Natalie Darcy addressed the committee next. Ms. Darcy stated the Department received a call from an individual asking if they could donate their stimulus check they received from the Federal government. The money will be used for things like purchasing an infant car seat, baby formula, or paying for someone's gas bill etc. There was a second call for donation of a stimulus check and both donations are in the amount of \$1,200 each specifically for Keene residents and both donors wish to remain anonymous.

Councilor Ormerod asked whether the motion would be for all stimulus checks received by the city or whether others need to be accepted separately. Chair Powers stated these two checks will be accepted today, but there could be other donations that come in throughout the year which might have a name attached to the donation and the Committee will accept them appropriately and extend their appreciation to those individuals.

Councilor Hooper made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Clark.

On 4-0 roll call vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommend that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to accept anonymous cash donations to offset cost necessary to assist Human Services clients who may be experiencing an extraordinary need.

4) Professional Services Contract Change Order CMA Engineers - Engineering and Technical Services for Fire Suppression System and Increased Structural Support at City of Keene Transfer Station - Asst. Public Works Director/Solid Waste Manager

Asst. Public Works Director/Solid Waste Manager Duncan Watson stated in April there was a fire at the Transfer Station which resulted in some damage. There were no structure issues but there were some building issues that needed repair. The initial bid for the work received no responses. Because this is the third fire at the transfer station the Fire Department would like a better system to address the fire issues.

Mr. Watson stated the transfer station has had issues with fires caused by combustion issues due to the items people bring up to the station and incompatible items being mixed with trash. He noted there is a 30,000 gallon cistern but this has to be put through a pumper for the Fire Department to access water. What is being proposed is a dry pipe system the Fire Department could hook into. In addition, it has also been recommended the structure be strengthened which is part of the change order. Mr. Watson stated because there were no responses from the prior bid to repair just the fire damage they would combine fire damage work with the dry pipe work. Once this bid packet is ready, staff will be able to come back to the Council with proper numbers.

Councilor Clark asked whether it would be practical to also have the cistern connected to the dry pipe system. Mr. Watson stated to have the cistern connected it would be an entirely different and more expensive proposal. Councilor Clark asked whether all the fire damage work will be covered by insurance. Mr. Watson agreed it would be, but minus the deductible.

Councilor Ormerod noted the \$16,500 paid to CMA Engineers to prepare the bid was not successful and asked for explanation as to what happened with that. Mr. Watson explained it was a combination of a couple of things; the repair to the transfer station was not estimated to be a big job, mostly cosmetic and insulation, which did not attract any contractors. He added it was also a timing issue (late fall) and some of these contracts were impacted because of Covid. The Councilor confirmed the bid package is not going to be duplicated but that these other feature are going to be added to them. Mr. Watson answered in the affirmative.

Councilor Hooper made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Clark.

On 4-0 roll call vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommend that the City Manager be authorized to negotiate and execute a change order with CMA Engineers, on professional services contract 04-20-27, for engineering and technical services for a fire suppression system and increased structural support for the roof of the Transfer Station and Recycling Center for an amount not to exceed Thirty Two Thousand One Hundred Forty Five Dollars (\$32,145).

5) Colony Court Sewer Replacement - Consultant Selection - City Engineer

City Engineer Don Lussier was the next to address the committee. Mr. Lussier explained the Colony Court sewer replacement project was approved through the CIP process for construction in 2021. This project will replace around 1,800 feet of existing sewer main which have been a problem for the last few years. Mr. Lussier stated the City went through the normal selection process and received two bids. Both firms were interviewed and staff is recommending Dubois & King be awarded the contract for the design of this project.

Councilor Hooper asked whether the other bid was close to the \$70,000 amount. Mr. Lussier stated both firms were well qualified and in the end it came down to one being less expensive, and the selection team not seeing where the added price came from for the other firm to support their proposal.

Councilor Clark asked whether these pipes connect to pipes under Wright Street. Mr. Lussier agreed and added there are pipes being replaced that go under private property to the rear of Colony Court towards Wright Street and connecting to a man hole which was built as part of the Washington Street project. The work under the private driveway is within an easement and the work will need to restore the driveway to existing condition or better. The work in backyards include moving sheds and replacing fences and this work has been budgeted into the project.

Councilor Hooper made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Clark.

On 4-0 roll call vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommend that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to negotiate and execute a professional service contract with DuBois & King, Inc., in an amount not to exceed \$70,000, for engineering and technical services for the Colony Court Sewer Main Replacement Project.

6) Relating to Use of Fund Balance SCBA Masks - Fire Chief Resolution R-2021-01

Fire Chief Mark Howard stated the 2024 Capital Improvements Program included a Fire Department project for the full replacement of self-contained breathing apparatus equipment with an estimated cost of \$750,000 to be debt funded. Chief Howard noted as he had indicated during the CIP process last year, the SCBA's were two NFPA Standards out of compliance and hence the Department was going to be eligible for grant funding.

In December 2019, Deputy Chief Chickering submitted the grant application for the full replacement of the SCBA equipment in the CIP project. The grant was awarded to the City of Keene in July 2020 for \$369,090.91 and was accepted by City Council in August. By accepting the grant, the project will be completed in FY 2021, therefore, no longer included in the CIP.

The City funded a 10% match, \$39,909.09, by utilizing a FY 2020 City Manager carryover request from the Fire Department budget. The total amount of the grant including the match is \$406,000 for the replacement of 58 complete SCBA packs (base back-pack, mask with voice amp, regulator and two 4,500 PSI 30 minute bottles). However, the grant award does not cover the replacement of the 5-RIT Packs, fifteen 4500 PSI one hour bottles, and 60 SCBA masks.

By working with and guidance from FEMA, it has been determined that if the purchase and receipt of the SCBA equipment is under budget, the City can re-submit for the remaining funds to be re-allocated through a waiver to purchase some of the equipment not approved in the initial grant. Upon approval, the waiver will cover the fifteen 4,500 PSI one hour bottles and the RIT Packs, but it will not cover the additional 60 masks. The estimated cost of the 60 additional masks is \$15,960, and with the approval by the City Council, is to be funded with the use of fund balance.

Councilor Clark asked whether the additional expense for the masks the reason the 10% is \$39,909.09 instead of \$36,909. Chief Howard stated the \$39,909.09 is the 10% of the overall grant. The Councilor clarified whether the grant is then more than \$369,000. Chief Howard felt this could be due to a typographic error and asked for clarification from finance staff. Attorney Mullins agreed the Memo and Resolution don't seem to line up. Finance Director Merri Howe stated she had made a typographic error in the Memo, but not in the Resolution. She noted the 10% as indicated by Councilor Clark should be \$36,909.

Councilor Hooper made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Clark.

On 4-0 roll call vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends the adoption of Resolution R-2021-01.

Chair Powers addressed items on the More Time Agenda. He stated Councilor Manwaring's request for evaluation of Charter Employees will be moving forward. Councilors Bosley, Remy and Giacomo's request for continued remote participation will need to wait until the Covid pandemic is over.

There being no further business, Chair Powers adjourned the meeting at 7:18 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Krishni Pahl, Minute Taker