

**Rochester City Council Workshop
April 17, 2018
Council Chambers
(Immediately following the City Council Public Hearing)**

COUNCILORS PRESENT

Councilor Abbott
Councilor Bogan
Councilor Gates
Councilor Gray
Councilor Hamann
Councilor Hutchinson
Councilor Keans
Councilor Lachapelle
Councilor Lauterborn
Councilor Torr
Councilor Walker
Councilor Varney
Mayor McCarley

OTHERS PRESENT

Daniel Fitzpatrick, City Manager
Blaine Cox, Deputy City Manager
Terence O'Rourke, City Attorney
Gregg DeNobile, Resident
David Cline, Property Owner
Paul Martin, resident
Peter Nourse, Director of City Services

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

Mayor McCarley called the Rochester City Council Workshop meeting to order at 7:03 PM. Deputy City Clerk Cassie Givara took as silent roll call. All Councilors were present.

2. Public Input

Mayor McCarley invited members of the public to come forward and speak.

Sam Oliver, resident, spoke about the view he has heard around town that Rochester spends too much on schools and is wasteful with school spending. Mr. Oliver stated that the statistics on

the state website did not support these claims. For the last school year, Rochester was just over \$7 million under the state average for school spending based on money spent per student and was the lowest 11% out of 162 cities/towns for school funding.

Gregg DeNobile, resident, spoke about the property at 38 Hanson Street and advised selling it to get in back on the Rochester tax roll. Mr. DeNobile also referenced recent articles stating that Rochester “has” to break the tax cap. Mr. DeNobile feels that most Rochester residents can’t afford an increase in their taxes to cover this.

Mayor McCarley closed public input at 7:09 PM.

3. Communications from the City Manager

3.1. Presentation of the FY 2019 Budget

City Manager Dan Fitzpatrick gave a presentation on the Fiscal Year 2019 City of Rochester Operating Budget.

4. Communications from the Mayor

Mayor McCarley pointed out that the budget schedule indicates that Council will be concluding the budget process a week earlier than normal. The final meeting will be on the last Tuesday in May as opposed to first Tuesday in June due to a scheduling conflict. If Council is unable to conclude the process at the end of May, Mayor McCarley will look into remoting in for the June meeting or potentially delaying the meeting one week.

5. Presentation: Wayfinding

Randy Collins, Landscape architect with the BETA group, gave an updated presentation on the Wayfinding Signage Master Plan which was originally presented to Council 6 months prior. The goal is to develop a unified system of wayfinding to direct visitors or residents to different points throughout the City. Mr. Collins presented the final logo for the wayfinding system which will be used on all the signage.

Mr. Collins presented examples of the types of wayfinding signs and how they would be used throughout the community. Mr. Collins also showed a map of proposed locations in and around the City for the directional, gateway and destination signs. The BETA group has done an inventory of the existing non-DOT wayfinding signs in the City so as they move forward they can remove duplicate signs and signs that are no longer relevant.

Councilor Torr questioned the total cost of the project being \$800,000. It was clarified that the total cost for all the signage would be approximately \$400,000.

Councilor Varney asked if the signage project could be prioritized over the course of several years, putting up the signs in increments. Perhaps placing them in groups or placing the most important items first.

Karen Pollard, head of Economic Development, said the way they had separated the signs out by routes was a way to prioritize which signs would be placed at which time. The routes could be completed first and then directional signs and parking signs within the City the following years.

Councilor Varney inquired if they could be further split up within the routes, with just a portion of the signs being placed at a time because there would have to be a line drawn on where the funding ends. Ms. Pollard indicated it was difficult to install the signs this way because they are related to each other and work as a unit.

Councilor Walker inquired why the signage is so expensive. Mr. Collins indicated that there were certain safety requirements that had to be met for roadside signs. The poles on the signs have to be crashworthy and the signs are constructed from galvanized material. The signs are a durable material which will last 15 – 20 years without upkeep. The signs are also fairly large which accounts for some of the cost.

Mayor McCarley asked what would be the next step in the process. City Manager Fitzpatrick said that Council would need to evaluate the budget and then have discussion at a workshop meeting. There wasn't a decision to be made this evening, just a chance for Council to see the presentation.

6. Discussion: Council Rules of Order – Suspending Rules

Mayor McCarley gave a brief summary of the questions to be discussed. The issue in question is Council's frequent suspension of their own rules to read for a second time by title only.

Attorney O'Rourke summarized the discussions that had been held about this matter at the Codes & Ordinances Committee meeting. It had been discussed that the two readings were redundant and Council never did anything other than suspend the rules and read for first and second time by title only and that it was a waste of time. Mr. O'Rourke reviewed the rules of order as written and added some new wording. The current wording says "all

other resolutions shall have one reading before they are finally passed." Mr. O'Rourke said he added a paragraph to read "Except those placed on the agenda by the Mayor which have already been examined by the City Manager, City Attorney, City Clerk and Finance Director" which will be Resolutions which will only require one reading. The original wording was left intact to allow the possibility for Councilors to present agenda items at meetings which haven't been through the entire agenda setting process. The items which appear on the agenda currently have already been through the process of being reviewed multiple times and many have come from Committee. The idea is these items can be read for a first time by title only and then voted on immediately or sent to Committee. When the agenda items comes back from committee, it can be voted on immediately without a second reading because it has already been through the process.

Councilor Keans felt like this new wording would allow shortcuts and rash decisions and felt it interfered with the democratic process. Some of the decisions Council makes are straightforward and can go through quickly, but Councilor Keans felt it was her duty as an elected official to read each resolution multiple times and taking time before making a decision.

Councilor Walker stated that the way Council conducts business currently is to suspend the rules twice and then vote immediately. This new wording would not speed the process in any way, it would just allow for a single vote. There is still an opportunity to review the resolution prior to voting.

Councilor Hamann agreed that the process was not being expedited. He felt it is unusual that the Council sets a rule for themselves that they intend to break almost every time they vote.

Councilor Keans asked if she, as a Councilor, could have an item requiring money to be spent on the "quickie" agenda by the City Attorney, City manager and the others on the agenda settings committee. Attorney O'Rourke clarified that items on the agenda currently are not "just placed" there. They have usually come from a Committee and have already been reviewed by himself, the Finance Director, and the City Manager.

Councilor Lauterborn questioned the section which reads "No ordinance shall be amended except on its second reading." If an item comes from a Committee, how can it be amended if there is no second reading?

Councilor Hamann indicated that the items would still be read for a second time, the rules just wouldn't be suspended to do so.

Attorney O'Rourke stated that items that are on the agenda have already gone to committee, have already been reviewed and have already gone through the agenda settings process. The process of a second reading is redundant since the agenda item has already been reviewed several times in order to be placed on the agenda.

City Manager Fitzpatrick stated that any motion can be amended after it has been introduced.

Councilor Varney indicated that the first and second reading requirement had originated from when Councilors would bring up items at a meeting to be discussed without any prior notice without opportunity to be reviewed or put in proper form. The items would be sent to committee, then come back to Council.

Mayor McCarley said that the issue of suspending the rules will be voted on at the May 1, 2018 Council Meeting.

7. Department Reports

No Discussion

8. Other

Councilor Gates thanked the Department of Public Works for their assistance in filling the ditch and cleaning out the culverts on his road after the heavy rains eroded the ground at the bottom of his and his neighbors' driveways.

Councilor Keans referenced a presentation by the Riverwalk Committee last week and inquired whether there was someone in-house who was keeping an eye on the improvements proposed to Hanson Pines and whether or not they fall within the boundaries of the trust.

Councilor Varney requested an update on the development off Chesley Hill Road and where the City was as far as the Street acceptance and straightening out the drainage. Peter Nourse, Director of City Services, reported that they are working with the contractor that rebuilt Chesley Hill Road to and repaired some of the patches. As far as development goes, it went to the Planning Board and the owner has appealed the pull of surety. Councilor Walker clarified that the owner has made a deal where he agreed to do the extra surety to get the work completed. Mr. Nourse said he would get back to Council with a timeline on when the work would be completed and the street accepted.

9. Non-Public Session, Land, RSA 91-A:3 II (d)

Councilor Torr **MOVED** to enter Non-public session under RSA 91-A:3, II(d) land at 8:04 PM. Councilor Lachapelle seconded the motion. **MOTION CARRIED** by a unanimous roll call vote with Councilors Hutchinson, Keans, Lauterborn, Hamann, Lachapelle, Abbott, Walker, Gates, Torr, Gray, Bogan, Varney and Mayor McCarley all voting in favor of the motion.

Councilor Lauterborn **MOVED** to exit the non-public session at 8:40 PM. Councilor Bogan seconded the motion. **MOTION CARRIED** by a unanimous voice vote.

Councilor Lauterborn **MOVED** to seal the minutes of the Non-Public Session because it had been determined that divulgence of this information likely would render a proposed action ineffective. Councilor Lachapelle seconded the motion. The **MOTION CARRIED** to seal the minutes by a 13 to 0 roll call vote. Councilors Varney, Hutchinson, Keans, Lauterborn, Hamann, Lachapelle, Abbott, Walker, Gates, Torr, Gray, Bogan and Mayor McCarley voted in favor of the motion.

10. Adjournment

Councilor Lachapelle **MOVED** to **ADJOURN** the meeting at 8:41 PM. Councilor Bogan seconded the motion. The **MOTION CARRIED** by a unanimous voice vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cassie Givara
Deputy City Clerk