

**City Council Special Meeting
June 21, 2022
Council Chambers
6:16 PM**

COUNCILORS PRESENT

Councilor Beaudoin
Councilor Berlin
Councilor Desrochers
Councilor Fontneau
Councilor Gilman
Councilor Gray
Councilor Hailey
Councilor Hamann
Councilor Larochelle
Councilor Malone
Deputy Mayor Lachapelle
Mayor Callaghan

OTHERS PRESENT

Blaine Cox, City Manager
Alexander de Geofroy, Ward 5 resident
Karen Stokes, Ward 5 resident
Susan Rice, Ward 5 resident

Minutes

1. Call To Order

Mayor Callaghan called the City Council Special meeting to order at 6:16 PM. Deputy City Clerk Cassie Givara took a silent roll call attendance. All Councilors were present.

2. Resolution Authorizing Supplemental Appropriation in the amount of \$289,000.00 for the Purchase of 181 Highland Street, Rochester, New Hampshire

Mayor Callaghan read the resolution for a first time by title only and referred to a public hearing on July 5, 2022.

Resolution Authorizing Supplemental Appropriation in the amount of \$299,000.00 for the Purchase of 181 Highland Street, Rochester, New Hampshire

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ROCHESTER, AS FOLLOWS:

That the Mayor and City Council of the City of Rochester hereby authorized a supplemental appropriation in the amount of Two Hundred Ninety Nine Thousand Dollars (\$299,000.00) to cover the costs associated with the purchase of 181 Highland Street, Rochester, New Hampshire. The supplemental appropriation will be derived in its entirety from the General Fund Unassigned Fund Balance.

To the extent not otherwise provided for in this Resolution, the Finance Director is hereby authorized to establish and/or designate such multi-year, non-lapsing accounts and or account numbers as are necessary to implement the transactions contemplated in this Resolution.

3. Election: City Council Ward 5, Seat A

Mayor Callaghan announced that the three candidates for the Ward 5, Seat A Council position would have an opportunity to read a statement.

3.1 Candidate Statements:

a. Alexander de Geofroy

Alexander de Geofroy read a statement for Council detailing his history and interest in serving on Council.

Councilor Beaudoin asked Mr. de Geofroy what he felt his role would be as a City Councilor if he were to take the seat. Mr. de Geofroy stated that the City Council is akin to a Board of Directors for the citizens of the City of Rochester and he sees the role as one of oversight and leadership, ensuring that the way the City is being run is in the best interest of its citizens. He stated that because this would be a new position for him, he also sees an opportunity to bring a new perspective to the Council.

Councilor Hainey asked Mr. de Geofroy what he felt is the biggest challenges that Rochester has faced as well as its biggest accomplishment. Mr. de Geofroy spoke about the opioid crisis in the City as a challenge and cited the advances in Economic Development, such as the Granite Ridge and larger manufacturers developing in Rochester, as an accomplishment.

Councilor Desrochers asked what Mr. de Geofroy what he felt his biggest strength would be as well as what skills he offered that would best serve the Council. Mr. de Geofroy spoke about his strength as a problem-solver and his background in engineering. He stated that his passion is in leadership and mentoring positions, and finding innovative solutions to issues; whether they be technical or organizational.

b. Karen Stokes

Karen Stokes read a statement for Council detailing her history and interest in serving on Council.

Councilor Beaudoin asked Ms. Stokes what she felt her role would be as a City Councilor if she were to take the seat. Ms. Stokes answered that her background and passion in working with youth with disabilities and ensuring vulnerable populations have equal opportunities for education, housing, employment, and other resources. She also spoke about handling the issue of homelessness in the City.

Councilor Hainey asked how Ms. Stokes would transition her prior history on the School Board to the City Council. Ms. Stokes spoke about how the School Board and City Council work in conjunction with each other. She stated that she would bring a perspective from the School side and may have insight on their financial requests and reasoning behind these requests.

Councilor Desrochers referenced the future costs to taxpayers for inaction on social issues. She asked Ms. Stokes to speak about this issue and if she had any thoughts on the upfront costs versus long term costs. Ms. Stokes stated that there is a perception that much of the funding for these issues comes from tax dollars; however, she stated that these issues are not just local, but experienced State and Countrywide. She spoke

about looking outside of the community for grants, funding, and resources that could be utilized to assist within Rochester. Councilor Desrochers asked how Ms. Stokes felt about accepting federal grants and funding. Ms. Stokes stated that she felt grants could be beneficial; however, they need to be reviewed and vetted to determine the terms and expectations, whether they will work for the City, and how the funding will be handled by the City when the grant funding is depleted.

c. Susan J. Rice

Susan Rice read a statement for Council detailing her history in Rochester and her interest in serving on Council.

Councilor Beaudoin asked Ms. Rice what she felt her role would be as a City Councilor if she were to take the seat. Ms. Rice spoke about being a leader and moving the City forward in a positive direction to continue to grow and prosper. Ms. Rice spoke about her personal passion regarding access to potable water and importance of maintaining the City's wastewater disposal systems. Additionally, she said that food insecurity, mental health, drugs, and immigration were of high importance as well.

Councilor Hainey asked Ms. Rice where she sees Ward 5 in five-years. Ms. Rice responded that she foresees the economic development occurring along the Route 11 corridor continuing and expanding. She stated there is room for growth in the area and suggested the possibility of another business park. She also spoke about the working and hobby farms in the area, the importance of maintaining this industry, and the need to ensure that all uses allowed within the ward are compatible.

3.2 Oath of Office: City Council Ward 5, Seat A

Mayor Callaghan announced that the vote to fill this vacancy would occur at the July 5, 2022 Regular Council meeting. Councilor Hainey asked for clarification on why the process was being followed in this manner instead of a vote being taken this evening. Mayor Callaghan clarified that section 68 of the City Charter stated that the City "shall" elect Council members at a Regular meeting; due to the current meeting being a Special meeting, a vote would conflict with the Charter.

4. Adjournment

Mayor Callaghan **ADJOURNED** the City Council Special Meeting at 6:41 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cassie Givara
Deputy City Clerk