

**Special City Council Meeting
March 21, 2017
Council Chambers
*immediately following the Workshop***

COUNCILORS PRESENT

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

OTHERS PRESENT

Daniel Fitzpatrick, City Manager
Terrence O'Rourke, City Attorney
Blaine Cox, Deputy City Manager

COUNCILORS EXCUSED

Councilor Barnett

Minutes

1. Call to Order

Mayor McCarley called the Special City Council Meeting to order at 8:10 PM. Marcia Roddy, Deputy City Clerk, took the roll call. Councilors Keans, Lauterborn, Willis, Lachapelle, Gray, Abbott, Torr, Hamann, Bogan, Gates, Varney, and Mayor McCarley were present. Councilor Barnett had been excused.

2. **AB 138 Resolution Authorizing the Rochester Legal Department to Apply for a Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Grant in the Amount of up to \$26,000 *first reading and adoption***

Councilor Lachapelle **MOVED** to read the resolution for the first time by title only. Councilor Bogan seconded the motion. The **MOTION CARRIED** by unanimous voice vote. Mayor McCarley read the resolution by title only as follows:

Resolution Authorizing the Rochester Legal Department to Apply for a Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Grant in the Amount of up to \$26,000

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

That the Mayor and City Council of the City of Rochester, by adoption of this Resolution, approve the submission of a grant application in an amount up to Twenty-Six Thousand Dollars (\$26,000.00) to the New Hampshire Department of Justice VOCA Grant program in order to fund a Victim-Witness Advocate position. The Grant, if awarded, requires a Twenty Percent (20%) local match.

Councilor Lachapelle **MOVED** to **ADOPT** the resolution. Councilor Bogan seconded the motion.

Councilor Keans asked how this resolution is impacted by "felonies first." City Attorney Terence O'Rourke said it is not impacted at all as all felonies are handled at the county level. The City only prosecutes misdemeanors.

Councilor Willis asked where the local match would come from. City Manager Fitzpatrick said it is currently in the budget and if it is approved it will be in next year's budget.

The **MOTION CARRIED** by a majority 11-1 voice vote.

3. Resolution of the City of Rochester City Council Affirming the City of Rochester's Commitment to Support Pursuit of 75% State of New Hampshire Funded Renovations to the Richard W. Creteau Technology Center *first reading and adoption*

Councilor Lachapelle **MOVED** to read the resolution by title only for the first time. Councilor Bogan seconded the motion. The **MOTION CARRIED** by unanimous voice vote. Mayor McCarley read the resolution by title only as follows:

A Resolution of the City of Rochester City Council Affirming the City of Rochester's Commitment to Support Pursuit of 75% State of New Hampshire Funded Renovations to the Richard W. Creteau Technology Center

Whereas, the Rochester School Board has determined that renovations and expansion of the Richard W. Creteau Technology Center are needed to adequately meet the Career and Technical Education mission as defined by the State of New Hampshire; and

Whereas, New Hampshire Revised Statutes Annotated Chapters 188-E:3 and 188-E:10 make provisions for the renovation of regional Career and Technical centers and allows for the possibility to seek State appropriations for renovation; and

Whereas, the State of New Hampshire through the Department of Education's Division of Career Technology and Adult Learning has indicated said funding would be formulated at this time as 75% State and 25% Local funded.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED that the Rochester City Council affirms its commitment to pursue State appropriations, along with Local appropriations, for renovation and expansions to the Richard W. Creteau Technology Center.

Councilor Lachapelle **MOVED** to **ADOPT** the resolution. Councilor Bogan seconded the motion.

Councilor Gates said that he has seen the Creteau Technology Center and as far as he can see the building is structurally sound. What he does see is a need for computers and other technological devices that students learn on, as well as the curriculum. He believes that the amount of money proposed for upgrading the school is out of line, given the fact that a substantial amount has just been spent on two other schools in the City.

Councilor Lachapelle said that although he is in favor of upgrading the Center he is concerned about how it will be paid for. He pointed out that there are other big projects proposed for the City, such as a new DPW and improvement of Strafford Square. He also cited the Finance Director's warning that putting the City in more bonding could affect the City's credit rating, resulting in a higher rate.

Mayor McCarley agreed with Councilor Lachapelle's concerns. There are several challenges presented to the City. She pointed out that the State has said that this offer of funding is available now and the opportunity could be lost for the immediate future. She explained that this resolution is a vote to state that Rochester believes that this is a project that should go forward for the benefit of the students.

Councilor Lauterborn asked for clarification of the \$4 million bonding for the school district. She said she supports the Creteau Center project, but it is her understanding that this funding is a School Department budget matter. She said the City Council has no authority over the School Department matters and it is up the School Board to review these projects very carefully.

Councilor Abbott said he, too, supports the project, but he is concerned

about how it will be paid for. He believes the School Board should look at scaling back the projects and try to find ways of reducing the cost.

Councilor Gray agreed that funding is certainly an issue. He said that new money being generated from the new construction has been put into TIFFs. He has proposed that additional monies paid to the City (such as the Waste Management agreement) should be applied to the deficit and needs of the School Department. He expressed his concerns with how money is spent and the danger of raising the tax cap to fund various projects without considering other ways of distributing tax money.

Councilor Varney said that the Capital Reserve transfer was intended to cover part of the East Rochester School bonding payments. The \$796,326 is actually coming from Fund Balance and that will continue. He is not in favor of increasing the School Department's indebtedness and they should look to reducing the proposed project cost. He does not agree with "shuffling" funds around. He said that the proposed \$24 million is extravagant and can be done for much less. He added that the TIFFs are self-supporting and they do not cost the City anything. He does not think money should be taken from the TIFFs as they are just getting started generating money.

Councilor Gates asked Superintendent Hopkins if all of the classes at the Creteau Center are full and students are being turned away because of that. Mr. Hopkins said not every class is full. There are some classes that fill up and others that don't.

Councilor Gates pointed out that fewer and fewer people seem to be interested and learning the trades. He believes that the country needs to see a cultural change where the attitude toward trades people shifts and there is a need for said training.

Mayor McCarley agreed with Councilor Gates and she has observed that over time people have believed that going to college after high school is the ultimate goal, but there is an increasing need for students to look at schools such as the Creteau Technology Center for the career opportunity that can be offered.

Councilor Bogan is also in support of the renovation at the Creteau Center. She said that at this time the Council is voting to go forward with looking into the project, not making a firm commitment.

Councilor Gates asked if an affirmative vote this evening does not lock the City into a commitment. Mayor McCarley said yes.

Councilor Willis said he is in favor of the project, as well, and challenged

the School Department to scale back the cost.

Councilor Keans said this is a discussion about "our" kids and the future of the City. She said that if the City does not go forward with the project to get it into the State budget they it will be a missed opportunity. It would be very difficult to get the funding back in the State budget if it is not used at this time. She encouraged the councilors to vote yes.

Councilor Varney issued a challenge to the School Board that between and now and the time that the budget is passed that they bring to the Council a renovation project that is substantially reduced from the one being proposed.

Councilor Gray asked if there can be a discussion of where the money will be coming from.

Councilor Lauterborn said she thought it was the School Department's responsibility to fund its projects and the Council has no control of looking into its budget.

Councilor Gray said that the School Department does not have the money to fund projects and always looks to the Council for additional funding.

Councilor Varney said there are a variety of ways to fund projects, but this is an opportunity to look at projects and see what can and what cannot be done.

Mayor McCarley requested a roll call vote. Councilor Bogan seconded the request. The **MOTION CARRIED** by an 11-1 majority vote. Councilors Varney, Hamann, Abbott, Gates, Willis, Torr, Keans, Lauterborn, Lachapelle, Bogan, and Mayor McCarley voted yes. Councilor Gray voted no.

4. **AB 139 Resolution Authorizing Supplemental Appropriation to the School Building Fund in the Amount of \$796,326.00 *first reading and refer to a Public Hearing***

Councilor Lachapelle **MOVED** to read the resolution by title only for the first time. Councilor Bogan seconded the motion. The **MOTION CARRIED** by unanimous voice vote. Mayor McCarley read the resolution by title only as follows:

Resolution Authorizing Supplemental Appropriation to the School Building Fund in the Amount of \$796,326.00

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF

ROCHESTER, AS FOLLOWS:

In accordance with RSA 34:2, that the sum of Seven Hundred Ninety Six Thousand Three Hundred Twenty Six Dollars (\$796,326.00) be, and hereby is, appropriated as a supplemental appropriation to the School Building Fund. The entire amount of the supplemental appropriation shall be derived from the General Fund unassigned fund balance.

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

Councilor Lachapelle **MOVED** to refer the resolution to a public hearing in April. Councilor Bogan seconded the motion.

The Council discussed where this money is coming from and where it is going. Mr. Fitzpatrick said if this is approved the funds are not going anywhere. The funds are being moved from the fund balance sheet. Mayor McCarley said it is subject to a public hearing.

Councilor Gates asked why this is being done at this time. Councilor Varney said because it is a long process that requires a public hearing and it should be started now. He said it is to be used to satisfy the East Rochester School debt service.

Councilor Lauterborn asked if the City Attorney could address the word "specific" in the ordinance and if that could be clarified prior to the public hearing.

The **MOTION CARRIED** by unanimous roll call vote. Councilors Torr, Hamann, Gray, Keans, Varney, Gates, Bogan, Lauterborn, Abbott, Willis, Lachapelle, and Mayor McCarley all voted yes.

5. Adjournment

Councilor Lachapelle **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting at 8:55 PM. Councilor Bogan seconded the motion. The **MOTION CARRIED** by unanimous voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Marcia H. Roddy, CNHDCC
Deputy City Clerk