

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING
March 11, 2014
Council Chambers
7:00 P.M.

Present:

Mayor Jean
Deputy Mayor Varney
Councilor Keans
Councilor Walker
Councilor Lauterborn
Councilor Larochelle (7:47PM)
Councilor Torr

City Staff Present

Dan Fitzpatrick, City Mgr
Blaine Cox, Deputy City Mgr
Fire Chief Sanborn
Asst. Fire Chief Dupuis
Tom Mullin, Assessor
Jim Grant, Director BZ & L
Dennis Schafer, MIS Manager
Peter Nourse, DPW Director

Other Councilors Present

Councilor Gates
Councilor Gray
Councilor Hamann
Councilor Kittredge

Residents Stillwater Cir Neighborhood

Cindy Andrews
Jim Andrews
Matt Pappas

MINUTES

1] Call to Order

Mayor Jean called the meeting to order at 7:02 P.M.

2] Public Input

There was no public input.

3] Old Business

3.1. Stillwater Circle

Mayor Jean recognized several meeting attendees from the Stillwater Circle neighborhood. These included Cindy Andrews, Jim Andrews and Matt Pappas.

Ms. Andrews addressed the Committee and described her recollection of the agreement between the City and the developer of Stillwater Circle housing project that included the transfer of land to the City along with \$10,360 for improvements to said land. Mr. Pappas spoke about how the developer and real estate agent when he bought his home led him to believe the City would be carrying out recreation related improvements to the City land in question. Mr. Andrews stated his desire to see the City use the funds available for benches, tables and other low maintenance amenities. Mrs. Andrews also made the point that the City accepted the funds in 2004 when no homeowner's association existed or was contemplated.

Department of Public Works Director Peter Nourse was asked what could be provided or accomplished with the \$10,360 available. He responded that this amount of funds would not allow the amount of site work needed to create any type of playing fields. In addition, he

reminded the Committee that the Building and Grounds Department would find it very difficult to keep this area properly maintained as a turf covered recreation area.

After a lengthy discussion, Councilor Walker MOVED to direct Mr. Nourse to solicit a price quote to adequately clay base, loam and seed the area. Councilor Lauterborn provided a second to the motion which was then ADOPTED by a unanimous voice vote.

3.2 Fire Department Reports

Fire Chief Sanborn reviewed the overtime report contained in the Committee meeting packet. He summarized by stating that the overtime budget for fiscal year 2014 is approximately \$19K over expended to-date, and is projected to be \$150,000K overspent by the end of the fiscal year. Chief Sanborn also pointed out the legal expenses budget is projected to be \$10K over expended but the health insurance budget is projected to be \$30K under expended as a possible offset.

Chief Sanborn and Assistant Chief Dupuis reported to the Committee that the swivel unit on the Tower Truck had been repaired at no cost to the City. They shared with the Committee the research and communications conducted mostly by Assistant Chief Dupuis, with the dealer/manufacturer/swivel supplier that led to a no-cost result for the City.

4] New Business

4.1 Fire Department Staffing Discussion

Assistant Chief Dupuis conducted a Power Point presentation to the Committee (copy attached). Chief Sanborn indicated his desire for the Council to re-establish a plan from several years ago that called for the addition of 1 additional fire fighter position per year until staffing levels were at or near the level recommended by National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and Insurance Services Office Inc (ISO).

After a lengthy discussion, the Committee took no action on this item.

4.2 MIS Operations Update

MIS Manager Schafer provided the Committee with an update of the activities of his department. In his report, he described how the transfer of funds granted by the Council has funded the work of a part time technician for two to four hours in the evening which has been very beneficial. Mr. Schafer also described the upcoming project to upgrade the Government Channel head-end equipment, network server upgrades, Window's XP computer replacements and the work to create a new Welfare Department database.

The City Assessor, serving as the Information Technology Self-Directed Work Team Chairperson, reported on the results of two recent outside vendor analyses of the City's existing MIS program. He indicated that both reports cited understaffing as the most pressing challenge facing our use of technology.

4.3 Hatfield Sewer Fees

Mayor Jean asked if the Committee had any questions regarding this agenda item. Seeing none, he stated he would entertain a motion.

Councilor Larochelle MOVED that the City refund Mr. Hatfield \$5,265.18 for sewer fees paid. Councilor Walker provided a second to the motion which was then ADOPTED by a unanimous voice vote.

4.4 NCS Global Tax Increment

Deputy Mayor Varney opened the discussion by raising the issue of whether the tax increment to be received from the June 2014 tax billing from NCS Global should be re-directed from the Granite State Business Park Tax Increment Financing district and instead go to the General Fund revenue account.

City Manager Fitzpatrick informed the Committee that the TIF Advisory Committee had voted to recommend that use of increment proceeds for the installation of sidewalks, street lighting and a bus stop in the Granite State Business Park TIF.

After a lengthy discussion, Mayor Jean indicated that this item would be kept in Committee.

5] Finance Director's Report

Deputy City Manager Cox raised for discussion two items from his written report. First, regarding report item #4, he asked the Committee if the Council wanted him to bring forth a proposal to re-purpose the unspent RSA 205 TIF bond proceeds toward reimbursing the General Fund balance.

The consensus of the Committee was affirmative.

Second, Mr. Cox reviewed the concept of developing a policy that would guide the City's use of General Fund fund balance.

After a brief discussion, Councilor Larochelle MOVED that the Finance Committee proceed with the development of a fund balance policy. The motion received a second from Councilor Lauterborn and was ADOPTED by a unanimous voice vote.

6] Monthly Financial Statements

The Committee raised three questions regarding the list of Authorized Budget Transfers. The first question centered around the purchase of Emergency Salt. City Manager Fitzpatrick stated that this issue was discussed at the Public Works Committee by Public Works Director Nourse who explained that City salt stores were low and the availability to buy more was limited. The City purchased more as quickly as possible while it was available and needed to transfer funds for this purpose.

The City Manager addressed the second question by explaining that the Dispatch Center transfer for Professional Consulting Services was to fund an independent outside study by Municipal Resources Incorporated of the operations and functions of the Dispatch department.

The final issue raised by the Committee regarding the list of budget transfers was simply to question why membership fees and subscriptions needed transfers as they should be anticipated expenditures.

7] Other

The Director of Building, Zoning & Licensing Services, Jim Grant, addressed the Committee regarding supplemental material distributed to the Committee about the Energov software (copy attached). Councilor Keans expressed concerns about being a software beta test site for an out-of-state company. Councilor Walker stated that he was convinced of the capability of the software, however, he seeks information justifying its benefits specifically for Mr. Grant's department and the City as a whole. Councilor Walker also encouraged Mr. Grant to seek supplemental funding to offset the cost of the Energov software.

Councilor Larochelle brought forward another issue on behalf of the City Clerk. Specifically, the Clerk requested the flexibility to issue Council Meeting packets by Friday at 12:00 P.M. Under this scenario, the Clerk would still issue the Council meeting agendas on Thursday. The Committee consensus was to not allow the change. The City Manager stated that he and Deputy City Manager Cox would work with the clerk to streamline the Council Packet process.

8] Adjournment

Councilor Walker **MOVED** to adjourn the Finance Committee meeting which was seconded by Councilor Lauterborn. The motion was **ADOPTED** by a unanimous voice vote.

The meeting adjourned at 9:56 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Blaine M. Cox
Deputy City Manager

BMC:sam