

Public Safety Committee
Council Chambers
January 15, 2020
7:00 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT

Councilor Don Hamann, Chair
Councilor Peter Lachapelle, Vice-chair
Councilor Palana Belken
Councilor Jeremy Hutchinson
Councilor Chris Rice

OTHERS PRESENT

Mayor Caroline McCarley
Councilor David Walker
Michael Bezanson, PE, City Engineer
Gary Boudreau, Deputy Police Chief
Mark Klose, Fire Chief
Dan Camara, GIS Asset Mgmt. Tech.

Minutes

Councilor Hamann brought the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

1. Public Input

There were no members of the public present for public input.

2. Granite St./William Allen School Traffic Issue (kept in committee)

Councilor Hamann introduced the issue. Councilor Walker summarized the issue by stating that it has been on the agenda of this Committee for a couple of months now, and it involves vehicles cueing for school drop off/pick up that are stopping, standing, and lining up all the way out to Portland Street and blocking Portland Street so emergency vehicles cannot get down Granite or any of the other side streets. Dropping off the children does not seem to be as much of a problem as the afternoon pick up; some of the vehicles line up a half hour early. Councilor Walker stated there is plenty of parking near Woodman Park. He said the Committee will be working with the School Department and the neighbors to come up with a solution to this issue. If another solution is not reached, he suggests installing "no parking" signs up and down the road. Councilor Lachapelle asked Deputy Chief Boudreau if there was verification that someone from the School Department would be at next month's Committee meeting to discuss the issue. Deputy Chief Boudreau said they are working on it. Councilor Lachapelle suggested reaching out to some of the School Board members as well. Councilor Hamann said he would give the School Board Chair a call to see if they would like to come to the next meeting. Councilor Rice wanted to clarify that the vehicles are backing up on Granite Street to Charles

Street and the Committee is looking at recommendation to divert the vehicles to other areas, such as Woodman Street to park. Councilor Walker said that was correct, as it is now an emergency vehicle cannot go down Granite with all the vehicles standing there waiting to pick up children. Councilor Rice wanted to know how many buses service the school. Councilor Walker said the buses really don't present a problem, as they go around Davyanne Locke Lane; it's the parents waiting for the children that are blocking the area. Kept in committee until next month.

3. E911 Update

Councilor Hamann introduced the issue. Deputy Chief Boudreau updated the Committee on the Rochester Neck Road renumbering. He said that Deputy Fire Chief Wilder has been working with Waste Management on the renumbering of Rochester Neck Road. All but 3 properties are owned by Waste Management; he doesn't think this will have to go to the City Council or have a public hearing. Hoping that the 3 land owners will voluntarily renumber their properties. Councilor Lachapelle asked if this would go all the way to the Dover line. Deputy Chief Boudreau said that is where the 3 properties are to his knowledge: Brox Industries, Pike Industries, and the City of Dover. Chief Klose said that there would be a Public Hearing for the Milton Road renumbering near 164-168 Milton Road on January 21, 2020. All but one person has acknowledged the City; they were sent to certified letters, phone calls, and knocks on the door. Councilor Hamann asked if a public hearing only had to be done if not everybody acknowledged the City. Mayor McCarley said yes that's when they have to hold the public hearing, when they didn't get back to the City. Councilor Rice asked how many more addresses needed to be changed. Deputy Chief Boudreau said there was quite the stack. Chief Klose said they have about 27 pages of changes to be made. Councilor Hutchinson asked if there is a completion goal with the changes. Deputy Chief Boudreau said no specific date. Chief Klose said they try to deal with some hard ones that are time consuming and may take months, then they mix in dealing with some easier ones before taking on harder ones again.

4. Emergency Management Update

Councilor Hamann introduced the issue. Chief Klose said it is pretty quiet, there is some inclement weather coming in Thursday and Sunday. There is not much going on at the state level.

5. Season Cold Weather Warming Center

Councilor Hamann introduced the issue. Councilor Hutchinson noted that he chairs the Task Force for Homelessness for the Tri-City. He stated that there is really no update regarding master plan recommendations, but the Task Force did just meet last week. Some of the discussion at that meeting was the successful implementation of permitting for organizations that want to apply for operation of a warming center. He stated that he thinks the permitting process in Rochester might be inadequate for the situations that the City is now dealing with. Councilor Hutchinson went over draft revisions to the City's Ordinance. The current permit recommends up to 48 hours to open a warming center; the climate we live in suggests we will have more than 2 days of cold weather in one period of time, so the proposal includes permitting for 7 days, extendable up to 15 days, similar to Dover's policy. Second, currently only 3 permits are allowed per season. And finally, permits are only issued for November-March, so permitting doesn't allow for relief during hot weather. If a faith-based organization applies for a permit and they have a religious function that day and cannot open the shelter, they have used one of their three allowed permits for the season. There are a lot of gaps in the process. The new policy would change some of these things. Councilor Lachapelle asked if this would be a public hearing. Mayor McCarley said it would need an ordinance change, so it would need to follow the normal procedure for revising an ordinance. Chief Klose went over the State Fire Marshall's draft language, which is less restrictive than our current ordinance. Mayor McCarley has had discussions about cold weather shelters; there are a bunch of folks that have been trying to keep this going for a while. She said that Councilor Walker stopped her in the parking lot in December and asked why they weren't utilizing the 38 Hanson Street building. They have been through the building, and although it would not be free, and they would need to get volunteers, there probably is a way to get the front portion of the building usable for a shelter. It will end up costing the City a little money, not sure how much money, but there's a number of ways to put it all together. Chief Klose said Mike Riley from Building and Grounds will be checking out the Hanson Street building in the morning to evaluate what could be done. Councilor Walker said they should explore both, the City-owned building and religious organizations. ***Councilor Lachapelle made a motion to send the proposed Ordinance changes for Pre-Approving Conditional /Temporary Emergency Use Shelter to the Codes and Ordinances Committee with the Fire Safety backup. The motion was seconded by Councilor Hutchinson. Unanimous voice vote carried the motion.***

Councilor Lachapelle made a motion that the City Council consider using the 38 Hanson Street building for a temporary shelter. The motion was seconded

by Councilor Rice. Unanimous voice vote carried the motion. Councilor Rice asked Councilor Hutchinson with this provision change will requirement be sent on who will open Hanson Street, what is the temp when it will open. Councilor Hutchinson said, in general, if it is a private entity they will decide when to open and if it is the City's building, which 38 Hanson Street is, they will decide. It was generally agreed that the City Manager would decide when to open a City-owned building for a shelter under the guidance of the City Council.

6. Other

"No Parking" by China Palace During Winter Storms

Councilor Hamann said that the China Palace wanted to have "no parking signs" put up during winter storms. There were a few cars that their mirrors were clipped by other vehicles making the turn from Columbus to South Main; the vehicles that struck the mirrors did not appear to be plow trucks. It was agreed that cars parking there should make sure they are parked correctly. **Councilor Lachapelle made a motion to take no action. The motion was seconded by Councilor Rice. Unanimous voice vote carried the motion.**

North Main St Crosswalk – Pedestrian Visibility

Councilor Hamann said he has received a lot of calls from Councilors and citizens regarding crosswalks, most notably the crosswalk on North Main Street near the former The 103 restaurant, now Lilac City Grille. Visibility of pedestrians in the crosswalks has been an on-going problem for at least 6 years. Some of the suggestions received have been rumble strips approaching the crosswalk, flashing lights, and spot lights. Councilor Lachapelle said LED lights have been a suggestion, he asked Mr. Bezanson if he had any information about this. Mr. Bezanson said a lot of this goes back to placement of lights; in the past it was generally agreed that lights should be placed right at crosswalks, now studies have shown that placement of lighting ahead of the crosswalk as traffic approaches allows for optimal illumination of pedestrians. Councilor Lachapelle asked Mr. Bezanson to get prices on lights. Councilor Belken said in Newmarket on Route 108 there are a couple of crosswalk that have a button that pedestrians can push and lights flash to alert motorists that a pedestrian is at the crosswalk. Councilor Rice also mentioned the pedestrian crossing in Epping on Route 125 at the Cumberland Farms. Mr. Bezanson stated that pedestrian-activated crosswalk warning devices called rectangular rapid flash beacons (RRFB) are being considered in the final design of the Strafford Square Roundabout. Councilor Rice suggested that the North Main

Street crosswalk by Lilac City Grille be used as a test case for this application before the roundabout is constructed; Mr. Bezanson will get pricing for RRFB installation at this location. Deputy Chief Boudreau wanted to remind the public that RSA 265:35 Section 2 Pedestrian's Right of Way in Crosswalks, states "no pedestrian shall suddenly leave a curb or other place of safety and walk or run into the path of a vehicle which is so close as to constitute an immediate hazard. As a pedestrian, you still need to exercise due care and make sure vehicles stop before crossing in a crosswalk." If there is no crosswalk, RSA 265:36 states that "every pedestrian crossing a roadway...other than a marked or unmarked crosswalk...shall yield the right of way to all vehicles upon the roadway." This item was kept in committee.

Blue Hills Drive - Speed Limit

Councilor Lachapelle shared a concern from a resident regarding speeds in the Blue Hills neighborhood and wanted to know if the speed limit was posted. Street View showed a Speed Limit 30 MPH sign on Blue Hills Drive. The resident thought that 90% of the traffic drove the speed limit, but thought this was still too fast considering the pedestrians, especially children, in the neighborhood. Councilor Lachapelle wanted to know if anything could be done to lower the speed limit without opening Pandora's box. Deputy Chief Boudreau said that there are some areas that are posted 25 MPH, so he believed the Council could vote to do that here, but he wouldn't recommend that. Councilor Hamann said in their neighborhood they email the neighbors once in a while to remind them to slow down. Councilor Lachapelle will follow up with the resident.

Crimeline Signs

Councilor Lachapelle said he was approached by a member of the Crime Line; they would like to put signs up, maybe on a stop sign or post. The only cost to the City would be DPW's labor and equipment to put them up. ***Councilor Lachapelle made a motion to have DPW put signs up that the Crime Line purchases. The motion was seconded by Councilor Rice. Unanimous voice vote carried the motion.***

Councilor Rice wanted to know if the Crime Line phone number was specific to Rochester. Deputy Chief Boudreau replied that it is.

Speed Limit Issue on Nottingham Lane

Councilor Hutchinson asked if there was an update to the speed trailer being out on Nottingham Lane. Deputy Chief Boudreau said the speed trailer was out in the area

for 7 days, data was collected on a total of 682 vehicles with the average speed being 17.52 MPH and the 85th percentile being 19.85 MPH. No action was taken.

Councilor Hamann asked the members of the Public Safety Committee if they would be willing to meet at an earlier time; the suggested time was 6 PM. Councilor Rice said he isn't opposed to an early meeting; however, every 3rd month he has a Ward 3 RUN meeting that he'd like to attend and may ask to be excused from the Public Safety Committee during those months. There were no objections to the proposed time change, so the Chair announced that future meetings will be held at 6 PM going forward.

Councilor Lachapelle made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:04 PM. Councilor Rice seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Laura Miller, Secretary II.

CITY OF ROCHESTER, NH
CONSIDERATION FOR THE PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

Policy for Pre-Approving Conditional/Temporary Emergency Use Shelter

Scope:

The scope of this policy is to create guidelines intended for pre-approving and permitting the emergency use of buildings as a temporary shelter in adverse weather conditions. Specifically, to ensure facilities used as shelters for a temporary/emergency nature, that are not designed or designated as shelters, provide a reasonable degree of life safety for the occupants.

Definitions:

Conditional/Temporary Use Shelter – A facility whose primary use is for something other than sheltering activities; however, from time to time may end up providing sheltering services for a limited number of persons for a pre-determined period of time.

Approval Required:

Any facility owner requesting use of their facility for conditional/temporary emergency sheltering purposes shall apply for approval from the City of Rochester Inspection Services Division and must meet the provisions outlined below. When operating under approved terms, the Conditional/Temporary Emergency Use Shelter will be allowed to remain open under a timeframe established at the time of application, as defined by the conditions of a specific weather event. Permits will typically not be approved beyond a 7 day timeline. Extensions may be granted by the Fire Chief or designee, upon specific written request by the original applicant. In no case shall the conditional/temporary permitted use exceed 15 days total, unless a State of Emergency has been declared by the Governor and the extended use of the shelter has been approved by the Fire Chief or designee. Application requests must be signed by the recorded owner or legal representative of the property listed on the application. During the shelter activity, the notice of approval (permit) must be conspicuously posted at the entrance to the facility. The notice will indicate the dates and times of operation, the specific location in which occupants are being sheltered and the total number of occupants permitted in the shelter. The allowable occupant load of the shelter will be determined by the Fire Chief or designee after review of the submitted application and inspection of the facility.

Egress:

Any area used for sheltering and/or sleeping must have a primary and secondary means of egress that has the appropriate exit capacity. The emergency egress/emergency rescue opening (5.7 square foot opening) complying with the NFPA 101 Life Safety Code is required unless the building is protected with a fully operational fire sprinkler system and travel distance to an exit does not exceed 75 feet along an accessible route.

The egress route must be clearly identified by exit signs and emergency lighting and maintained clear at all times the building is occupied.

Fire Protection Systems:

An approved automatic fire alarm system with occupant notification shall be provided throughout buildings used as a shelter. The area where sheltering is done must have interconnected smoke detection inside and directly outside all sleeping areas.

Exception: An interconnected smoke detection system is not required where the building is throughout with a fully operational fire sprinkler system, and individual/local smoke alarms are provided inside and directly outside areas used for sleeping purposes. Battery powered devices are permitted.

Carbon monoxide detector(s) are required in the immediate vicinity of the sleeping areas. Combination Smoke/CO alarms are permitted.

Plug in detectors with battery back-up are permitted. In buildings without an approved automatic fire sprinkler system, a trained fire watch detail must be in place the entire time the shelter facility is in use.

For buildings without an approved, automatic fire alarm system, the fire watch detail must consist of a minimum of (2) certified fire watch members.

Cooking:

Cooking will only be allowed in facilities with code compliant commercial cooking facilities that are protected with hood vents and fire protection systems and have required state and local approvals for commercial cooking.

Emergency plans:

A Fire Safety and Evacuation Plan must be presented for review and accepted at the time of application. This plan must be available on site for review by the persons being sheltered.

The Fire Safety and Evacuation Plan shall include the following elements:

1. Emergency egress or escape, including alternate routes.
2. Procedures for accounting for employees and occupants after evacuation has been completed (a current roster of all persons being sheltered, and staff, must be maintained at all times the shelter is in operation). The roster must be available for immediate review upon request by emergency personnel during any emergency.
3. The preferred and any alternative means of notifying occupants of a fire or other emergency.
4. The preferred and any alternative means of reporting fires and other emergencies to the appropriate emergency response department

5. Identification and assignment of personnel who can be contacted for further information or explanation of duties under the plan.
6. A description of the emergency voice/alarm communication system alert tone and preprogrammed voice messages, where provided.
7. Procedures for the evacuation of the special need occupants.

Evacuation routes must be clearly posted in each area being occupied by persons being sheltered.

When a shelter is activated there must be a review of the fire safety and evacuation plan with each person(s) being admitted to the shelter, and a fire evacuation training drill shall be performed with participation of all persons being sheltered.

This policy is enacted insure that safety of the occupants in a conditional/temporary emergency shelter is maintained. In accordance with this overall objective, other requirements may need to be considered and/or imposed at the sole discretion of the Fire Chief or designee prior to issuance of a permit.