

**Public Safety Committee
Meeting Minutes
January 20, 2021
6:00 PM
Council Chambers
Meeting Conducted Remotely**

Members Present

Councilor Don Hamann, Chair
Councilor Palana Belken
Councilor Peter Lachapelle
Councilor Chris Rice

Members Absent

Councilor Jeremy Hutchinson

Others Present

Michael Bezanson, PE, City Engineer
Dan Camara, GIS Asset Mgmt. Tech.
Deputy Chief Gary Boudreau, PD
Mark Klose, Fire Chief
Richard Odess, Fownes Mill Condos

Councilor Hamann brought the Public Safety Committee meeting to order at 6:00PM and he read the following statement:

Good Evening, as Chairperson of the Public Safety Committee, I am declaring that an emergency exists and I am invoking the provisions of RSA 91-A:2, III (b). Federal, State and local officials have determined that gatherings of 10 or more people pose a substantial risk to our community in its continuing efforts to combat the spread of COVID-19. In concurring with their determination, I also find that this meeting is imperative to the continued operation of City government and services, which are vital to public safety and confidence during this emergency. As such, this meeting will be conducted without a quorum of this body physically present in the same location.

a.) Public Input: Due to the ongoing situation with COVID-19, the City of Rochester will be taking extra steps to allow for public input, while still ensuring participant safety and social distancing. In lieu of attending the meeting, those wishing to share comments, when permitted, with the Public Safety Committee (Public Hearing and/or Workshop settings) are encouraged to do so by the following methods:

- **Mail: Public Safety Committee, Rochester DPW 45 Old Dover Road Rochester, NH 03867 (*must be received at least three full days prior to the anticipated meeting date*)**
- **Email: laura.miller@rochesternh.net (*must be received no later than 4:00 pm of meeting date*)**
- **Voicemail: 603-335-7569 (*must be received no later than 12:00 pm on said meeting date in order to be transcribed*)**

Please include with your correspondence the intended meeting date for which you

are submitting. *All correspondence will be included with the corresponding meeting packet (Addendum).*

In addition to the above listed public access information, the City Council will be allowing the public to enter Council Chambers and speak in person during the Public Input portion of this meeting. In an effort to adhere to CDC guidelines; enter only at the front Wakefield Street entrance and exit on the side closest to the Police Department and adhere to 6-foot social distancing while inside. Hand sanitizer and facemasks will be available at the Wakefield Street entrance. Participants will be admitted into Council Chambers one at a time to speak and will exit directly thereafter. Please note; the seating in Council Chambers will not be available for the public during meetings.

At this time, I also welcome members of the public accessing this meeting by phone. The public can call-in to the below number using the conference code. This meeting will be set to allow the public to “listen-in” only and there will be no public comment taken via conference line during the meeting.

Phone number: 857-444-0744 Conference code: 843095

b.) **Roll Call:** Please note that all votes that are taken during this meeting shall be done by Roll Call vote.

Let’s start the meeting by taking a Roll Call attendance. When each member states their name (and/or ward), also please state whether there is anyone in the room with you during this meeting, which is required under the Right-to-Know Law. (Additionally, Council members are required to state their name and ward each time they wish to speak.)

Let’s start the meeting by taking a Roll Call attendance. When each member states their name and ward, also please state whether there is anyone in the room with you during this meeting, which is required under the Right-to-Know Law. Additionally, Committee members are required to state their name and ward each time they wish to speak.

Councilor Peter Lachapelle	Ward 3 Present
Councilor Jeremy Hutchinson	Ward 5 Absent
Councilor Chris Rice	Ward 5 Present
Councilor Palana Belken	Ward 2 Present
Councilor Don Hamann	Ward 5 Present

1. Public Input

The public that was present at City Hall were for an item that was already on the agenda. That item was moved up on the agenda.

2. Stop Sign Request

Richard Odess of Fownes Mill Condominiums off River Street was present at City Hall to request a “Stop” sign on Gagne Street. He said that his wife and he are the only tenants of the Fownes Mill Condominiums at this time. There are two new condominium buildings on Fownes Mill Court with a total of 11 units; and, another

building is planned that will have apartment-style condos and he believes there will be 51 of those. Folks are not used to people living there and what used to be an L-shaped intersection has now become a T-shaped intersection. Fownes Mill Court is parallel to Gagne Street and the Cocheco River. They have been there for 1 month with 2 vehicular near misses. He would like a “Stop” sign placed at the end of Gagne Street; he did say one would work at the end of Fownes Mill Court, but there is an incline and in bad weather stopped vehicles may slide backwards. Councilor Lachapelle asked Mr. Bezanson if Fownes Mill Court was going to be a private road. Mr. Bezanson said it will be a private road. Councilor Lachapelle also asked if 2 “Stop” signs would be better and work. Mr. Boudreau said he does think there should be a “Stop” sign at the end of Gagne Street and one at the end of the Fownes Mill Development because it is a private road and they would have to yield to traffic. **Councilor Lachapelle made a motion to place two “Stop” signs at the discretion of DPW, one at the end of Gagne Street and one at the end of Fownes Mill Court. Councilor Belken seconded the motion. A Roll Call vote was taken on the motion.**

Councilor Lachapelle	Ward 3	Yes
Councilor Rice	Ward 5	Yes
Councilor Belken	Ward 2	Yes
Councilor Hamann	Ward 5	Yes

Mr. Odess asked what the turnaround time would be for the signs to implement. Councilor Lachapelle explained that this was just a recommendation to the full City Council; the next City Council meeting is the first Tuesday of the month and he believes it is February 2, 2021.

3. 690 Pickering Road-Sign Request (follow-up)

Councilor Hamann summarized the issue. Councilor Rice said he thought they were waiting to hear back from the Deputy Chief Boudreau to talk to Dover before they make a decision because the town line is right there. Deputy Chief Boudreau said that he has not heard back from the City of Dover yet. Deputy Chief Boudreau said that he did research the number of accidents that took place on the Rochester side of Pickering Road by the curve. There were 6 accidents between 2016 and 2020: 2 were deer collisions, a couple were vehicles off the roadway and 1 a DWI. Councilor Rice asked if any of the accidents were due to snow or inclement weather. Deputy Chief Boudreau said not that he recalled, not near the curve. Councilor Hamann said years ago he use to drive that road a lot and the snow would drift near the curves. Councilor Hamann asked if there were any signs there. Mr. Bezanson said there are advance warning signs at both ends on the Rochester side and a 30 mph speed limit sign as you enter Rochester from Dover. He mentioned that there are no “Chevron” signs at the corner and that “Chevron” signs could be added. Councilor Lachapelle asked Mr. Bezanson if he thought the area warranted “Chevron” signs, Mr. Bezanson said the “Chevron” signs could be helpful. Mr. Bezanson said there is a turnaround that he thinks busses utilize. Deputy Chief Boudreau said there is a gravel turn around that the busses and

maybe Waste Management use to turn around. Mr. Bezanson said he looked at the suggested spacing of “Chevron” signs and it appears that 3 or 4 in each direction would be recommended. ***Councilor Rice made a motion to install at the discretion of DPW, 3 “Chevron” signs in both directions on Pickering Road, 1 set visible northbound and 1 set visible southbound. Councilor Lachapelle seconded the motion. A Roll Call vote was taken on the motion.***

Councilor Lachapelle	Ward 3	Yes
Councilor Rice	Ward 5	Yes
Councilor Belken	Ward 2	Yes
Councilor Hamann	Ward 5	Yes

4. E911 Update

Councilor Hamann summarized the issue. Fire Chief Klose said there was no update. Deputy Boudreau said there was not a meeting last month.

5. Emergency Management Update

Councilor Hamann summarized the issue. Fire Chief Klose said the weather has been quite and nothing in the forecast. He said he believes after the last 2 storms they should be out of the drought. Mr. Bezanson said we are out of the drought. The alternate care site at UNH is looking to close the facility. They were using the Fire Department trailer and it is ready to come back to Rochester.

6. Covid-19 Statistics Update

Fire Chief Klose said for the last 6 weeks he has been working directly with Health and Human Services and the National Guard to open the Armory for a vaccination testing site. Last week they closed that facility and moved it to Dover to the C&J Trailway building and parking lot to handle some of the traffic flow so when the tier 1B and 2A near further. They lost the fixed facility here in Rochester. Starting Friday anyone 65 and older will be allowed to sign up for the vaccine at vaccines.nh.gov and they will walk you through to make an appointment. The CBC and the vaccination system takes over from there and they will get notified. He also said they are allowing dispatches to jump on the Tier 1B and get the vaccination. The number of people with Covid as of today in Rochester is 263 which is coming down from well over 300. The last known number of hospitalized at Frisbie are 4, Fire Chief Klose said the number of hospitalization is what you really need to look at. There are still a systematic population out there. The good news is the introduction of the vaccination. It is a 2 shot system. Pfizer is 21 days and Medora is 28 days. It's 2 shots plus 14 days, they say 2 weeks after your second dose you will be 94 to 96 percent vaccinated, so it's the 2 shots plus 14 days. Going into spring we should see the numbers going down. Fire Chief Klose also said they are working with local help care providers to work on getting the long term facilities vaccinated, like the Rochester Housing. They have a meeting Monday to look into that. Mr. Bezanson wanted to bring up before the meeting went on that he looked up the drought monitor for the drought conditions that is updated every Thursday and conditions are that they are not in a severe drought

but are still abnormally dry.

7. Other

Update Gear Road/125 Traffic Signal

Councilor Lachapelle asked Mr. Bezanson if he heard back for the State about the traffic signal at the Intersection of Gear Road/125. Mr. Bezanson said he has not heard back from the State yet; when he does he will update the Committee.

Fire Department Update

Fire Chief Klose said they have had a relatively busy January with multiply building fires, there was a 3 alarm building fire at 61 Lafayette Street, there were no loss of life or severe injury, they had working smoke detectors. He stated that fire detectors do work and if you do not have working ones to reach out to the Fire Department. Councilor Rice asked Chief Klose how many detectors they give out. Fire Chief Klose said they work with the State Fire Marshalls office with the program that they do and have worked with the American Red Cross when they were running the program and gave out a bunch. Due to Covid the Red Cross does not have that program in place this year.

Councilor Hamann adjourned the meeting at 6:30 PM.

These minutes were respectfully submitted by Laura J. Miller, Admin Assistant II.