

MINUTES OF THE EYES ON 30 COMMITTEE
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
December 6, 2023 – 4:15 p.m.

Committee Members Present: Councilor Nancie Cameron, Chair
 Councilor Richard Michaud
 Planning Board Representative, Jason Barry
 City Manager, Bob Belmore

Absent Member: Jenne Holmes

Staff present: Finance Director, Scott Smith
 City Clerk, Kristen LaPanne

Others Present: Deb Clough

Committee Chair Cameron called the meeting to order at 4:15 p.m.

APPROVE PAST MEETING MINUTES OF OCTOBER 25, 2023

Richard Michaud made a motion to accept the October 25, 2023 minutes as submitted. The motion was seconded by Mr. Barry and passed 4-0.

DISCUSS ADDITIONAL GOALS

Councilor Cameron introduced Deb Clough to the Committee, and she explained that she invited Mrs. Clough to share how she began the Don't Trash Dover program that Councilor Cameron has expressed interest in implementing in Somersworth.

Mrs. Clough stated that she started the Don't Trash Dover program approximately 6 years ago. It started when she would go for daily walks with her husband and pick up trash on their own and soon after other residents began to ask how they could help. Mrs. Clough stated that she meets with a group of locals every 4th Saturday of the month from 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 p.m., she stated that she keeps the timeframe to 60 minutes as she feels volunteers are more likely to have an hour of time to offer during their busy schedules. Each month the group departs to arrive at a different part of the City, they receive trash bags from the City, as well as funding for litter grabbing devices and safety vests to protect the volunteers assisting in the litter pick up. She mentioned that volunteers are welcome to bring their own gloves. Mrs. Clough stated that she moved to Barrington three years ago and with the help of the town's Recreation Department, she implemented the program there as well, Don't Trash Barrington.

Mrs. Clough noted that there were approximately 26 volunteers that assisted with the most recent Don't Trash Dover cleanup and she has seen up to about 36 volunteers during a cleanup day. Mrs. Clough noted that a group recently cleaned an area near the Dover Ice Arena and within an hour, the volunteers collected 35 full trash bags. She asked that if the City of Somersworth were to implement the program, that the format could remain the same because it works.

Councilor Cameron asked if the program runs year around. Mrs. Clough confirmed that the program does run year around and they have only had to cancel a few times due to inclement weather. Mrs.

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Clough added that part of the format is that each volunteer goes out with a partner and the group reconvenes at the end of the hour to consolidate their trash into City trash bags, take a group photo, and they have an arrangement with the City to leave the trash on the curb for pick-up by Waste Management.

Mr. Barry asked if Mrs. Clough has noticed a reduction in litter since implementing the program. Mrs. Clough confirmed yes, but that the litter always comes back. Mr. Barry stated that we are trying to change people's mindsets and to encourage them not to litter. Mrs. Clough agreed and added that through the program, they are trying to create awareness of the litter and are hoping to encourage people not to litter. She stated that it starts with educating and involving children, and she shared a story of families coming out with their children to pick-up trash and how determined the children are to find trash to be cleaned. Mr. Barry commented that he thinks that the programs Mrs. Clough started is phenomenal and he hopes that she is willing to help Somersworth get the program off the ground within the City. Mrs. Clough assured the Committee she would like to help and she suggested that the Committee find someone who is committed to pioneering the program.

Mrs. Clough shared that she creates an annual schedule which includes dates, times and departure locations that she shares on social media platforms before the new year. She also explained that she has created a culture that if someone cannot make it to a scheduled cleanup day, that it isn't a big deal and individuals make it when they can because after all, the program runs because of volunteers and she is grateful that people help when they are available. Mr. Barry commented that he loves the regularity of the program, he added that he would also like to see that the City continue with their annual cleanup day should they implement the monthly cleanup dates.

Mr. Barry and the Committee thanked Mrs. Clough for attending the meeting and sharing her program with them. Councilor Cameron stated that she would like to connect with Mrs. Clough in the new year and begin to work more closely with her to figure out how to implement the program in Somersworth.

MISCELLANEOUS

There were no miscellaneous items discussed.

ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Michaud made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Mr. Barry and passed 4-0. The meeting adjourned at 4:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristen LaPanne, City Clerk