

MINUTES OF FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING
EXECUTIVE CONFERENCE ROOM
October 26, 2016, 4:00 p.m.

Committee Members present: Councilor David Witham, Chair
Councilor Martin Pepin
Councilor Jennifer Soldati
Councilor Dale R. Sprague (Entered the meeting at 4:13 p.m.)

Administration/Staff present: City Manager, Bob Belmore
Finance Director, Scott Smith
Public Works Director, Mike Bobinsky
Deputy City Clerk, Elise B. Brelis

Other: Attorney Anthony S. Hartnett
Thomas Lin-Hilltop Laundromat

Chairman Witham called the meeting to order at 4:12 p.m.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Motion made by Councilor Pepin, seconded by Councilor Witham, to accept the minutes of the meeting of October 13, 2016. Motion carried, 2-0, Soldati abstained.

SEWER CONNECTION CHARGE WAIVER PETITION-HILLTOP LAUNDROMAT

Chair Witham stated that Mayor Hilliard turned this matter over to the Finance Committee to make a decision. Introductions were made. Finance Director Smith outlined the situation: Thomas Lin proposes moving his Laundromat from its current location at 24 Washington Street to 7 Plaza Terrace, the former Happy City site. He went through related sewer connection permit fees first calculated according to NH Code, then by considering actual use at both sites. The second method did offer relief, but was still not “tenable”.

Councilor Sprague asked Mr. Lin how many machines the business now operates. He answered fourteen. He said adding machines would require a permit and trigger (fees). The City’s dilemma is that another business going into the Washington Street location, for instance, a restaurant, does not help the city financially as the next business would have credit. (It would not generate revenue.) Councilor Sprague expressed worry about our sewer system.

Councilor Witham talked about upcoming WWTP upgrades, and the City’s hope to recoup costs, in part, with sewer construction fees. He wondered if the sewer use ordinance could reconsider credits when a business moves.

Thomas Lin explained that he has a very tiny business. His current location is a problem sometimes in the winter with parking/plowing issues. Usage at the Laundromat currently costs approximately \$1,000 per month.

Councilor Sprague wondered out loud if they might triple the rate for three years, mirroring usage, which would still be less than the other fees calculated.

Mr. Lin would like to move his business before winter. City Manager Belmore thinks it might still be January at the earliest, even if it is on the agenda for November 7, 2016.

Councilor Witham wants to aggressively work to update the sewer ordinance.

Although the committee mentioned that there is room for expansion at this location Mr. Lin is planning only to use one of the two units at Somersworth Plaza: #7. Mr. Lin stated that his business saves water for the City of Somersworth.

Councilor Witham made a motion to waive the sewer connection fee for Hilltop Laundromat moving to 7 Plaza Terrace, limited to 14, (fourteen,) machines. Further, any additional machines will require permitting and sewer connections fees. If machines are added without the required permits, the waiver will be revoked and full sewer fees reinstated. This condition will be placed on file. Councilor Soldati seconded the motion which passed 4-0.

Director Smith made it clear that any work to increase the water line, service connection fees, water hook-ups, etc will be additional, separate fees.

Attorney Hartnett and Thomas Lin left after thanking Finance Committee members for their action and handling it so expeditiously.

REPORTING

None.

MISCELLANEOUS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Pepin, seconded by Councilor Sprague, made a motion to adjourn at 4:57 p.m. Motion carried, 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Elise B. Brellis, Deputy City Clerk