

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE
EXECUTIVE CONFERENCE ROOM
January 11, 2019 8:30am

Committee Members present: Councilor David A. Witham, Chairman
Councilor Martin Pepin
Councilor Martin P. Dumont, Sr.

Administration/Staff present: Bob Belmore, City Manager
Scott Smith, Finance Director
Michael Bobinsky, Director of Public Works
Kelly Gagne, Deputy City Clerk
Marybeth Walker, Contract City Assessor
Gary Lemay, City Engineer

Other: Councilor Richard Michaud

The meeting called to order by Chairman Witham at 8:30 AM.

APPROVE PAST MEETING MINUTES

Councilor Pepin, seconded by Councilor Dumont, made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 7, 2018 meeting. Motion passed, 3-0.

Chairman Witham stated that the agenda will be addressed out of order.

VETERANS PROPERTY TAX CREDITS

City Assessor Walker provided a memo of other municipalities located in Strafford County and the amount of their veteran tax credits.

There was discussion about increasing the total disabled Veteran credit. There were different credit limits discussed and what the impact on the tax rate impact would be. There was a Committee consensus to increase from \$1400 to \$2000, for totally disabled Veterans. Staff noted that currently 31 residents receive the veteran's credit, and the increase is an estimated cost of \$18,600.

There was additional discussion on upcoming re-evaluations and when the Veteran credit amounts can be revisited.

Councilor Dumont, seconded by Councilor Pepin made a motion that the Finance Committee supports a Resolution to be brought to Council to increase the disabled Veteran credit from \$1400 to \$2000. Motion passed 3-0.

Director Smith asked if we would extend that to a surviving spouse. City Assessor Walker defined surviving spouse as any veteran who was killed or died while on active duty in the armed forces.

Councilor Dumont, seconded by Councilor Pepin amended the motion to extend the credit to the surviving spouse as defined per RSA 72:29-a. Motion passed 3-0.

FIRE STATION – SW COLE PROPOSAL FOR MAPLE STREET SITE TEST BORINGS

Manager Belmore stated that this was also discussed with Public Safety Committee. The question arose should we spend the \$4000 for the test borings without having a fire station conceptual design first, having a conceptual design first would allow for the area of testing to be more specific.

City Engineer Lemay spoke about a map that was passed out. He spoke about what the findings were from the report provided by Geosyntec Consultants, the City's Superfund engineering consultant; they conducted test borings when the landfill was examined so that methane gas trench and emission structures could be installed.

Manager Belmore stated that an estimated cost for a conceptual design could probably range from \$25,000 to \$100,000; however, based on some contacts made by the City engineer, the suggestion was to consider \$50,000 with some contingency which would include the need for test soil borings.

Councilor Witham stated that he thinks having a conceptual design first is very important to see if the current site is even feasible.

Councilor Pepin stated that the consensus of the Public Safety Committee was to get a conceptual design first.

Manager Belmore stated that the next discussion would be funding for the conceptual design.

Director Smith stated that we were just notified the City has received a premium holiday on workman's compensation in the amount of \$89,655, which is going to be refunded by Primex. We are receiving it back as unanticipated revenue. There was discussion on how the City would use those funds and how much would be used for the conceptual design project.

Councilor Pepin, seconded by Councilor Dumont made a motion that the Finance Committee supports moving forward with an RFP for a conceptual design for the fire station. Motion passed 3-0.

Councilor Dumont, seconded by Councilor Pepin made a motion to support a supplemental appropriation in the amount of \$50,000, with a 20% contingency making the total \$60,000, to be funded in full by a portion of the Primex premium holiday refund. Motion passed 3-0.

PRE-ORDER NEW POLICE SUV CRUISER

Manager Belmore stated that this was spoken about at the Public Safety Committee meeting. Currently the City has a fleet of Ford Interceptors used as SUV police cruisers. This specific vehicle is in a redesign process and in order to get a 2019 model we would have had to order by September 2018. We have missed that mark so we will order one in the fall after the budget is passed. Belmore passed along that Chief Kretschmar stated at the Public Safety meeting, that the current cruisers are in good working order and that they can wait until the fall of 2019 to order a new one should it be approved.

ROCKY HILL ROAD CITY WELL/WELLFIELD EVALUATION BY WRIGHT PIERCE ENGINEERS

City staff and the Committee expressed that they expected more analysis from the evaluation received from Wright Pierce Engineers. However, it appears that the wellfield evaluation will require additional study.

Manager Belmore recommended the City put this out for an RFP, but suggested that we wait until the 2019 budget is adopted. The CIP calls for an analysis of the Noble Pines standpipe, and examine the need for repair or a new standpipe. He anticipates that as a recommendation in his FY21 proposed budget, and if approved we could include both actions in a single RFP and hope to achieve some economies of scale. The Finance Committee consensus was to also wait and send out an RFP for both studies to be done together.

REPORTING

Director Smith stated that the budget looks like we are moving along just fine. We are watching Public Works snow budget first, but they seem to be in line with years past. Right now, the concern is with solid waste and recycling, which is looking to be over spent by \$70,000 +/- . City staff is going to meet with Waste Management today to understand the recycling process better. The other area we are watching is the Human Services Department. Homelessness is an issue with direct assistance up over 20% more than the past years. More families are becoming homeless and shelters are full. Currently we are paying for motels for the families until we can get them into a shelter.

Councilor Dumont asked about Dover and Rochester and if they are facing these same issues. Director Smith stated that they are having the same issues.

Director Smith explained the process of placing families and how the Human Services Director works with surrounding towns as they meet on a regular basis.

Manager Belmore spoke about solid waste collection. He suggested that the requirement for a City recycling bin be removed from the City Ordinance and residents would be allowed to use store purchased bins and other receptacles. The Committee consensus agreed with this suggestion.

Manager Belmore spoke in regards to the recycling program and that the City is looking into modifying the recycling program to reduce the cost of solid waste.

Manager Belmore spoke regarding the cardboard program at the DPW facility. The dumpsters tend to be full and are actually overflowing at times. Councilor Witham stated he saw styrofoam still in TV boxes which is an issue. Manager Belmore asked the Committee ideas on how to modify this program. He has seen businesses come in with van loads of boxes; it was his understanding the bins were for residential use.

Councilor Witham would like City staff to come back with an idea for the Committee to consider. He gave examples of video monitoring and lighting surveillance as an option. Maybe put up fences around the dumpsters with signs that say no commercial use.

MISCELLANEOUS

Councilor Witham stated that his wife recently had issues finding City trash bags in the stores. He stated that with the snow it may have caused a delay in delivery by the DPW as they were out treating the roads. He would like the Manager/City staff to bring back the proposal that was rejected some time ago to outsource the delivery directly to stores.

Manager Belmore stated that in a recent Recreation Committee meeting \$3000 has been allotted to repair the stairs at Noble Pines. As of now they do not meet code and are not ADA compliant, and hence a liability concern. He suggested that we remove the stairs and it would then perhaps become a natural trail. The committee expressed no issues removing of the stairs, which was supported by the Recreation Committee.

ADJOURNMENT

***Councilor Dumont, seconded by Councilor Pepin made a motion to adjourn at 9:37 AM
Motion passed, 3-0.***

Respectfully submitted,

Kelly Gagne, Deputy City Clerk