

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
AUGUST 31, 2022 – 4:45 p.m.

Committee Members present: Councilor David A. Witham, Chair
Councilor Don Austin, Vice-Chair
Councilor Matt Gerding
Councilor Richard Michaud (Mayoral Appointment)

Administration/Staff present: City Manager Bob Belmore
Finance Director Scott Smith
Public Works Director Michael Bobinsky
Police Chief Timothy McLin
City Clerk Jonathan Slaven

Chairman Witham called the meeting to order at 4:49 p.m. and noted the Mayor appointed Councilor Michaud as a temporary member for this meeting to replace former Councilor Dumont.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Councilor Austin made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 26, 2022 meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilor Gerding and passed 3-0-1. Councilor Michaud abstained.

EMERGENCY BUILDING REPAIRS

Manager Belmore reviewed a memorandum from Director Bobinsky regarding the need for a new furnace/HVAC system at the Department of Public Works Highway building and a memorandum from Police Chief McLin as well on the Police Department's needing a new furnace. Director Bobinsky received three quotes for the repairs including the installation of a valve to allow the system to work for both propane and natural gas. The low bidder for the Public Works/Highway Facility was ProHVAC. Councilor Witham noted he would be okay having the one company do both projects due to their proximity while Manager Belmore recommended maybe waiting to see if another vendor would come in at a lower cost for the police facility's needed new furnace as only the one from ProHVAC had been received.

Councilor Gerding mentioned the possibility of doing mini-split systems; although after a brief discussion, it was determined that installing such systems in every room would be very difficult.

Councilor Witham made a motion to approve the ProHVAC proposal for HVAC repairs at the Department of Public Works for an amount not to exceed \$15,000. The motion was seconded by Councilor Gerding and passed 4-0.

Councilor Gerding made a motion to approve repairs to the HVAC system at the Police Department for an amount not to exceed \$19,000. The motion was seconded by Councilor Michaud and passed 4-0.

Councilor Austin made a motion to sponsor a Resolution to utilize money from the Unanticipated (Emergency) Building Maintenance Capital Reserve Fund for these projects. The motion was seconded by Councilor Gerding and passed 4-0.

SOLID WASTE BAG PROGRAM

Manager Belmore explained that the Public Works and Environment Committee had already met and discussed the need to increase the cost to residents for the Pay-per-Bag program due to rising tipping and recycling fees. Staff has done an analysis on these costs and the plan is to increase the bags by \$.25 each year over the next two years to cover the cost of the increase for Solid waste pick up and disposal. Manager Belmore also noted there may be a need in the future to increase the amount charged for Bulky Waste stickers as well. Councilor Witham noted that even with the increase in bag amount, Somersworth is still lower than most neighboring towns.

Director Smith mentioned that money from every bag goes into two buckets: .10 cents of each bag sold is held in reserve to support unanticipated costs for solid waste and recycling endeavors and the balance supports the pay per bag fund. Councilor Gerding floated the idea of utilizing pay per bag funds for dirty dirt removal. He stated the increase is marginal and easy to digest especially if to keep in line with rising costs.

Councilor Gerding made a motion to support an Ordinance for the increase in cost for the pay per bag program by \$.25 per bag in FY24 and FY25. The motion was seconded by Councilor Austin and passed 4-0.

REPORTING

Director Smith informed the Committee that the auditors are scheduled to do their field work in October. Manager Belmore informed the Committee we are going through an audit by the NH Retirement System, he also noted that we are supposed to get audited by the New Hampshire Retirement System every three years, but it has been six. They inspect how we report retirement contribution funds as well as withholdings.

MISCELLANEOUS

Manager Belmore informed the Committee of some contaminated asphalt found at the Fire Station. Currently staff is seeking removal options.

ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Austin made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Councilor Michaud and passed 4-0. The meeting adjourned at 5:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

City Clerk, Jonathan Slaven