

MINUTES OF THE GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

Executive Meeting Room
September 22, 2022 – 4:45 p.m.

Committee Members present: Councilor Richard Michaud, Chairman
Councilor Matt Gerding, Vice-Chair
Councilor Don Austin
Councilor Nancie Cameron

Administration/Staff present: City Manager Bob Belmore
Deputy City Manager Scott Smith
City Clerk Jonathan Slaven

Chairman Michaud called the meeting to order at 4:45 p.m.

APPROVE PAST MEETING MINUTES OF AUGUST 3, 2022

Councilor Austin made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 3, 2022 meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilor Cameron and passed 4-0.

REVIEW RESOLUTION 12-23, COUNCIL RULES AND REGULATIONS

The Committee reviewed the Resolution in front of them in regards to a statement to be read after the pledge of allegiance at City Council meetings. Councilor Gerding stated the Resolution was drafted in order to recognize the indigenous people who first settled here. He added that other Communities have similar language and felt it important as a way to distance the City from Columbus Day, which the City does not officially recognize.

Councilor Austin stated he wanted to ensure the accuracy of the statement being made prior to approving. Councilor Gerding said he it was vetted by local groups, but will verify. Councilor Austin stated his belief that reading this statement at every City Council meeting may be too often and suggested perhaps reading it once a month. Councilor Gerding noted that it may come across as non-supportive if we do that. Discussion followed regarding other options of reading the message.

Matt Gerding suggested he could try and see if he could get some representatives of the indigenous community to attend the next City Council meeting to answer any questions Council may have.

Councilor Austin made a motion to send the Resolution back to the full Council for their deliberation. The motion was seconded by Councilor Cameron and passed 4-0.

CITY WELFARE GUIDELINES, CITY ORDINANCE, CHAPTER 10

Manager Belmore referred the Committee to a memo from Welfare Officer, Kristen LaPanne, who has been comparing the City's current guidelines against current model guidelines provided by the NH

Municipal Association and the NH Local Welfare Association. The City's guidelines were last amended in 2015. Director Smith stated that most of the changes are housekeeping in nature to keep up with current vernacular found at the state level. The only financial change is increasing the burial assistance amount from \$650-\$750. Committee members suggested not including the Appendix that provided specific amounts for housing and food and such so that when these amounts changed an Ordinance amendment would not be needed

Councilor Gerding made a motion to sponsor and Ordinance accepting the proposed amendments made to Chapter 10. The motion was seconded by Councilor Cameron and passed 4-0.

SEWER ORDINANCE, CHAPTER 8A, SEWERAGE COMMITTEE ARTICLE XIV

City Manager Belmore stated the change being proposed is codifying the group make up and removing the designation of "Standing Committee" as it never was handled in that capacity.

Councilor Gerding made a motion to sponsor an Ordinance accepting the proposed amendments to Chapter 8A. The motion was seconded by Councilor Austin and passed 4-0.

DISCUSSION ON RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

Manager Belmore stated Police Chief McLin has recently come to him with the concern of competing with surrounding Communities for the recruitment and retention of certified police officers. He stated the Department has struggled with keeping officers, and now is especially concerned of losing officers to other agencies due to other towns offering sign on bonuses and even offering to buy out any officers' current Community hiring contract in order to come work for them. Staff was asking the Committee for suggestions regarding the possibility of a \$6,000 retention bonus to certified officers hired prior to January 1, 2023 and have officers sign an agreement to stay with the City for 3-continuous years.

Councilor Gerding asked what the price of replacing an officer was. Chief McLin replied it was roughly \$42,000. Manager Belmore stated if the Committee was okay with the inventive, it should probably go to the Finance Committee to be further vetted regarding funding before going to full Council.

Councilor Austin made a motion to support a retention bonus strategy to all certified police officers hired before January 1, 2023 pending Finance Committee review. The motion was seconded by Councilor Gerding and passed 4-0.

UPDATES FROM THE CITY MANAGER

Manager Belmore informed the Committee that the Fire Secretary has recently moved to the position of Public Works Secretary. The City currently has openings for police officers and two

operator/laborers, and a library assistant. The City is close to hiring a new firefighter as well as two police officers and one equipment operator.

ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Cameron made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Councilor Gerding and passed 4-0. The meeting adjourned at 5:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jonathan Slaven, City Clerk