



City Council Meeting Minutes
March 6, 2014
2014-2015 Goal Setting Workshop

Attendees- Mayor Dana Hilliard, Councilors present: Brian Tapscott, Jonathan McCallion, Dale Sprague, David Witham, Martin Pepin, Jennifer Soldati, Denis Messier and Marcel Hebert. Absent- Councilor Sean Collins.

City staff present- City Manager Robert Belmore, Police Chief Dean Crombie, Fire Chief Keith Hoyle, Director of Planning & Community Development David Sharples, Director of Finance & Administration Scott Smith, and interim Director of Public Works & Utilities Carol Murray; Others present- Brian Gottlob of PolEcon Research.

Folks arrived starting at 5:00 p.m. to enjoy some food. The meeting was called to order at 5:45 p.m. in City Council Chambers at City Hall. Brian Gottlob gave a PowerPoint presentation for approximately one hour; it focused on positive economic activity indicators in NH moving to the Seacoast Region. Mr. Gottlob presented specific data in regards to Somersworth trends with comparisons made to nearby communities, etc. Much of the information gave high marks to Somersworth in such areas as job growth and positive demographic change. He left the meeting after his presentation.

Manager Belmore facilitated the goal discussion portion of the meeting. Belmore mentioned that should any official want a tour of any of our City facilities, to include the water treatment plant and wastewater treatment plant, he would be pleased to make it happen at their convenience.

The City Council 2013-2014 Goals were reviewed and benchmarks as well as specific goal accomplishments were noted during the discussion.

- Downtown Infrastructure
- Riverfront Development
- Regionalization & City/School partnership approaches
- Code / Property Maintenance
- EMS/Ambulance
- Planning Office/Planning Board
- City Parking Lots- former Nards rear lot and Plaza
- Support Local Businesses
- Downtown Zoning
- Road Infrastructure

Here is a consensus driven summary of the Council's 2014-15 Goals and action items that were discussed. Please note that the goals are not listed in any order of importance or priority. It was also decided to target this June for a follow-up session to further define these goals and objectives to include determining achievable timelines.

City-School Cable TV: Government Access & Educational Access channels

A Cable TV access coordinator position will be considered to manage the recruitment, training and scheduling of camera operators to broadcast city and school meetings, programs, and events. This position would be funded with cable franchisee fee funds.

Constitutional Way

Plans will be developed for improvements to this street. Construction is earmarked after the downtown project is complete and improvements should consider new sidewalks, street pavement and a “bump out” at the Washington Street intersection.

Riverfront Access

Mast Point Dam Recreational Grant Funded Project is planned for construction this year.

City Parking Lots

The Council’s Economic Development Committee is considering a recommendation to place the so-called former Nard’s rear parking lot out for sale. The Plaza lot considerations are on-hold during the downtown construction project.

New Fire Station

Discussion ensued regarding the formation of a special ad-hoc committee to explore new construction feasibility, define the need, and develop an overall plan. Upon the Mayor’s recommendation, there was general agreement to forward a Resolution for a new Fire Station before City Council and then the Mayor would refer the project to the Council’s Public Safety Committee.

Plaza

There was discussion on how the Plaza might be redeveloped to tie into the new downtown construction project and future plans for passenger rail, etc. This might also include the formation of a TIF (tax increment finance) district. The Council’s Economic Committee has been exploring future Plaza development and a possible TIF district.

Road Improvements

There was discussion on present plans being formulated by staff, which were discussed with the Council’s Public Works and Environment Committee. The RSMS – road surface management system/pavement assessment approved project was mentioned as it will assist in determining community priorities and better allocation of road repair funds.

School Capital Improvements

There was agreement to pursue utilizing the approx. \$120,000 in funding authorized by the Council and not expended by the School to complete more HVAC needed improvements. This was referred to the Council’s Finance Committee.

Former Hilltop Elementary School/Building

The architect will be providing a report to City Council on March 17 and then a plan needs to be finalized.

Superfund Landfill Site –Solar Array

EPA Grant funded feasibility study results will be presented to the City Council at the workshop meeting on April 7. A Council decision made and perhaps a plan finalized.

Image & Marketing

Vision2020 Committee will be developing plans. A new City banner statement has been proposed: “We Believe in Somersworth” in addition to “Proud Past, Bright Future”.

Disposition of other City-owned Buildings

A plan needs to be finalized for other properties:

a) the former Chabot’s Dairy building on Green Street: City Council has voted to authorize its sale through a negotiated process that would include any sale being taken back to the full Council for ratification.

b) the former Police Station property: a Resolution was referred to the Council’s Public Works and Environment Committee.

Increase City Recycling Efforts

The recommendation is to explore program options and build upon the Sustainability Committee educational recycling efforts to date.

Idea Tank – “Salmon Tank”

The program might include efforts to promote and encourage new creative ideas from all stakeholders in order to improve all facets of the community.

Rail

The formation of a Mayoral Rail Committee will be forthcoming. The notion is to improve rail availability and to advocate for passenger rail extension into the City.

Regionalization – Municipal Partnerships

There should be further consideration to establishing partnerships within the region and particularly with our neighboring cities and towns.

Goal Setting Workshop adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert M. Belmore
City Manager

March 13, 2014