

Minutes of City Council Meeting
Tuesday, February 20, 2024

ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mayor Gerding and, upon roll call, the following Council members were present: Pepin, Gibson, Paradis-Catanzaro, Michaud, Witham, Goodwin, Cameron, and Messier

Councilor Vincent was excused.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilor Paradis-Catanzaro led the Council in the Pledge of Allegiance.

RECOGNITION OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLE – OUR NATIVE ANCESTRAL AMERICANS

Mayor Gerding read the Recognition of Indigenous People – Our Native Ancestral Americans

PUBLIC HEARING

- A. **Ordinance 8-24** – Amend Chapter 34, Exemptions and Credits, Section 34.6, Solar Exemption, To Re-Adopt the Provisions of RSA 72:62 and Limit the Solar Exemption to a Maximum Amount of \$25,000

There were no public comments.

COMMENTS BY VISITORS

Michelle Nash, 78 Winter Street in Ward 1, commented that she is aware of the School Board presenting their budget to the City Council and that as a taxpayer, she is in favor of a tax override. She added she also works within the School and she has witnessed programs or staffing be cut to meet the tax cap in previous years that she feels are detrimental to the school's function. Ms. Nash stated that she has seen classroom sizes increase by adding another 5 or so children this year and she also shared concern that special education staff has gone from three paraprofessionals, to one, and that one is soon to retire and the position may not be filled going forward or the fact that the Somersworth Youth Connection (SYC) program is in jeopardy of being cut. She concluded her comments by stating that she is willing to pay more in property taxes to give the kids an education they deserve and hopes that the City Council will consider overriding the tax cap.

CONSENT CALENDAR

- A. Approve Minutes of the City Council & Somersworth School Board Joint Budget Workshop held on February 5, 2024
- B. Approve Minutes of the City Council Meeting held on February 5, 2024

Councilor Witham made a motion to approve the consent calendar as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilor Cameron and passed 8-0 by voice vote.

COMMENTS BY CITY COUNCILORS

Councilor Paradis-Catanzaro thanked Ms. Nash for her comments. She stated that she has received numerous emails about overriding the tax cap and that she had shared some of those emails with her fellow Councilors. Councilor Paradis-Catanzaro commented that child care expenses is something that had been brought up at a recent event she attended, and the mention of the Somersworth Youth Connection program was mentioned by a Somersworth resident who stated that the program is more affordable to families than child care. As a taxpayer, Councilor Paradis-Catanzaro stated that she is also okay with an increase to her property taxes to continue to support the children in the Community.

Councilor Witham thanked Ms. Nash for her comments as well. He added that concern over the budget is real and he expects it to be tough to navigate this year. He stated that while some are in favor of the tax cap override, others are not in favor and for him the question is not if there is a tax cap override but how much to override it by. He asked for the public to reach out to provide guidance as to how much. Councilor Witham briefly explained that the Council will receive a proposed budget from the City Manager around March 15th followed by budget meetings throughout the month of April where the Council will dive into each department and begin discussions on what it will look like to provide the schools with enough funding to provide an adequate education for their students, as well as to give the City what it needs to maintain its important City services. Councilor Witham commented that for every \$115,000 in the budget adds \$0.10 to the tax bill per thousand. Again, he appreciates the comment of override but feels that comments and guidance from the public would be helpful as they navigate how much to override the tax cap.

COMMUNICATIONS

There were no communications.

PRESENTATIONS OF PETITIONS AND DISPOSAL THEREOF BY REFERENCE OR OTHERWISE

There were no presentations of petitions and disposal thereof by reference or otherwise.

MAYOR'S REPORT

This past Thursday, February 15th, I attended the **New Hampshire Mayor's Meeting**, an open meeting to all 13 of the New Hampshire Mayors. At this meeting 10 of the 13 mayors attended, and this was our first meeting with the current contingent of New Hampshire Mayor's. Our meeting started with introductions, and we were then updated on past efforts of the previous mayor's group. We then shared our goals for the year, and identified homelessness, housing, child care, education, and the upcoming 2025-2026 New Hampshire State Biennial Budget as our priority issues. A large portion of the meeting was then spent discussing our first priority topic: homelessness. Each mayor shared out what was currently being done within their city to tackle this issue, as well as challenges that each city faces. As the only Tri-City Mayor that was able to attend this meeting, I shared some of the challenges that we are and has faced over the last few years; I spoke about the Warming Center and our coordination with the County to fill in the other mayors on what we have been doing. There was a ton of useful information shared out by each mayor, and it was clear that this issue was one being felt by all the cities around New Hampshire - not just one we see here in Somersworth. We then began identifying ways in which we can advocate as a collective group in order to make change, particularly at the State level, related to the homelessness crisis. More to come on this soon!

I would also like to announce that the **Mayor's Housing Taskforce** will have its first meeting this Thursday, February 22nd at 5:00 p.m. here in Council Chambers. This will be the first time we come together as a newly formed Committee, thus a large portion of this meeting will be dedicated towards goal-setting. I encourage any councilors here tonight, or citizens watching at home, to reach out to me or the Committee members about any goals you'd like to see related to housing here in Somersworth. All ideas are great ideas, and I'm happy to share these with the Committee when we meet on Thursday.

I have been tracking the State Board of Education and they have been working on revising the rules (aka ED306's) that govern the operation of the schools through the State of New Hampshire including high school credit requirements, competencies that schools must have, attendance, diversity, equity provisions, etc... The Board formed a task force and contracted out, spending about \$75,000, to work on the revision of this document. The task force then provided recommendations to the State Board of Education, however, the Commissioner decided to scrap those recommendations and create his own rules that he would like to see go forward which will go to a Public Hearing on April 8th at 1:00 p.m. at the State Board of Education. At first glance, there are a number of concerning changes that I wanted to identify, one being that the cap on class sizes will be eliminated meaning that classroom will have as many kids in their rooms as deemed by the School Boards of each community. There were also several other revisions that were scrapped which potentially endanger the safety and sanctity of New Hampshire public schools. I encourage anyone that feels inclined to either speak at the Public Hearing or submit written testimony, that information can be found through the Department of Education's website by searching the State Board of Education.

Also, tonight under **Appointments and Elections** I have a number of appointments.

Before us tonight, we will have **Donna Donovan** for re-appointment to the Library Board of Trustees. Mrs. Donovan has served as the Chair of the Board for a number of years, and has done a phenomenal job as Chair. With her position coming up this month, I respectfully request that when we get to this agenda item, that the city council move her nomination onto a second reading and approve the nominee this evening.

Also, after over a month of having a vacancy, we have finally received an application for the Ward 5 School Board position. Thank you to Gemma Soldati for applying for this position. This council will vote on the applicant tonight, and I hope that we can fill this position so that the School Board has a full board.

Also, under Appointments and Elections, I will be reappointing both Jenne Holmes and Paul Robidas as members to the Traffic Safety Committee. These appointments do not require a vote by Council.

Also, a FINAL reminder tonight that we are still accepting submissions for the **Mayor's Quarterly Art Show**, as the deadline for submissions for this year is March 1st, 2024. After the submission deadline, I will be asking the Chair of the Mayor's Commission for Arts and Culture to convene a

meeting to vote on the winners of this year's contest. The chosen pieces will be displayed in the Mayor's Office for a period of 3 months throughout the year, with the first piece going up on April 1st. Artwork can be any medium and size, as long as it will fit comfortably within the Mayor's Office. Please consider submitting your work for consideration. Submit a picture of your artwork to mgerding@somersworthnh.gov, including the name of the artist, size of the work, medium, and artist's description of the work.

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Finance Committee – Councilor Witham reported that the Committee is scheduled to meet Wednesday, February 21st at 4:00 pm.

Public Safety – Councilor Pepin reported that the Committee met on February 7th. The Committee discussed updates pertaining to the Police Department, Chief McLin discussed the potential of the City receiving funds to continue their ACERT program, the replacement of the facilities air conditioning system which is currently in a failed state, and replacement of the City's radio repeater located on top of the former Hilltop School and the Public Works Department Base Station.

Councilor Pepin reported that interim Fire Chief Dellner provided the Committee with an update regarding the fire suppression sprinkler break, the estimated timeline for the repair and restoration is that it will be completed by the end of February. Councilor Pepin summarized the High School and Middle School fire safety inspection which was conducted by the City's Fire Department, NH Fire Marshal's Office, and the school's facility director and maintenance staff. He noted that the violations found were determined to be housekeeping items. He added that the concern brought up regarding staff and students not being able to hear an active fire alarm while positioned behind a closed door was referred back to the SAU to contact their fire alarm company for testing. Councilor Pepin also stated that the Fire Department had received approval to repurpose the HUD Grant they originally received to build a Fire Training Tower, Chief Dellner shared with the Committee, proposed training and training equipment he would recommend the funds be used towards.

Councilor Pepin reported that Stewarts Ambulance Manager Robidas provided the Committee with response data including a briefing of a comparison from the last couple of years, additionally, the Committee learned that the two new ambulance vehicles were nearing being put into service and only pending State inspection.

The Committee discussed the Willand Warming Center and the affects that it has on the City's Police, Fire and Ambulance services. City Manager Belmore concluded the meeting with a report of some proposed budget strategies that he will be presenting pertaining to the Police and Fire Departments in order to meet the tax cap parameters.

Recreation Committee – Councilor Cameron reported that the Committee is planning to meet in mid-March.

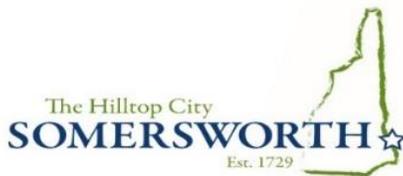
REPORT OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES, CITY OFFICERS AND CITY MANAGER

E-911 Committee – Councilor Pepin reported that the Committee met on February 15th and discussed an update on address number changes on Willand Drive. He stated that currently there are two property owners along Willand Drive that it would cause a burden on if the City were to renumber the road. At this time, the Committee determined to not take any action.

COAST – Councilor Paradis-Catanzaro reported that although she has not attended her first meeting since being appointed as the City’s COAST Board representative, she met with the Executive Director of Transportation, Rad Nichols to get some onboarding information. She shared that they discussed rideshare being up in the City of Somersworth and rideshare has also continued to increase since COVID restrictions were relaxed. Councilor Paradis-Catanzaro stated that she had received communication from a resident who was inquiring about a bus stop in their area, she shared that she learned that in addition to the routes that come through Somersworth, that there are Federal mandates that require ADA pickup services within three quarters of a mile radius from current bus stops. She also inquired about what the County is doing to support COAST bus and she learned that from the perspective of the County, COAST bus services are not County-wide so some challenges are faced there. She did add that COAST does have a good relationship with the County and they do receive some funding from them as well as State and Federal Funding.

Eyes on 30 – Councilor Goodwin reported that the Committee met prior to the City Council meeting. Being the first Eyes on 30 meeting in the new year and with new members, the Committee had an onboarding discussion to review what the mission of the Committee is and to discuss goals and initiatives that had been previously formed. A future agenda item for the Committee is for new members to bring any new ideas forward that can be folded into the current goals before the Committee moves forward with the prioritization and assignment phase.

City Manager’s Report



Office of the City Manager

TO: Mayor Matt Gerding and City Council Members
FROM: Robert M. Belmore, City Manager
DATE: Friday, February 16, 2024
SUBJECT: City Manager’s Report for February 20, 2024 City Council Meeting

*6:30 p.m. - Non-meeting / Union Negotiations
Re: Tentative Agreement*

Unfinished Business (under Section 15 of Agenda)

Ordinances

- A. **Ordinance 8-24: Amend Chapter 34, Exemptions and Credits, Section 34.6, Solar Exemption, to Re-Adopt the Provisions of RSA 72:62 and Limit the Solar Exemption to a Maximum Amount of \$25,000.** Again, the Finance Committee supports an Ordinance change to re-adopt the Solar Exemption limiting the Solar Exemption to a maximum amount of \$25,000.00.

City Manager Belmore reminded the Council that in 2017, the City Council voted to implement a solar exemption underneath State law and that law has changed. He stated that after seeking advice from the City Attorney and our Chief Property Assessor, City staff recommends that the Council consider re-adopting the solar exemption and putting a cap to the exemption. Therefore, City staff is recommending to limit the solar exemption to \$25,000 or whichever is less. Manager Belmore confirmed that is the Council does not vote to re-adopt the exemption, the current residents that are receiving the tax exemption will no longer receive it.

Resolutions

- A. **Resolution 31-24: To Notify the City Tax Collector that the City Council Shall Not Accept a Tax Deed on Properties Located on Wexford Lane and Blackwater Road Subject to an Unredeemed Tax Lien.** Again, the recommendation of "not to accept" is based on the land containing buried trash and debris, ie: potential contamination clean-up costs.
- B. **Resolution 32-24: To Notify the City Tax Collector that the City Council Shall Not Accept a Tax Deed on Certain Properties Subject to an Unredeemed Tax Lien.** Again, the Finance Committee voted to support Resolution No. 31-24 and Resolution 32-24.
- C. **Resolution 33-24: To Authorize the City Manager to use Funding from the American Rescue Plan Act and Contract with ENE Systems of New Hampshire, Inc. to Replace the Air Conditioning System at the Somersworth Police Station.** Again, the Finance Committee voted to support replacing the current air conditioning system which has failed.
- D. **Resolution 34-24: To Authorize the City Manager to Contract with GMI Asphalt, Inc. of Belmont, New Hampshire for Fiscal Year 2024 Road Resurfacing Improvements and to Repair and Reconstruct the Sidewalk on the East Side of Maple Street.** Again, the Public Works and Environment Committee and Finance Committee voted to support this action.
- E. **Resolution 35-24: To Accept Whippoorwill Way and Sandlot Lane as a Public Ways.** Again, the Public Works and Environment Committee voted to support acceptance of these two (2) roads providing that certain conditions are met.

City Manager Belmore noted that the City has received the bonding instrument and City staff along with the City Attorney have worked with the developer's attorney to prepare a deed that is ready to be recorded.

Other

- A. **Vote to Ratify a 3-Year Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) between the Somersworth School Board and the Somersworth Association of Clerical and Aides (SACA)** Please see attached "**confidential**" Memorandum from School Superintendent Louis Goscinski.

Informational Items

- A. **Upcoming City Council Workshops & Special Meetings**
- Monday, March 18 at 6:00 p.m. - State of the City Address before the Regular Council Meeting at 7:00 p.m.
 - Monday, April 1 at 6:00 p.m. - City Manager Presents FY 2025 Proposed Budget
 - 7:00 p.m. - FY 2025 Budget Public Hearing and Regular Council Meeting
 - Saturday, April 6 at 8:30 a.m. - Community Support Organizations & City Departments Budget Review
 - Monday, April 22 at 7:00 p.m. - Special City Council Budget Meeting (if needed)

City Hall is Closed on Monday, February 19 for President's Day Holiday

Attachments

1. Department Head Reports

NOMINATIONS, APPOINTMENTS AND ELECTION

In accordance with Council Rules 17 Appointments, the following are being introduced for a Council confirmation vote:

- A. Donna Donovan for re-appointment to the Library Board of Trustees with a term to expire February 2029

Councilor Witham made a motion to suspend Council Rules to allow for a Council vote on the nomination. The motion was seconded by Councilor Cameron and passed 8-0 by voice vote.

Councilor Witham made a motion to re-appointment Donna Donovan as a member of the Library Board of Trustees with a term to expire February 2029. The motion was seconded by Councilor Paradis-Catanzaro and passed 8-0 by voice vote.

In accordance with Council Rules 17 Appointments, the following is being introduced for a Council confirmation vote to fill the vacancy of the Ward 5 School Board Member until the next Municipal or State Election:

- A. Gemma Soldati

Councilor Paradis-Catanzaro made a motion to appoint Gemma Soldati at the Ward 5 School Board Member until the next Municipal or State Election. The motion was seconded by Councilor Goodwin.

Discussion:

Councilor Witham thanked Gemma for putting her name in to serve as a School Board Member. He commented on the size of Ward 5 increasing in size since changing the ward boundaries line and the position represents an equitable portion of the City and is important to be filled.

Councilor Paradis-Catanzaro questioned if the position will then be a vote at the next State election. Mayor Gerding confirmed that Ward 5 will have a vote to fill the position during the State Primary Election.

Councilor Goodwin asked to clarify that the nominee will fill the position until the State Primary in September 2024. Mayor Gerding concurred.

The motion passed 8-0 by roll call vote.

In accordance with Council Rules 17 Appointments, the following are Mayoral Appointments not requiring a Council vote:

- A. Jenne Holmes as a Member of the Traffic Safety Committee
- B. Paul Robidas as a Member of the Traffic Safety Committee

LAY ON THE TABLE

There were no items under Lay on the Table.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

ORDINANCES

- A. **Ordinance 8-24** – Amend Chapter 34, Exemptions and Credits, Section 34.6, Solar Exemption, To Re-Adopt the Provisions of RSA 72:62 and Limit the Solar Exemption to a Maximum Amount of \$25,000

City Clerk LaPanne performed a second reading of Ordinance 8-24.

Councilor Paradis-Catanzaro made a motion to amend Ordinance 8-24 by striking “whichever is less” and replacing it with “whichever is greater”. The motion was seconded by Councilor Witham.

Discussion:

Councilor Paradis-Catanzaro stated that the reason for her amendment is to clarify the language that follows an increase of assessed value should that value increase in the near future and to encourage people to purchase solar panels.

Councilor Witham stated that he expected the amendment to be regarding the dollar amount which is what he is leaning towards, perhaps \$30,000 would provide a cushion.

Councilor Gibson stated that that he does not have a problem with the exemption itself, but questions it being more of a subsidy for people who can afford to pay to have solar panels installed, he compared it to the tax subsidy that was granted for EV vehicles which he felt only helped those with large discretionary incomes that could afford to make that choice. He stated that he is not in favor of amending the exemption with an increased dollar amount. He questioned if someone can afford to purchase solar panels and that adds value to their property, then why would someone need the exemption to help cover the cost.

Councilor Goodwin shared his experience with purchasing solar panels for his home, he stated that he was not responsible to pay an up-front cost for the installation of solar panels and talked about how he entered into a Power Purchase Agreement with a third party. He explained that he pays the third party to essentially rent his roof while receiving cleaner energy and lower rates than the grid. Councilor Goodwin agrees that having solar panels installed can increase the value of a home, he also stated that he agrees with a limit being set but does feel that \$25,000, as suggested in the Ordinance, is a little too low. He would also like for growth provisions to be considered in the exemption amount.

Councilor Witham commented that he was on the City Council in 2017 when they voted to adopt a solar exemption, he continued that the driving force of the exemption was to incentivize clean energy. He commented that State law has changed and he feels that adding a dollar value to the exemption makes sense, he suggested considering an increase to \$30,000 which would provide a cushion and a few years of escalation costs.

Councilor Gibson expressed frustration with this Country's tax system. He stated that he likes the idea of incentivizing people to purchase clean energy but he still believes that the exemption only targets a certain population of people that are able to do so, and that, for example, people living in mobile homes are not able to have solar panels installed on their roofs. He agreed to keep the exemption but also added that he does not agree with increasing the dollar amount.

City Manager Belmore stated that the City's Tax Assessor is a certified by the Department of Revenue and does assessing valuations for other local communities as well. He feels that using the term "whichever is greater" is confusing to him because it would allow everyone receiving the exemption to receive the dollar amount set by the Council. Manager Belmore added that another safeguard that is in place would be for a property owner to file an abatement should the cost of their qualifying solar energy system drastically increase before the Council was able to reconvene to discuss amending the exemption amount at a later date.

Councilor Goodwin inquired about how City staff came to the assessed value of a solar system. Manager Belmore stated that he is relying on the knowledge of certified staff to make those recommendations.

Councilor Paradis-Catanzaro commented that amending the language to "whichever is greater" still makes sense to her. She questioned if the changes in State law required a dollar amount be set for the exemption. Councilor Witham responded that his understanding through Committee meetings is that a dollar amount is required. He further explained his take on using the term "whichever is less" versus "whichever is greater" as well as solar system costs versus the exemption amount, he provided the example of if a solar system is assessed at a value of \$20,000, the tax exemption would only apply to that amount and not the set maximum of \$25,000 as is currently being presented. Councilor Paradis-Catanzaro understands and she stated that she felt her intent on amending the language was that if inevitably the cost or value is going to increase, why not state however much the added value of the solar system is. For those reasons, she is in agreement with the amendment being an increase to \$30,000.

Councilor Messier clarified that it is a tax exemption that is being capped at \$25,000 for solar panels assessment values. He continued to comment that not every home will have the same amount of panels installed with some being less and some being more.

Councilor Witham made a motion to suspend Council Rules to allow for questions and answers to Finance Director Smith. The motion was seconded by Councilor Pepin and passed 7-1 by voice vote. Councilor Gibson opposed.

Finance Director Smith explained his concern with using the language “whichever is greater” and he shared that if someone has only \$10,000 in assessed solar, they would then receive a tax exemption of \$25,000. He explained that the City’s Tax Assessor came to the amount of \$25,000 because in her experience, a typical residential solar panel array that can be seen on roofs is typically valued at about \$20,000 and that the \$25,000 being proposed would provide a buffer. He did add that the discussion around increasing the value to \$30,000 is reasonable in his opinion.

Councilor Gibson questioned how much a \$25,000 exemption would affect a tax bill for residents. Director Smith confirmed that it would be around a maximum of \$60.00 in exemptions per bill. Councilor Gibson stated that he still stands firm on his thoughts on not wanting to favor some residents that have the ability to purchase or have installed solar panels, however, he will not let that small amount stand in the way of the Ordinance passing.

Councilor Witham and Councilor Paradis-Catanzaro withdrew their motions on the table.

Councilor Witham made a motion to amend Ordinance 8-24 by striking \$25,000 and replacing it with \$30,000. The motion to amend was seconded by Councilor Paradis-Catanzaro and passed 7-1. Councilor Gibson opposed.

Councilor Witham made a motion to adopt Ordinance 8-24 as amended. The motion was seconded by Councilor Paradis-Catanzaro.

Discussion:

Councilor Witham stated that he appreciates the discussion between the Council members regarding the language and dollar amounts. He added that he hears Councilor Gibson’s concerns, but the purpose of exemptions is not meant to apply to all residents such as the Veteran and Elderly Tax Exemptions that are both legit and important. Councilor Witham feels that it is the right thing to do to incentives clean energy exemption and why he supports it.

Councilor Goodwin added that he believes it is an important exemption to renew and that it is a small sacrifice of the overall tax income, he stated that having recently added a solar system to his home, it would be a disincentive to have the burden of a higher tax bill at the forefront of his mind when solar energy is something that will benefit the environment and the community at large with cleaner energy.

The motion passed 7-1 by roll call vote. Councilor Gibson opposed.

RESOLUTIONS

- A. **Resolution 31-24** – To Notify the City Tax Collector that the City Council Shall Not Accept a Tax Deed on Properties Located on Wexford Lane and Blackwater Road Subject to an Unredeemed Tax Lien

City Clerk LaPanne performed a second reading of Resolution 31-24.

Councilor Gibson made a motion to adopt Resolution 31-24 as submitted. The motion was seconded by Councilor Pepin and passed 8-0 by roll call vote.

- B. **Resolution 32-24** – To Notify the City Tax Collector that the City Council Shall Not Accept a Tax Deed on Certain Properties Subject to an Unredeemed Tax Lien

City Clerk LaPanne performed a second reading of Resolution 32-24.

Councilor Cameron made a motion to adopt Resolution 32-24 as submitted. The motion was seconded by Councilor Goodwin and passed 8-0 by roll call vote.

- C. **Resolution 33-24** – To Authorize the City Manager to use Funding from the American Rescue Plan Act and Contract with ENE Systems of New Hampshire, Inc. of Bow New Hampshire to Replace the Air Conditioning System at the Somersworth Police Station

City Clerk LaPanne performed a second reading of Resolution 33-24.

Councilor Pepin made a motion to adopt Resolution 33-24 as submitted. The motion was seconded by Councilor Messier.

Discussion:

Councilor Witham stated that the value in this Resolution is that the air conditioning system needs to be replaced because it failed and that by utilizing remaining ARPA funds to fund this project, removes it from being a budgetary burden in the future.

The motion passed 8-0 by roll call vote.

- D. **Resolution 34-24** – To Authorize the City Manager to Contract with GMI Asphalt, Inc. of Belmont, New Hampshire for Fiscal Year 2024 Road Resurfacing Improvements and to Repair and Reconstruct the Sidewalk on the East Side of Maple Street

City Clerk LaPanne performed a second reading of Resolution 34-24.

Councilor Witham made a motion to adopt Resolution 34-24 as submitted. The motion was seconded by Councilor Paradis-Catanzaro.

Discussion:

Councilor Paradis-Catanzaro commented that the section of sidewalk is inclusive of the section of West High Street which on the opposite side of the road was fixed last year and she is excited for that side of the road to look just as nice.

The motion passed 8-0 by roll call vote.

- E. **Resolution 35-24** – To Accept Whipoorwill Way and Sandlot Lane as Public Ways

City Clerk LaPanne performed a second reading of Resolution 35-24.

Councilor Witham made a motion to adopt Resolution 35-24 as submitted. The motion was seconded by Councilor Gibson.

Discussion:

Councilor Witham commented that he believes that there are another one or two lots to be developed but that those curb cuts have already been completed for those properties. He added that he has driven through the neighborhood and feels that it has been well done.

Councilor Gibson inquired about water and sewer lines being completed. Councilor Witham responded that there are no water/sewer lines and that there are septic systems in place.

The motion passed 8-0 by roll call vote.

OTHER

- A. Vote to Ratify a 3-Year Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) between the Somersworth School Board and the Somersworth Association of Clerical and Aides (SACA)

Councilor Paradis-Catanzaro made a motion to ratify a 3-Year Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) between the Somersworth School Board and the Somersworth Association of Clerical and Aides (SACA) as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilor Messier

Discussion:

Councilor Witham stated that the work that members of the collective bargaining does is very important and that it is not easy, he does plan to support the vote tonight. He stated that the difficulty in it is the dollar amount, he noted that in year one, the agreement is over \$350,000 of an impact to the School Department budget which covers between 80-100 employees which is a significant chunk of the school district staff. Councilor Witham recalled a comment that the timing of this agreement is not ideal as the City Council moves into what he believes will be one of the most difficult budgets he has been through. He continued to explain the tax cap and lack of adequate State funding, and he mentioned that by meeting the City's tax cap, it would allow the School Department budget to be increased by around \$400,000 and that amount just barely covers the Collective Bargaining Agreement first year increases. Again, he plans to ratify this agreement and wants to remain transparent with the public about the difficulties within the budget.

Councilor Paradis-Catanzaro confirmed that she would also be supporting the vote to ratify the Collective Bargaining Agreement and she recalled a comment made during discussions that alluded to if the City Council did not approve the agreement, it would cost the City over \$2,000,000 to contract out for services that the City is obligated to provide. She added that she is confident in the agreement because it has been negotiated by both sides to hopefully give the members enough to stay within the School District and to also attract other very important workers to our schools.

The motion passed 8-0 by roll call vote.

COMMENTS BY VISITORS

Kari Clark, 59 Franklin Street, thanked the City Council for their vote to ratify the Collect Bargaining Agreement and supporting the school staff.

Maggie Larson, 16 Hamilton Street and School Board Chair, thanked the City Councilor for the support with voting to approve the Agreement. She stated that although it is a difficult process, she feels that the communication regarding what is needed and the discussions had is what the City is all about. She also commented that she believes that a lot of people will feel the collective support which is incredibly important to have.

Michelle Nash, 78 Wither Street, thanked the Council for their unanimous vote and believes that her coworkers will also be appreciative of the unanimous vote.

CLOSING COMMENTS BY COUNCIL MEMBERS

Councilor Witham commented on the traffic signal upgrades along High Street being “so welcome”, he added that the project was not inexpensive and is thankful for the grant that the City received to cover that project. He inquired about his hope that the intersection of High Street, Indigo Hill Road and Blackwater Road would have been adjusted allowing for cross traffic to travel at separate times to help avoid vehicle accidents that are prone to that area. Councilor Witham also requested that City staff begin to look at crooked or bent over street signs and fix those.

Councilor Cameron requested that the public reach out to their local State Representatives regarding upcoming education bills that would provide more funding for education. She gave kudos to the Public Works Department staff for responding quickly to her call about a pipe cover coming off within a section of the road. She concluded with her comments that she is excited for when the dog park reopens so she can bring her puppy.

Councilor Messier commented that he is happy to have seen work beginning on Elm Street with the new development moving forward and he is looking forward to seeing the final product. He asked for an update regarding the Memorial Drive solar lights. Councilor Messier inquired about the agreement regarding the Willand Warming Center operations, he has concerns that people are not leaving the Center timely according to the agreement.

Councilor Pepin commented on cars speeding along Rocky Hill Road and he expressed concern for pedestrian safety. He also noted that the speed limit sign on Otis Road is leaning again and needs to be adjusted.

Councilor Gibson commented that he appreciates the Council’s unanimous vote regarding the 3-year Bargaining Contract. He acknowledged that the work that the staff does is tough and that they deserve it and he wishes that more can be done. He stated that he agrees with Councilor Witham’s comments regarding the intersection of High Street, Indigo Hill Road and Blackwater Road and the safety concerns it poses. Councilor Gibson also pointed out the intersection of West High Street and High Street, he stated that vehicles have been blocking the intersection when there is traffic backed up from travelers heading towards the Berwick Bridge and would like it looked into for a solution.

Councilor Paradis-Catanzaro commented on an article that she read in the Foster’s Daily Democrat written by Palana Belken of Rochester and titled *Yes, Affordable Housing in my Backyard*. She read the first few lines of the article and stated that it is compelling that someone with support had become homeless. Councilor Paradis-Catanzaro continued by sharing statistics from the article including that there was a 52% increase in homelessness from 2019 to 2022 in the State of New Hampshire in comparison to the National average just 12% and thus making this State the third highest rate of homelessness. She shared these statistics because she would like to add it to the conversations around affordable housing. Councilor Paradis-Catanzaro shared that she joined the Leadership Seacoast event at Fold’d which held their economic development day within the City of Somersworth. She also thanked Planning Director Mears for joining the event and providing information and tours to the class. She also gave thanks to Public Works Director Bobinsky for addressing the 4th sidewalk crossing that she had mentioned at the intersection of High Street, Highland Street and Constitutional Way.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

No future agenda items were brought forward.

NONPUBLIC SESSION

There were no nonpublic sessions scheduled.

ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Gibson made a motion to adjourn at 8:40 p.m. The motion was seconded by Councilor Goodwin and the motion passed 8-0 by voice vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kristen LaPanne, City Clerk



City of Somersworth – Ordinance

Ordinance No: 8-24

**AMEND CHAPTER 34, EXEMPTIONS AND CREDITS,
SECTION 34.6, SOLAR EXEMPTION, TO RE-ADOPT THE
PROVISIONS OF RSA 72:62 AND LIMIT THE SOLAR
EXEMPTION TO A MAXIMUM AMOUNT OF \$25,000**

February 5, 2024

THE CITY OF SOMERSWORTH ORDAINS THAT the Ordinances of the City of Somersworth, as amended, be further amended as follows:

Amend Chapter 34, Exemptions and Credits, by deleting Section 34.6, Solar Exemption, in its entirety, and replace it with the following:

Section 34.6 Solar Exemption

The City re-adopts the provisions of RSA 72:62, an exemption from the assessed value for property tax purposes, for persons owning real property which is equipped with a solar energy system as defined in RSA 72:61. Such Solar property tax exemption shall be in an amount of \$25,000 or equal to the added assessed value of the qualifying solar energy system equipment as defined in RSA 72:61, whichever is less. This exemption shall be effective for the tax year that begins on April 1, 2024.

| Authorization | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| <i>Sponsored by Councilors:</i> David A. Witham Denis Messier Martin Pepin | <i>Approved:</i> City Attorney |

City of Somersworth – Ordinance 8-24

History

| | | | |
|------------------|-----------|---------------------|--|
| First Read Date: | 2/5/2024 | Tabled: | |
| Public Hearing: | 2/20/2024 | Removed From Table: | |
| Second Read: | 2/20/2024 | | |

Discussion

2/5/2024

Deputy Clerk Ramsey performed a first reading of Ordinance 8-24.

Ordinance 8-24 will remain in first reading until the call of the Chair.

2/20/2024

City Clerk LaPanne performed a second reading of Ordinance 8-24.

Councilor Paradis-Catanzaro made a motion to amend Ordinance 8-24 by striking “whichever is less” and replacing it with “whichever is greater”. The motion was seconded by Councilor Witham.

Discussion:

Councilor Paradis-Catanzaro stated that the reason for her amendment is to clarify the language that follows an increase of assessed value should that value increase in the near future and to encourage people to purchase solar panels.

Councilor Witham stated that he expected the amendment to be regarding the dollar amount which is what he is leaning towards, perhaps \$30,000 would provide a cushion.

Councilor Gibson stated that that he does not have a problem with the exemption itself, but questions it being more of a subsidy for people who can afford to pay to have solar panels installed, he compared it to the tax subsidy that was granted for EV vehicles which he felt only helped those with large discretionary incomes that could afford to make that choice. He stated that he is not in favor of amending the exemption with an increased dollar amount. He questioned if someone can afford to purchase solar panels and that adds value to their property, then why would someone need the exemption to help cover the cost.

Councilor Goodwin shared his experience with purchasing solar panels for his home, he stated that he was not responsible to pay an up-front cost for the installation of solar panels and talked about how he entered into a Power Purchase Agreement with a third party. He explained that he pays the third party to essentially rent his roof while receiving cleaner energy and lower rates than the grid. Councilor Goodwin agrees that having solar panels installed can increase the value of a home, he also

stated that he agrees with a limit being set but does feel that \$25,000, as suggested in the Ordinance, is a little too low. He would also like for growth provisions to be considered in the exemption amount.

Councilor Witham commented that he was on the City Council in 2017 when they voted to adopt a solar exemption, he continued that the driving force of the exemption was to incentivize clean energy. He commented that State law has changed and he feels that adding a dollar value to the exemption makes sense, he suggested considering an increase to \$30,000 which would provide a cushion and a few years of escalation costs.

Councilor Gibson expressed frustration with this Country's tax system. He stated that he likes the idea of incentivizing people to purchase clean energy but he still believes that the exemption only targets a certain population of people that are able to do so, and that, for example, people living in mobile homes are not able to have solar panels installed on their roofs. He agreed to keep the exemption but also added that he does not agree with increasing the dollar amount.

City Manager Belmore stated that the City's Tax Assessor is a certified by the Department of Revenue and does assessing valuations for other local communities as well. He feels that using the term "whichever is greater" is confusing to him because it would allow everyone receiving the exemption to receive the dollar amount set by the Council. Manager Belmore added that another safeguard that is in place would be for a property owner to file an abatement should the cost of their qualifying solar energy system drastically increase before the Council was able to reconvene to discuss amending the exemption amount at a later date.

Councilor Goodwin inquired about how City staff came to the assessed value of a solar system. Manager Belmore stated that he is relying on the knowledge of certified staff to make those recommendations.

Councilor Paradis-Catanzaro commented that amending the language to "whichever is greater" still makes sense to her. She questioned if the changes in State law required a dollar amount be set for the exemption. Councilor Witham responded that his understanding through Committee meetings is that a dollar amount is required. He further explained his take on using the term "whichever is less" versus "whichever is greater" as well as solar system costs versus the exemption amount, he provided the example of if a solar system is assessed at a value of \$20,000, the tax exemption would only apply to that amount and not the set maximum of \$25,000 as is currently being presented. Councilor Paradis-Catanzaro understands and she stated that she felt her intent on amending the language was that if inevitably the cost or value is going to increase, why not state however much the added value of the solar system is. For those reasons, she is in agreement with the amendment being an increase to \$30,000.

Councilor Messier clarified that it is a tax exemption that is being capped at \$25,000 for solar panels assessment values. He continued to comment that not every home will have the same amount of panels installed with some being less and some being more.

Councilor Witham made a motion to suspend Council Rules to allow for questions and answers to Finance Director Smith. The motion was seconded by Councilor Pepin and passed 7-1 by voice vote. Councilor Gibson opposed.

Finance Director Smith explained his concern with using the language "whichever is greater" and he shared that if someone has only \$10,000 in assessed solar, they would then receive a tax exemption of \$25,000. He explained that the City's Tax Assessor came to the amount of \$25,000 because in her experience, a typical residential solar panel array that can be seen on roofs is typically valued at about

\$20,000 and that the \$25,000 being proposed would provide a buffer. He did add that the discussion around increasing the value to \$30,000 is reasonable in his opinion.

Councilor Gibson questioned how much a \$25,000 exemption would affect a tax bill for residents. Director Smith confirmed that it would be around a maximum of \$60.00 in exemptions per bill. Councilor Gibson stated that he still stands firm on his thoughts on not wanting to favor some residents that have the ability to purchase or have installed solar panels, however, he will not let that small amount stand in the way of the Ordinance passing.

Councilor Witham and Councilor Paradis-Catanzaro withdrew their motions on the table.

Councilor Witham made a motion to amend Ordinance 8-24 by striking \$25,000 and replacing it with \$30,000. The motion to amend was seconded by Councilor Paradis-Catanzaro and passed 7-1. Councilor Gibson opposed.

Councilor Witham made a motion to adopt Ordinance 8-24 as amended. The motion was seconded by Councilor Paradis-Catanzaro.

Discussion:

Councilor Witham stated that he appreciates the discussion between the Council members regarding the language and dollar amounts. He added that he hears Councilor Gibson’s concerns, but the purpose of exemptions is not meant to apply to all residents such as the Veteran and Elderly Tax Exemptions that are both legit and important. Councilor Witham feels that it is the right thing to do to incentives clean energy exemption and why he supports it.

Councilor Goodwin added that he believes it is an important exemption to renew and that it is a small sacrifice of the overall tax income, he stated that having recently added a solar system to his home, it would be a disincentive to have the burden of a higher tax bill at the forefront of his mind when solar energy is something that will benefit the environment and the community at large with cleaner energy.

The motion passed 7-1 by roll call vote. Councilor Gibson opposed.

| Voting Record | | YES | NO |
|---------------------|-------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Ward 1 Councilor | Pepin | X | |
| Ward 2 Councilor | Vincent | EXCUSED | |
| Ward 3 Councilor | Gibson | | X |
| Ward 4 Councilor | Paradis-Catanzaro | X | |
| Ward 5 Councilor | Michaud | X | |
| At Large Councilor | Witham | X | |
| At Large Councilor | Cameron | X | |
| At Large Councilor | Messier | X | |
| At Large Councilor | Goodwin | X | |
| TOTAL VOTES: | | 7 | 1 |
| On 2/20/2024 | Ordinance 8-24 | PASSED | FAILED |



City of Somersworth – Resolution

Resolution No: 31-24

TO NOTIFY THE CITY TAX COLLECTOR THAT THE CITY COUNCIL SHALL NOT ACCEPT A TAX DEED ON PROPERTIES LOCATED ON WEXFORD LANE AND BLACKWATER ROAD SUBJECT TO AN UNREDEEMED TAX LIEN

February 5, 2024

WHEREAS RSA 80:76 directs the Tax Collector, after 2 years, to execute to the City a deed of the land subject to the real estate tax lien and not redeemed, and

WHEREAS the Governing Body of a municipality may refuse to accept a tax deed on behalf of the municipality because in its judgment, acceptance and ownership of the real estate would subject the municipality to undesirable obligations or liability risks, or for any reason that would be contrary to the public interest,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SOMERSWORTH THAT the City Tax Collector be notified that for those reasons the City shall refuse to accept the tax deeds on property located at the following locations:

| <u>Location</u> | <u>Tax Map/Lot</u> |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| 5 Wexford Lane | 35-12A |
| 7 Wexford Lane | 35-12B |

| Authorization | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| <i>Sponsored by Councilors:</i> David A. Witham Denis Messier Martin Pepin Kenneth Vincent | <i>Approved:</i> City Attorney |

City of Somersworth – Resolution 31-24

| History | | | |
|------------------|-----------|---------------------|--|
| First Read Date: | 2/5/2024 | Tabled: | |
| Public Hearing: | | Removed From Table: | |
| Second Read: | 2/20/2024 | | |

Discussion

2/5/2024

Deputy Clerk Ramsey performed a first reading of Resolution 31-24.

Resolution 31-24 will remain in first reading until the call of the Chair.

2/20/2024

City Clerk LaPanne performed a second reading of Resolution 31-24.

Councilor Gibson made a motion to adopt Resolution 31-24 as submitted. The motion was seconded by Councilor Pepin and passed 8-0 by roll call vote.

| Voting Record | | YES | NO |
|--------------------|-------------------|---------|----|
| Ward 1 Councilor | Pepin | X | |
| Ward 2 Councilor | Vincent | EXCUSED | |
| Ward 3 Councilor | Gibson | X | |
| Ward 4 Councilor | Paradis-Catanzaro | X | |
| Ward 5 Councilor | Michaud | X | |
| At Large Councilor | Witham | X | |
| At Large Councilor | Messier | X | |
| At Large Councilor | Cameron | X | |
| At Large Councilor | Goodwin | X | |



City of Somersworth – Resolution

Resolution No: **32-24**

TO NOTIFY THE CITY TAX COLLECTOR THAT THE CITY COUNCIL SHALL NOT ACCEPT A TAX DEED ON CERTAIN PROPERTIES SUBJECT TO AN UNREDEEMED TAX LIEN

| | | | |
|---------------------|------------------|---------------|---------------|
| TOTAL VOTES: | | 8 | 0 |
| On 2/20/2024 | Resolution 31-24 | PASSED | FAILED |

February 5, 2024

WHEREAS RSA 80:76 directs the Tax Collector, after 2 years, to execute to the City a deed of the land subject to the real estate tax lien and not redeemed, and

WHEREAS the Governing Body of a municipality may refuse to accept a tax deed on behalf of the municipality because in its judgment, acceptance and ownership of the real estate would subject the municipality to undesirable obligations or liability risks, or for any reason that would be contrary to the public interest,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SOMERSWORTH THAT the City Tax Collector be notified that for those reasons the City shall refuse to accept the tax deeds on property located at the following locations:

| <u>Location</u> | <u>Tax Map/Lot</u> |
|------------------------|--------------------|
| 30 Blackwater Road | 35-14 |
| 79 Crystal Springs Way | 82-43M |
| 113 Sherwood Glen | 87-113M |
| 325 Sherwood Glen | 87-325M |
| 409 Sherwood Glen | 87-409M |
| 510 Sherwood Glen | 87-510M |
| 691 Sherwood Glen | 87-691M |
| 4 Ringer Drive | 88-2M |
| 5 Ringer Drive | 88-10M |

| Authorization | |
|---------------------------------|------------------|
| <i>Sponsored by Councilors:</i> | <i>Approved:</i> |

David A. Witham
 Denis Messier
 Martin Pepin
 Kenneth Vincent

City Attorney

City of Somersworth – Resolution 32-24

History

| | | | |
|------------------|-----------|---------------------|--|
| First Read Date: | 2/5/2024 | Tabled: | |
| Public Hearing: | | Removed From Table: | |
| Second Read: | 2/20/2024 | | |

Discussion

2/5/2024

Deputy Clerk Ramsey performed a first reading of Resolution 32-24.

Resolution 32-24 will remain in first reading until the call of the Chair.

2/20/2024

City Clerk LaPanne performed a second reading of Resolution 32-24.

Councilor Cameron made a motion to adopt Resolution 32-24 as submitted. The motion was seconded by Councilor Goodwin and passed 8-0 by roll call vote.

| Voting Record | | YES | NO |
|--------------------|-------------------|---------|----|
| Ward 1 Councilor | Pepin | X | |
| Ward 2 Councilor | Vincent | EXCUSED | |
| Ward 3 Councilor | Gibson | X | |
| Ward 4 Councilor | Paradis-Catanzaro | X | |
| Ward 5 Councilor | Michaud | X | |
| At Large Councilor | Witham | X | |



City of Somersworth – Resolution

Resolution No: **33-24**

TO AUTHORIZE THE CITY MANAGER TO USE FUNDING FROM THE AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT AND CONTRACT WITH ENE SYSTEMS OF NEW HAMPSHIRE, INC. OF BOW NEW HAMPSHIRE TO REPLACE THE AIR CONDITIONING SYSTEM AT THE SOMERSWORTH POLICE STATION

| | | | |
|---------------------|------------------|---------------|---------------|
| At Large Councilor | Messier | X | |
| At Large Councilor | Cameron | X | |
| At Large Councilor | Goodwin | X | |
| TOTAL VOTES: | | 8 | 0 |
| On 2/20/2024 | Resolution 32-24 | PASSED | FAILED |

February 5, 2024

WHEREAS, the air conditioning system at the Somersworth Police Station has failed and no longer functions properly; and

WHEREAS, City Staff requested quotes from qualified contractors to replace the air conditioning system at the Somersworth Police Station; and

WHEREAS, the Finance Committee reviewed these quotes with City Staff and determined it is in the best interest of the City to utilize American Rescue Plan Act funds to start this project as soon as possible and recommends awarding a contract to ENE Systems of New Hampshire, Inc. of Bow, New Hampshire for an amount of \$55,240 (Fifty-Five Thousand Two Hundred Forty dollars); and

WHEREAS, the Finance Committee also recommends adding an amount of \$4,760 (Four Thousand Seven Hundred Sixty dollars) to this project for contingencies and authorize the City Manager to increase the contract to an amount not to exceed \$60,000 (Sixty Thousand dollars) if needed and determined to be in the best interest of the City;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SOMERSWORTH THAT the City Manager may use funding from the American Rescue Plan Act and contract with ENE Systems of New Hampshire, Inc. of Bow, New Hampshire to replace the air conditioning system at the Somersworth Police Station for an amount of \$55,240 (Fifty-Five Thousand Two Hundred Forty dollars); and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SOMERSWORTH THAT an amount of \$4,760 (Four Thousand Seven Hundred Sixty dollars) is included with this project for contingencies and the City Manager is authorized to increase the contract to an amount not to exceed \$60,000 (Sixty Thousand dollars) if needed and determined to be in the best interest of the City.

| Authorization | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| <i>Sponsored by Councilors:</i> David A. Witham Denis Messier Martin Pepin Kenneth Vincent | <i>Approved:</i> City Attorney |

City of Somersworth – Resolution 33-24

| History | | | |
|------------------|-----------|---------------------|--|
| First Read Date: | 2/5/2024 | Tabled: | |
| Public Hearing: | | Removed From Table: | |
| Second Read: | 2/20/2024 | | |

Discussion

2/5/2024

Deputy Clerk Rasmey performed a first reading on Resolution 33-24.

Resolution 33-24 will remain in first reading until the call of the Chair.

2/5/2024

City Clerk LaPanne performed a second reading of Resolution 33-24.

Councilor Pepin made a motion to adopt Resolution 33-24 as submitted. The motion was seconded by Councilor Messier.

Discussion:

Councilor Witham stated that the value in this Resolution is that the air conditioning system needs to be replaced because it failed and that by utilizing remaining ARPA funds to fund this project, removes it from being a budgetary burden in the future.

The motion passed 8-0 by roll call vote.

| Voting Record | | YES | NO |
|----------------------|-------------------|----------------|-----------|
| Ward 1 Councilor | Pepin | X | |
| Ward 2 Councilor | Vincent | EXCUSED | |
| Ward 3 Councilor | Gibson | X | |
| Ward 4 Councilor | Paradis-Catanzaro | X | |



City of Somersworth – Resolution

Resolution No: **34-24**

TO AUTHORIZE THE CITY MANAGER TO CONTRACT WITH GMI ASPHALT, INC. OF BELMONT, NEW HAMPSHIRE FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 ROAD RESURFACING IMPROVEMENTS AND TO REPAIR AND RECONSTRUCT THE SIDEWALK ON THE EAST SIDE OF MAPLE STREET

| | | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Ward 5 Councilor | Michaud | X | |
| At Large Councilor | Witham | X | |
| At Large Councilor | Messier | X | |
| At Large Councilor | Cameron | X | |
| At Large Councilor | Goodwin | X | |
| TOTAL VOTES: | | 8 | 0 |
| On 2/20/2024 | Resolution 33-24 | PASSED | FAILED |

February 5, 2024

WHEREAS, the City Council adopted Resolution 18-24 on October 23, 2023, authorizing the City Manager to prepare and request bids from qualified contractors for road improvements to the following City streets:

- West High Street (High Street to Cemetery Road) mill/overlay
- Pleasant Street (High Street to Green Street) mill/overlay
- Silver Street (Franklin Street to Pleasant Street) mill/overlay
- Fremont Street (Silver Street to Garden Road) mill/overlay
- Parkview Terrace (Maple Street to end of pavement) shim/overlay
- Trench patching due to water breaks; and

WHEREAS, Resolution 18-24 authorized including the repair and reconstruction of the sidewalk on the east side of Maple Street from the Maplewood School to Cemetery Road; and

WHEREAS, the Public Works and Environment Committee reviewed the results of the bids received with City staff and recommends contracting with GMI Asphalt, Inc. of Belmont, New Hampshire; and

WHEREAS, the Finance Committee reviewed the results of the bids received with City staff and recommends contracting with GMI Asphalt, Inc. of Belmont, New Hampshire for an amount of \$582,455 (Five Hundred Eighty-Two Thousand Four Hundred Fifty-Five dollars); and

WHEREAS, The Finance Committee recommends including a contingency in the amount of \$42,545 (Forty-Two Thousand Five Hundred Forty-Five dollars) for the project, and allow the City Manager to increase the contract to an amount not to exceed \$625,000 (Six Hundred Twenty-Five Thousand dollars) if needed, and it is determined to be in the best interest of the City;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SOMERSWORTH THAT the City Manager is authorized to contract with GMI Asphalt, Inc. of Belmont, New Hampshire to make road improvements to the aforementioned City streets and

sidewalk improvements as described on Maple Street for a cost of \$582,455 (Five Hundred Eighty-Two Thousand Four Hundred Fifty-Five dollars); and

BE IT FURTHERED RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SOMERSWORTH THAT an amount of \$42,545 (Forty-Two Thousand Five Hundred Forty-Five dollars) is included with the project total for contingencies and the City Manager is authorized to increase the contract to an amount not to exceed \$625,000 (Six Hundred Twenty-Five Thousand dollars) if needed, and it is determined to be in the best interest of the City.

| Authorization | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| <i>Sponsored by Councilors:</i> David A. Witham Denis Messier Martin Pepin | <i>Approved:</i> City Attorney |

City of Somersworth – Resolution 34-24

| History | | | |
|------------------|-----------|---------------------|--|
| First Read Date: | 2/5/2024 | Tabled: | |
| Public Hearing: | | Removed From Table: | |
| Second Read: | 2/20/2024 | | |

Discussion

2/5/2024

Deputy Clerk Rasmey performed a first reading on Resolution 34-24.

Resolution 34-24 will remain in first reading until the call of the Chair.

2/5/2024

City Clerk LaPanne performed a second reading of Resolution 34-24.

Councilor Witham made a motion to adopt Resolution 34-24 as submitted. The motion was seconded by Councilor Paradis-Catanzaro.

Discussion:

Councilor Paradis-Catanzaro commented that the section of sidewalk is inclusive of the section of West High Street which on the opposite side of the road was fixed last year and she is excited for that side of the road to look just as nice.

The motion passed 8-0 by roll call vote.

| Voting Record | | YES | NO |
|----------------------|-------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Ward 1 Councilor | Pepin | X | |
| Ward 2 Councilor | Vincent | EXCUSED | |
| Ward 3 Councilor | Gibson | X | |
| Ward 4 Councilor | Paradis-Catanzaro | X | |
| Ward 5 Councilor | Michaud | X | |
| At Large Councilor | Witham | X | |
| At Large Councilor | Messier | X | |
| At Large Councilor | Cameron | X | |
| At Large Councilor | Goodwin | X | |
| TOTAL VOTES: | | 8 | 0 |
| On 2/20/2024 | Resolution 34-24 | PASSED | FAILED |



City of Somersworth – Resolution

Resolution No: 35-24

TO ACCEPT WHIPPOORWILL WAY AND SANDLOT LANE AS PUBLIC WAYS

February 5, 2024

WHEREAS, the City of Somersworth Planning Board approved a certain subdivision known as Conservation Subdivision Plan for Greenview Subdivision, 138 Rocky Hill Road, Somersworth New Hampshire, Tax Map 54 Lot 1, revised on December 6, 2017, Final Plans signed May 14, 2018 prepared by TRITECH Engineering Corporation, recorded as Plan #115-092 through 115-094 at the Strafford County Registry of Deeds and the roadway was to be accepted by the City of Somersworth; and

WHEREAS, the City Council named Whippoorwill Way and Sandlot Lane as streets by Resolution No. 38-18 on June 4, 2018; and

WHEREAS, the roads known as Whippoorwill Way and Sandlot Lane have been constructed to the satisfaction of the City; and

WHEREAS, the following conditions apply: A 2-year maintenance Surety Bond in the amount of \$125,000 (One Hundred Twenty-Five Thousand dollars) is provided acceptable to the City, a deed to the road as well as all needed public utility easements are provided to the City;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SOMERSWORTH THAT the City Manager is authorized to accept and record deeds to Whippoorwill Way and Sandlot Lane and said ways are hereby accepted as public right of ways subject to the aforementioned conditions.

Authorization

Sponsored by Councilors:

Denis Messier
Martin Pepin
Kenneth Vincent

Approved:

City Attorney

City of Somersworth – Resolution 35-24

| History | | | |
|------------------|-----------|---------------------|--|
| First Read Date: | 2/5/2024 | Tabled: | |
| Public Hearing: | | Removed From Table: | |
| Second Read: | 2/20/2024 | | |

Discussion

2/5/2024

Deputy Clerk Rasmey performed a first reading on Resolution 35-24.

Resolution 35-24 will remain in first reading until the call of the Chair.

2/5/2024

City Clerk LaPanne performed a second reading of Resolution 35-24.

Councilor Witham made a motion to adopt Resolution 35-24 as submitted. The motion was seconded by Councilor Gibson.

Discussion:

Councilor Witham commented that he believes that there are another one or two lots to be developed but that those curb cuts have already been completed for those properties. He added that he has driven through the neighborhood and feels that it has been well done.

Councilor Gibson inquired about water and sewer lines being completed. Councilor Witham responded that there are no water/sewer lines and that there are septic systems in place.

The motion passed 8-0 by roll call vote.

| Voting Record | | YES | NO |
|----------------------|-------------------|----------------|-----------|
| Ward 1 Councilor | Pepin | X | |
| Ward 2 Councilor | Vincent | EXCUSED | |
| Ward 3 Councilor | Gibson | X | |
| Ward 4 Councilor | Paradis-Catanzaro | X | |
| Ward 5 Councilor | Michaud | X | |
| At Large Councilor | Witham | X | |
| At Large Councilor | Messier | X | |
| At Large Councilor | Cameron | X | |
| At Large Councilor | Goodwin | X | |
| TOTAL VOTES: | | 8 | 0 |
| On 2/20/2024 | | PASSED | |
| Resolution 35-24 | | FAILED | |