



MINUTES OF CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Somersworth, NH

March 18, 2019

7:00 P.M.

ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS

The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm by His Honor, the Mayor, Dana S. Hilliard, and upon roll call the following Council members were present: Pepin, Vincent, Dumont, Austin, Michaud, Witham, Sprague, Cameron, and Levasseur.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIENCE

Councilor Sprague led the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Ordinance No. 16-19 - To Amend Chapter 7, Solid Waste and Recycling, Section 7.4 – Fees

Real Roseberry, Route 108, stated, regarding recycling, his son lives in Rochester; they have one tote and everything goes into that one tote. They don't have to pay for it. Here in Somersworth, we have to buy bags, then you (the Council) increase the price of bags, and we have to purchase the totes. Somersworth needs to change to be like Rochester. Nobody in Somersworth does anything right. Nothing lasts. Rochester is smart. We are not. Think about the tax payers who work so hard. Mr. Roseberry suggests that we check Rochester and do it that way. Save money on the tax payers.

COMMENTS BY VISITORS

Real Roseberry, Route 108, wanted to talk about the people we hire year after year for the accounting (Auditors). We need to alternate accountants every 3 years.

He said he also heard that (the Council) wants to override the tax cap. That's no good.

He went on to address accountability; the two jobs should be part time, Finance Director and City Manager. We only need one person to run the city part time. Nobody accounts for these guys. Get a committee and see if they spend their full time doing city business. Common sense. Check the accountability of the City Manager and the Accountant (Finance Director) Why do we have the City Manager. Let's have the Accountant (Finance Director) do both jobs. It will come to a point where people will be so far behind on the taxes, that the city will go bankrupt. This city could be run part time. Hire a piece checker. And change the accountants (Auditors) every 3-4 years.

As for recycling, check Rochester. The taxpayers are happy there. Here, the tax payers do all of the work and get an increase.

Chris Horton, 15 Francoeur Drive, stated that he supports the tax cap override, and the increase in the bags. He likes the idea of using the increase for green projects. Thoughts

on Rochester having free recycling and trash is because they have Waste Management in their back yard.

Sarah McGraw, ward 1, spoke regarding recycling, stated that it would be helpful if we did some kind of presentation to help the public understand why recycling is so expensive right now. Rochester is unique in their situation with the free recycling. She supports the price increase.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Approve Minutes of the State of the City Address held on March 4, 2019

Approve Minutes of the City Council Meeting held on March 4, 2019

Scott Orzechowski - Letter of Resignation as Commissioner of the Strafford Regional Planning Commission

Pius C. Murray - Letter of Resignation as Ward 3 Supervisor of the Checklist

Councilor Pepin, seconded by Councilor Vincent, made a motion to approve the Consent Calendar 9-0.

COMMENTS BY CITY COUNCILORS

Councilor Vincent replied to Mr. Roseberry's comments on Rochester's recycling and trash program. They have a discounted rate because of the massive facility that they have. They get their totes at zero cost. He has no problem with comparing apples and oranges, but there is a big difference here. He also stated that he is not in favor of putting a GPS on the City Manager any time soon.

Councilor Sprague said that Councilor Witham did a great presentation on the cost of trash at the last Council Meeting. People want to put a dump in Somersworth; he will not entertain that. Rochester made a deal with Waste Management which is why they pay zero for the recycling and trash.

Councilor Pepin stated that there will be a couple meetings. There will be a Ward Boundary Meeting on March 25, to discuss ward boundary changes. There will also be a JBC on March 28, 2019.

Councilor Witham stated that people are entitled to their opinion, but it bothers him when there is the slightest hint that staff is doing anything inappropriate with money. It couldn't be furthest from the truth. He has implicit trust in them. The City hires an independent auditing firm that audits our books. Their lead auditor stays the same, but the individuals that review our books each year, changes. It is the same firm but different sets of eyes.

Councilor Levasseur said we regularly talk about recycling, we don't talk enough about reducing and reusing. This cost increase will hopefully go to education about recycling. Reduce the waste. Portsmouth is discussion about a plastic bag ban. Reduce, reuse then recycle.

COMMUNICATIONS

Presentation of Financial Statements for year ending June 30, 2018 by Vachon Clukay & Co., City Auditors

Audit presentation is on file.

Councilor Sprague asked, concerning the Water Fund, looking at the percentages, they said that the water that was unaccounted for...

Mr. Vachon stated that the unaccounted water is not expensed.

Councilor Sprague stated that we still treat all of the water, so if we are treating water that is going out through leaks, he would think the expenses would go down.

Mr. Vachon stated that he only difference would be the use of the chemicals.

Councilor Witham asked how our numbers compare to what they see elsewhere. He asked if this was a typical under-expenditure rage, between 3-5%.

Mr. Murray stated that he just did an analysis for another community. Throughout the area, the high was 7% and the low was .8%.

Mr. Vachon stated one thing he doesn't see in this community, that is a usual practice in other communities, at the end of the year, departments heads spend all that they have left. We don't see that here. Kudos to the department heads for running a stable operation.

Councilor Witham, in regards to a point that was made about Federal Audit, it is his understanding that on occasion, various government agencies will come in and do an audit to make sure that you did what you said you were going to do with the federal money or bought the thing you said you were going to buy.

Mr. Vachon said that the Federal Government reserves the right to oversight the CPA firm. What they rely on is this process called peer review, especially, the compliance procedures. He stated that they get a clean opinion every time.

PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS AND DISPOSAL THEREOF BY REFERENCE OR OTHERWISE

MAYOR'S REPORT

This evening before the City Council for a first read is Ordinance 16-19, FY 2019-2020 Budget. The Budget is before the Council after months of work of the City Manager and Department Heads. After close examination, I am proud of the countless hours that have been put into Ordinance 16-19, ensuring that the balance is met to keep the Somersworth both affordable for all residents while progressing it forward 'On the Move'. It is now time for this body to examine the proposal to see if it matches with the desires and the realities of our constraints. As we move through the budgetary process, let us continue to model why our municipal government continues to be an example of 21st century democratic practices. Let us, in practice, as we have in the last 6 budgets, seek to find common ground that we can all agree upon. With civility and statespersonship, respecting differences when common ground cannot be reached and work as a team to ensure our bright future will be represented in the 2019-2020 finalized budget. It will be my goal, as in the past, to have the 2019-2020 Budget process concluded before Memorial Day. I look forward to an in-depth review of the budget proposed and a team approach by this Council in adopting the budget which will continue to keep our bright Hilltop City 'On the Move' and affordable for all residents.

Special thanks to Chief Hoyle for an insightful and engaging Mayor's Community Forum last Saturday. Not only were all of the participants well educated on 21 century fire service practices, I was very educated and informed also and I appreciate that. Thanks for taking the time to make this a truly meaningful forum. I now know the difference between a boxed, first, second, and all of the other alarms and what that encompasses.

The next Mayors Community forum will take place Saturday April 13th from 9:00 – 10:30 at City Hall. Including in this forum will be discussion and insight into the School System. The purpose of these for The next Mayors Community forum will take place Saturday March 16th from 9:00 – 10:30 at City Hall. Including in this forum will be discussion and insight from the Fire Department. The purpose of these forums are to foster dialog and ideas, in a non-formal setting to continue to move our community "On the Move". All members of the community are welcome to attend any forums.

As we continue to move closer to a final approval of a 21century Fire Station, we must insure that our department is also modernized in their current practices, staffing needs and equipment. Therefore this evening, I am calling upon the Public Safety Committee to study the current department staffing, equipment needs and practices, and to ensure that they match a 21st century facility that we have committed to. The committee will examine all aspects including, but not limited to, whether a Deputy Chief position is warranted in this or future budgets. I look forward to the committee rolling up their sleeves and reporting back their findings by the end of September.

Nominations, Appointments and Elections:

Council vote to appoint to fill the School Board At-Large vacancy:
Steven Potter

There has also been a last minute applicant, Robert Gibson. We did advertise that applications were due by March 13, 2019, however, there is nothing in the Charter that specifies that there is a deadline to apply into these positions. While looking at Roberts Rules of Order, it is clear that nominations can be brought forward even from the Chair, called Floor Nominations. I will leave that up to Council whom they wish to nominate.

For Council Ratification Vote

Glenn Garvin, as an Alternate Member of the Zoning Board of Adjustment, with a term to expire, March 2022

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Finance Committee Councilor Witham stated that the Committee met on March 13, 2019. The Committee discussed:

- Ordinance 16-19, solid waste recycling fees. The Committee has endorsed this Ordinance. A Representative from WasteZero was in attendance at the meeting. The quality of our bags are in the middle. Bags are holding up better than they once did. The Committee discussed WasteZero taking over the distribution of the bags. Director Smith and City Manager Belmore both flagged an issue with the contract about an out of state bank.
- The City has the possibility of purchasing conservation land; 3 acres off of Rocky Hill Road. There is some willingness of the owner to sell that land. There are grant opportunities available to help with the purchase with this land. The Committee agreed to support the pursuance of grants and the purchase of conservation land. They talked about the Mayor's State of the City Address and the need to protect the wildlife.
- 125th banners. That event has passed and the desire of the Summersworth Historical Society is to sell the banners to the community. This is effective reuse of the banners.
- City Manager Belmore and Finance Director Smith introduced a new service called govdeals.com; it's like ebay for municipalities. This could be used to get rid of surplus equipment.
- Finance Director Smith reported that they are watching the Public Works and winter operations, but the big impact is solid waste recycling. They are also watching the Fire Department budget; there has been some large cost repairs to fire apparatus. They are also watching the Welfare budget, as it relates to housing of homeless.

No reason to be alarmed.

Economic Development Councilor Dumont reported that the Committee met on March 13, 2019. The Committee discussed:

- Review of a 79e application for 123 Main Street. They requested a 3 year relief. There are 2 more coming that are on main street. The Committee voted to approve the 79e application, 4-0.

Public Safety Meeting is scheduled for March 27, 2019.

Public Works & Environment Meeting is scheduled for March 25, 2019.

Recreation Councilor Cameron reported that the Committee met on March 6th. The Committee discussed:

- Introductions of the New Chair and Vice Chair.
- Lengthy discussion of improvements to the football field concession. They will get a couple designs. Will then decide on where to go from there.
- Public art wall; couple locations.

REPORTS OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES, CITY OFFICERS AND CITY MANAGER

Special Committees

School Board – Councilor Pepin reported that he attended a School Board Meeting on March 12, 2019. Mark Richardson has been appointed Chair of the School Board, with Matt Hanlon as Vice Chair. There is a budget freeze for the school department. They discussed the search for the Principal for the HS. They are reviewing the food contract which is coming up. Looks like there will be a 15cent increase for next year.

Vision 2020 - Councilor Levasseur stated that the meeting for March 19th has been rescheduled for March 26, 2019.

Cultural Commission – Councilor Dumont stated that the Committee will be meeting on March 20, 2019.

Traffic Safety – Councilor Vincent stated that the Committee will be meeting on March 20, 2019

SAU Withdrawal Committee – Councilor Witham reported that the Committee will be meeting on March 20, 2019.

Planning Board – Councilor Witham reported that the committee will be meeting on March 20, 2019.

City Manager's Report

TO: Mayor Dana S. Hilliard and City Council Members

FROM: Robert M. Belmore, City Manager

DATE: Friday, March 15, 2019

SUBJECT: City Manager's Report for Monday, March 18, 2019
City Council Agenda

6:00 p.m.

Council Workshop with Historic District Commission

Lay on the Table (Under Section 13 of Agenda)

- A. Ordinance No. 4-19: To Amend Chapter 19, Zoning Ordinance, Section 14, Historic District.** Attached is a copy of the proposed Historic District Zoning Ordinance section.
- B. Ordinance No. 15-19: To Amend Chapter 19, Zoning Ordinances, Section 21, Requiring Paved Parking Spaces for Residential Use and Deleting Parking Requirement in the Historic Moderate Density District.** The title was kept as originally written, however, please note the Historic Moderate Density District was voted on at the last Council meeting. The Ordinance was divided into 3-separate questions and votes; 1-question and vote remains On the Table

Unfinished Business (Under Section 14 of Agenda)

Ordinances

- A. Ordinance No. 16-19: To Amend Chapter 7, Solid Waste and Recycling, Section 7.4-Fees.** The Finance Committee met on March 13th and voted unanimously to support this proposed Ordinance change. Bag Rate Comparisons:

	15 Gallon	30 Gallon		15 Gallon	30 Gallon
Dover	1.45	2.15	<i>Somersworth Current</i>	1.30	1.85
Concord	1.25	2.50	<i>Somersworth Proposed</i>	1.45	2.00

Please review the notes under new Resolution No. 33-19 regarding the proposed direct bag distribution contract with WasteZero.

New Business (Under Section 15 of Agenda)

Ordinances

- A. Ordinance No. 17-19: FY 2019 / 2020 Budget.** The City Manager's Proposed FY 2019 / 2020 Budget and School Department Budget has been submitted in accordance with the City Charter. Mayor Hilliard has scheduled the Public Hearing for Monday, April 1st. The City Manager's Budget Presentation starts at 5:30 p.m. The Budget Public Hearing starts at 6:30 p.m. Please note: Budget Workshop is on Saturday, March 30th starting at 8:30 a.m. FYI: This Workshop will be televised.

Resolutions

- A. Resolution No. 33-19: To Authorize the City Manager to Contract with WasteZero of Raleigh, North Carolina to Distribute Specially Marked Bags to Authorized Vendors as Part of the City's Pay-Per-Bag Program.** The Finance Committee met on March 13th and voted to support moving forward with this Program. Finance Director Scott Smith and I did inform the Committee that there is an issue with WasteZero's proposed contract which needs to be modified before final approval. The issue concerns the financial transaction set-up between their out-of-state bank and the City's bank which may not be allowable as proposed per State Law. Attached is a copy of the *Draft* Agreement.

City Manager's Items (under section 11 of Agenda)

A. Informational Items.

- 1. City Council Goal Setting.** Reminder, the Council Annual Goal Setting Session is Saturday, April 6th starting at 8:30 a.m. Coffee and light refreshments will be provided.
- 2. NH DOT Listening Session for Route 108 Complete Streets Project.** The first Listening Session to inform the public on the Complete Streets Project will be on Monday, March 18th at 7:00 p.m. at the Dover Middle School. Attached is a letter from NH DOT regarding this Session. Tentatively, a Somersworth Session is being planned for Thursday, May 2 at the Career Technical Center. I am waiting on confirmation.
- 3. Spirit-Up Somersworth.** Attached is a letter from Somersworth Youth Connection Director Maureen Jackman informing the City that the Annual Spirit-up day is scheduled for Saturday, May 4th from 7:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The City will continue its support in assisting in the 11th Annual Somersworth Community wide clean-up day.
- 4. Conservation Commission Proposed Purchase Property.** Attached is a Memorandum from Director Shanna Saunders explaining the Conservation Commission's proposal to purchase this property, to place into a Conservation Covenant. The Finance Committee reviewed the proposal with Staff and

Commission members and voted to support moving forward. I will be submitting the proposed Grant Applications with assistance from Staff and the Commission.

- 5. City Ordinance Chapter 31, Community Revitalization Tax Relief Incentive Application (aka – 79E Application) from Mr. Mark Davenport for 123 Main Street.** Attached is a copy of the Tax Relief Application package received from Mark Davenport. The Economic Development Committee did meet on March 13th and voted to recommend acceptance of this application. I have also included a copy of the City Ordinance, the property record card, and notes from Director Shanna Saunders in regards to what work has already been completed. I recommend this be placed on the next Council Meeting Agenda for both a Public Hearing as well as an item for discussion and vote.
- 6. Public Assistance Grant Program - FEMA Snow Event, March 13, 2018.** The City has been awarded \$36,097 for reimbursement of City Expenditures in responding to this declared major disaster snowstorm event on March 13th & 14th, 2018. Attached is the award letter from the NH Department of Safety.

Attachments.

- a. City Attorney Certification Two (2)**
- b. Department Head Reports**

NOMINATIONS, APPOINTMENTS AND ELECTIONS

Council vote to appoint to fill the School Board At-Large vacancy:

Steven Potter

Robert Gibson

Councilor Dumont, seconded by Councilor Austin, made a motion to nominate Steven Potter.

Motion to appoint Steven Potter as School Board Member At Large, passed 8-1, by voice vote.

For Council Ratification Vote

Glenn Garvin, as an Alternate Member of the Zoning Board of Adjustment, with a term to expire, March 2022

Councilor Dumont, seconded by Councilor Michaud, made a motion to appoint Glen Garvin as an Alternate Member of the Zoning Board of Adjustment. Motion passed by a vote of 8-0. Councilor Witham abstained.

LAY ON THE TABLE

Ordinance No. 4-19 – To Amend Chapter 19, Zoning Ordinance, Section 14, Historic District

Ordinance No. 15-19 - To Amend Chapter 19, Zoning Ordinances, Section 21, Requiring Paved Parking Spaces for Residential Use and Deleting Parking Requirement in the Historic Moderate Density District

Question 1:

Add ‘paved’ to section 19.21.A. The section will read as follows:

19.21.A.1. In all districts permitting residential uses, except where otherwise dictated below, a minimum of two (2) **paved** parking spaces per dwelling unit shall be provided on the lot which they are required to serve.

Councilor Witham, seconded by Councilor Pepin, made a motion to remove Ordinance 15-19 from the table.

Councilor Witham stated that he intends to vote down Question 1 of Ordinance 15-19 and start with a clean slate.

The motion to remove Ordinance 15-19 from the table passed, 9-0.

Councilor Witham, seconded by Councilor Levasseur, made a motion to vote down Question 1 of Ordinance 15-19.

Mayor Hilliard explained that the Ordinance was separated into 3 questions at the previous City Council Meeting. The other two have already been passed. The Council is only voting on section one. A yes vote is for defeat of Question 1 of Ordinance 15-19. Yes to defeat.

Councilor Sprague stated that he would like to have future discussions to reword this proposed ordinance. The way it is worded now, he has concerns about the future. There are ways and idea; need to consider driveway cuts, also some wordage about driving and parking on sidewalks. We need to accomplish something for Code to be able to enforce these issues.

Question 1 of Ordinance 15-19 passed 8-1.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

ORDINANCES

Ordinance No. 16-19 - To Amend Chapter 7, Solid Waste and Recycling, Section 7.4 – Fees

Councilor Witham, seconded by Councilor Levasseur, made a motion to approve Ordinance 16-19.

Councilor Witham stated that this has been an interesting topic since his presentation. It has generated conversation in the community about what happens with the trash and recycling. There was a fair amount of people who did not know where the recycling and trash goes. He said, in his household, they used 1 bag a week. With the 10cent increase, the cost would be \$5.20 a year.

Ordinance 16-19 passed, 9-0.

NEW BUSINESS

ORDINANCES

Ordinance No. 17-19 – FY 2019-2020 Budget

Councilor Witham, seconded by Councilor Austin, made a motion to have Ordinance 17-19 read by title only. The motion passed, 9-0.



City of Somersworth – Ordinance

Ordinance No: **17-19**

FY 2019-2020 BUDGET

March 18, 2019

The City of Somersworth Ordains that Budgets for the City of Somersworth for the 2019-2020 Fiscal Year shall be:

<u>DEPARTMENT</u>	<u>ADOPTED BUDGET</u>
<u>GENERAL FUND</u>	
Elected Leadership	\$142,736
City Management	488,981
Finance and Administration	1,401,405
Development Services	911,676
Police	4,022,377
Fire	2,159,580
Public Works	3,053,257
Other Expenses	1,256,912
Capital Outlay	157,913
Intergovt Assessments - County	2,593,400
School Department	25,703,113
TOTAL GENERAL FUND	41,891,350
<u>ENTERPRISE FUNDS</u>	
Wastewater Department	2,290,705
Water Department	2,286,386
Solid Waste	417,550
TOTAL ENTERPRISE FUNDS	4,994,641
<u>SPECIAL REVENUE FUND</u>	
Cable Fund	60,839
TOTAL FY 2019-2020 APPROPRIATION	\$46,946,830


This Ordinance shall take effect upon passage.

Authorization

Sponsored by Request:
Mayor Dana S. Hilliard

Approved:
City Attorney

RESOLUTIONS

	City of Somersworth – Resolution
	Resolution No: 33-19 TO AUTHORIZE THE CITY MANAGER TO CONTRACT WITH WASTEZERO OF RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA TO DISTRIBUTE SPECIALLY MARKED BAGS TO AUTHORIZED VENDORS AS PART OF THE CITY’S PAY-PER-BAG PROGRAM

March 18, 2019

WHEREAS, the City sells specially marked bags designed for refuse through various commercial and retail outlets to cover the cost of collection and disposal of the City’s municipal solid waste program, and

WHEREAS, the current program operates by purchasing the bags wholesale, keeping an appropriate inventory on hand, accepting orders, and requiring the Department of Public Works to make weekly deliveries to the various commercial and retail outlets, and

WHEREAS, WasteZero operates a program whereby they accept orders directly from approved vendors, and delivers bags directly on the City’s behalf, and

WHEREAS, City staff have examined this program and believes it improves the efficiency of the program and allows the Department of Public Works to concentrate their efforts on other duties, specifically during winter operations, and

WHEREAS, the Finance Committee has reviewed this program with City staff and recommends contracting with WasteZero to distribute specially marked bags to City vendors at a cost of .05 cents (five cents) per bag,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SOMERSWORTH THAT the City Manager is authorized to contract with WasteZero of Raleigh, North Carolina to distribute specially marked bags to authorized City vendors for a cost of .05 cents (five cents) per bag and to take any other action relative to this contract determined to be in the best interest of the City.

Authorization	
<i>Sponsored by Councilors:</i> David A. Witham Dale R. Sprague Martin Pepin Martin P. Dumont, Sr.	<i>Approved:</i> City Attorney

Councilor Witham, seconded by Councilor Vincent, made a motion to waive Council Rules to allow for a second read of Resolution 33-19. The motion passed, 9-0.

Councilor Witham, seconded by Councilor Levasseur, made a motion for adoption of Resolution 33-19.

Resolution 33-19 passed, 9-0.

CLOSING COMMENTS BY VISITORS

None

CLOSING COMMENTS BY COUNCIL MEMBERS

Councilor Pepin stated regarding the budget, there are no Councilors that want to go over the tax cap. The school budget is \$700k less than their last year budget. It's like a retiree collection their pension and retirement then losing one. A tax cap is great, when areas are kept neutral. Anyone who has gone to the school board meetings knows that it has been a struggle, because of the reduced state funding. They have proposed a budget under the tax cap. There was a School Board meeting the other day to see exactly what was going to be cut from the school. We have an obligation to make sure our students were covered. People say that they want the tax cap, but if there is a need, then they agree with over riding the tax cap. There is a need. None of us want to spend any more money than we have to. He stated that he listened to the news and there is one community that is suing the state for the lack of State aid and how unfair it is. He would like to see Somersworth possibly join them also. Because he doesn't think it is equal.

He stated that he is disappointed that the State put the Route 108 project meeting on the same night as our Council Meeting. About 75% of that project goes through Somersworth. It amazes him how Dover and Rochester seems to have more say about the roads that are in Somersworth than we do. He thanked the City Manager for scheduling a meeting, but it is still doesn't make us able to be present at the Dover meeting.

He stated that he is all for trees in our community. What upsets him is when we put the trees under powerlines, because we know they are going to be chopped up.

Councilor Vincent offered his condolences to Mayor Watman. He knew his wife and she was such a nice person.

Councilor Dumont echoed Councilor Pepin's comments about the Route 108 meeting being held on a Monday night during the Council meeting.

He congratulated the Somersworth High School basketball team. They didn't win it all, but they got to the finals and had a second place win. They did a fine job.

He found out that he is the oldest guy on the Council, he considers himself the elder statesperson. He's not sure how much wisdom he brings but he tries his best.

He offered his condolences to Mayor Watman, and the family and loved ones of Luise. They were very close to him and his wife. It was a very sad day for them.

Councilor Dumont went on to thanked Councilor Witham for his “Dog and Pony Show”. It was enlightening and the constituents appreciated that. The price increase on the bags is insignificant for some and significant for others.

As for the comment about the City almost in bankruptcy a few years ago, he had never seen that or heard that.

Regarding recycling, we can all become a little more green-friendly. The weight of glass is the heavy piece of recycling. In households, many products come in plastic or glass. He encouraged the public to look for items with plastic containers. The amount of glass is costly to the city.

He addressed the comments towards the City Manager and Finance Director. Many people have their idiosyncrasies. Never in his lifetime, has he had the opportunity to work with a manager like Manager Belmore. He always takes the time to reply whether during a weekend or while on vacation. He takes the time to see where the rubber meets the road. He regularly visits the Department of Public Works, Fire Department, and employees in other Departments. This Council is the finest team of professionals and individuals. We don’t all agree but we come to a consensus of opinion, with the guidance from the Mayor, City Manager and Finance Director. City staff is very positive and he hopes to keep them together for another 20 years.

Councilor Austin congratulated the High School Basketball team. They had great attitude and they represent Somersworth well.

He is saddened to hear of the passing of Luise Watman.

He congratulated Steve Potter on his appointment to the School Board. He is sure Steve will do an outstanding job because of his experience and the work that he already does.

The budget discussion will be no easier this year than it has been. This council met with the School Board several days ago. There are significant issues with the school budget because revenue isn’t there as expected. It is important to take a look at items that are not being funded. There are other needs that the school needs. His expertise has been in the school area. They need to look at which areas are being cut and which are being funded.

Councilor Michaud said the City Manager and Finance Director do an outstanding job. Many people don’t understand what they do.

He welcomed Steve Potter to the School Board and Glenn to the Zoning Board.

Councilor Witham said he has the opportunity to travel all over the state with his job. He gets to see a lot of management teams, and by comparison, our management team is as strong a team as you will find anywhere in the state.

Councilor Witham said he had Michael and Louise Watman as teachers in high school. They were tough, but he is better today because of it. They were outstanding teachers and outstanding people. He offered his condolences to the family.

He thanked Sarah McGraw for addressing the Council regarding recycling education. He recently received a call from a gentleman from Northeast Resource Recovery. He is fairly certain that the recycling market will turn. We should tap into his resources.

As for the Mayor remarks regarding the Public Safety committee looking at needs of the Fire Department, the Committee should look at the report from MRI, because it addressed some needs.

The Basketball team, as a dad, he had a proud moment, to raise a banner last year when his son was on the team and they won the championship. For the team to make it back to the finals again this year shows that the coach dedicates his time. Congratulations to the coach and the team.

There was some vandalism to the Pines baseball field; graffiti and broken latches. He requested that the Recreation Committee look into the hours of operation for the parks. There is currently a Dusk to Dawn curfew. The area is not well lit.

Councilor Sprague offered his condolences to Mr. Watman. He had them as teachers in high school. They make you better for having had them as teachers.

They need to change the warning lights at the school. They are still going off at 9am because of the change of daylight saving times.

He recently witnessed our K9, Bravo, in action at Lydia's House of Hope. Bravo's handler, Colton Deschanes, has the heart and soul of a police officer. He explains things well. Adding the K9 is one of the best decisions the Council has made. Many other communities have multiple K9's on the department. Manchester has 12 K9s.

As for the School Building aid, he is not for taking the kindergarten aid (keno) and put it toward building aid. He would like to see the delegation that was just voted in keep the keno funds for the kindergarten as it was intended. In the Governor's budget, funds were allocated for the Somersworth Veterans Park. If that fails to stay in the budget, they have failed us. If you are representing Somersworth, fight to keep that in, not just because you are looking to be re-elected. He stated that he doesn't care which side comes up with a good idea (democratic or republican).

Councilor Sprague went on to say, that if you are going to come up to the podium to address the Council and make unfactual comments, it is just not right. Have respect and confidence in the City Manager and Finance Director, and the job they do. If you are going to come to the podium, know what you are talking about. He does not make enough money to be belittled. Stop trying to belittle the council. To hear a bunch of guys in public talking about changing the world, start in your own house.

Councilor Cameron said that she got to know Luise Watman and Mike. They are part of the same church family. Not seeing her in the front pew, it really hit home. Councilor Cameron said that she remembered that Luise could read a scripture and she taught you what it is all about and with humor. Mike is doing ok.

To the Coach of the basketball team and all of the players, Congratulations! There were more cheerleaders on our side than on the other team's side.

She agreed that the City Manager is always quick to respond to emails.

Councilor Levasseur said he grew up being taught to respect elders. He worked in geriatrics and he has a special place in heart for the elderly. They are the ones who have given their blood and sweat to build our community. He thanked Councilor Dumont for what he does to represent them. As much as we look to push our community forward, they have lived there their whole lives.

He recently attended the Library event, Ask a Muslim Anything. It was very enlightening. He encouraged others to venture outside of their boundaries and have a conversation. He congratulated the hard efforts of the basketball team. They should be very proud.

Councilor Vincent said 3-4 weeks ago, he was contacted by Governor Sununu. Sununu said he has extra money in his budget and wanted to know if Somersworth had any projects that needed funding. Vincent contacted the Mayor and City Manager and 2 projects came to mind, the middle school elevator and the Veterans' Park. This has not been confirmed, but Governor Sununu offered \$180,000 to fund the Veterans' Park. An email was sent out by City Manager explaining what was going to be funded. This has not been approved yet. Vincent said he would be fighting for the \$180,000.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

NONPUBLIC SESSION

ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Michaud, seconded by Councilor Vincent., made a motion to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 8:55 pm.

Trish Harris, City Clerk

Dana Hilliard, Mayor