

City of Keene  
New Hampshire

**MUNICIPAL SERVICES, FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE**  
**MEETING MINUTES**

**Wednesday, July 12, 2017**

**6:00 PM**

**Council Chambers**

**Members Present:**

Janis O. Manwaring, Chair  
Randy L. Filiault, Vice-Chair  
Robert J. O'Connor  
Stephen L. Hooper  
Gary P. Lamoureux

**Members Not Present:**

**Staff Present:**

Medard Kopczynski, City Manager  
Thomas Mullins, City Attorney  
Rhett Lamb, Planning Director  
Kürt Blomquist, Public Works Director  
Beth Fox, Assistant City Manager/ HR Director  
Donna Hanscom, Assistant Public Works  
Director  
Andy Bohannon, Director of Parks, Recreation  
& Facilities  
Steve Russo, Police Chief  
Brett Rusnock, Civil Engineer

Chair Manwaring called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM, welcomed the public, and explained the rules of procedure.

**1) Paula Sousa – Overnight Parking on Middle Street**

Chair Manwaring welcomed Paula Sousa, owner of a duplex at 22 Middle Street, Keene. Ms. Sousa explained she has purchased City parking for her two tenants since 2002 at the location that is now the new Fire Department. She noted that several tenant and public parking spots were lost when the new Fire Department was built and tenant parking was shifted to the lot behind The Colonial Theatre. Ms. Sousa noted that this duplex is in the Business District, where overnight parking is not allowed between 2:00-6:00 AM. She noted that while in the Business District, the majority of properties in this neighborhood are residential. There are now only three metered parking spaces on Middle Street. Ms. Sousa requested the City explore the possibility of allowing those metered spaces to be available to those with City Overnight Parking Permits. This would save tenants from having to move their vehicles late at night and walk back from The Colonial. She added that all other parking rules and regulations would be observed.

The Public Works Director demonstrated on a map where overnight parking is prohibited in Keene due to periodic maintenance needs – weekly street sweeping, occasional line painting, etc. He said overnight parking has been prohibited in these areas for at least 25 years. These areas were chosen in an effort to not disrupt daytime business. Today

Middle Street, Summer Street, School Street, and Center Street are more mixed-use areas – business, office, and residential. The Public Works Director indicated he has spoken with the Police Chief to explore how to enhance parking for City customers including overnight parking, which is currently primarily allowed in City lots. Normally, if a parking lot needs maintenance, for example, the Public Works Department will post public notices of the closure five days in advance. He noted this is more difficult for weekly street maintenance. The Public Works Director requested, because any changes regarding this matter will require an amendment to the Ordinance, that the MSFI Committee provide more time for him to consult with his staff and other departments and return with an Ordinance to amend the current layout.

Chair Manwaring recognized Councilor Robert Sutherland who indicated he lives in the neighborhood in question. He said since moving there, parking on School Street was eliminated and meters were added on Summer and Middle Streets. Additionally an accounting firm has taken over several spaces. He said he is glad the City is looking into this matter, particularly as many businesses in that area are closed after 5:00 PM and on weekends.

The City Manager acknowledged that parking continues to be a prominent discussion amongst City staff, including if parking permit systems are needed in certain parts of the City.

The Public Works Director explained that he will work with staff and present an amended Ordinance to City Council on August 3<sup>rd</sup>, which will then be referred to the MSFI Committee for review on August 30<sup>th</sup>, and return to Council for final adoption on September 7<sup>th</sup>. Councilor Filiault asked if there is any opportunity for a shorter term solution for the residents, acknowledging how long Ordinance amendments can take within the City structure. The Public Works Director was not aware of individual waiver possibilities the Council can grant in the short-term.

Chair Manwaring recognized Councilor Sutherland who asked, if there is no short-term solution, the closest area the Middle Street tenants can park; specifically he asked about Court Street. The Public Works Director indicated that area is not restricted for overnight parking.

Councilor O'Connor made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Filiault.

On a vote of 5-0, the Municipal Services, Facilities, and Infrastructure Committee recommends more time to allow staff to investigate and to review the summer parking restrictions in the business district.

**2) Goose Pond Dam Improvements – Preliminary Design Concepts – Public Works Department**

Chair Manwaring welcomed Brett Rusnock, City Civil Engineer, and Jeffrey Tucker of Dubois & King, Inc., Randolph, VT. Mr. Rusnock said this was a more in-depth follow-up presentation to address any concerns about public access during the construction.

Mr. Rusnock provided some history about this project. In 2009 and 2015, the City received a letter of deficiency regarding the Goose Ponds dam and dike. The NHDES Dam Bureau regulates dams throughout the State to make sure they are safe and in proper working condition. Goose Pond is identified as a high hazard dam, meaning there is potential for loss of life or property if it were to fail. This is a Capital Improvement Project (CIP), for which design money was appropriated in FY17 and construction money appropriation is anticipated in FY 19 (July 1, 2018). Dubois & King were hired to execute the construction design.

Mr. Tucker explained the technical aspects of the design showing the dam, dike, and staging area locations on a map. He provided details about each primary area:

1. The Staging Area
  - a. At the intersection of the current access road to the Main Dam and East Surry Road.
  - b. Improved Goose Pond parking is proposed for the staging area once construction is complete.
2. The Main Dam
  - a. Embankment has been rotting and eroding for decades and will be reconstructed/refilled with earthen/stone fill.
  - b. Some seepage has been observed. Seepage filters will be installed to deter internal erosion, the leading cause of dam failure.
  - c. An existing trail crosses over the dam and it will be closed for reconstruction.
  - d. Construction is estimated to last six to eight weeks.
  - e. The Pond will be drained approximately five feet to allow safe conditions for construction.
3. The Dike
  - a. Holds approximately six feet of water in the pond.
  - b. A small earthen embankment, 200 feet long, and six to eight feet tall.
  - c. Must be raised approximately two feet to meet increased hydraulic freeboard requirements.
  - d. Will be reshaped to address erosion and old tree stumps will be removed.
  - e. A trail also crosses the dike and it will be closed during construction.
  - f. Construction is estimated to last three to four weeks.

Mr. Tucker explained the intention is to phase these construction projects so that both trails do not have to be closed at the same time. Additionally, the goal is to finish the design phase by the end of 2017 so the City can go to bid for construction in early 2018 and be ready to commence when funds are appropriated in July 2018. Mr. Tucker shared

additional photos displaying locations, topography, trails, the primary spillway (where water goes in a flood), the existing conditions of the dam and dike, wetlands locations, the conditions of low-level drain piping, and engineering details. The main dam embankment will be reinforced by adding material on the downstream face of the dam. Slip linings and cleanouts will allow the City to more easily maintain the dam in the future.

Andy Bohannon, Director of Parks, Recreation, and Facilities, spoke about the plans to convert the staging area into additional parking. On the north side of East Surry Road, the City intends to install gravel parking spaces, as parking at Goose Pond is currently insufficient. Because the space has to be excavated out anyway for staging (so as to not disturb forest closer to the dam), it makes sense to use it for the future of the park and not bring that material back in. This is an opportunity to improve recreation needs and will allow the City to maintain the dike in the long term, as there is currently no vehicle access to that location; the construction road from the staging area to the dike will be kept as a maintenance road.

Mr. Rusnock said, in summary, a lot of the preliminary design is complete providing a clear idea of necessary next steps:

- Widening the dam crest to 10 feet and installing a stability berm and filter on the downstream face.
- Replacing the existing gate valve within the outlet chamber.
- Lining the existing outlet pipe through the dam.
- Raising the dike approximately two feet to meet increased hydrologic and hydraulic requirements from the NHDES.
- Improving the access road to the dike.
- Excavating a construction staging area at the existing entrance to the site on Woods Drive.

The intention is to flag a temporary trail area the public can use during construction.

Chair Manwaring asked what happens to the water during construction. Mr. Rusnock replied the water will be lowered approximately five feet in order to provide safe working conditions in the existing gate chamber and when constructing the tow filter of the dam, and to eliminate risk of dam failure during construction. Chair Manwaring questioned the effect of lowering the water level on pond life. Mr. Tucker said in his experience this disruption is minimal and he has seen no residual effects.

Councilor Hooper asked if equipment will be placed on the drained parts of the pond during construction. Mr. Tucker replied yes.

Per Chair Manwaring's request, Mr. Rusnock recalled that construction funds are expected to be allocated in FY 19 (July 1, 2018). The hope is to have permitting completed this winter in order to put construction out to bid in in spring 2018 to be ready

for construction on July 1. Chair Manwaring directed the public to the July 6, 2017 City Council presentation which included more photos of this proposed project.

Councilor Hooper made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Filiault.

On a vote of 5-0, the Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee recommends that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the Goose Pond Dam Improvement Project as presented.

### **3) Departmental Presentation: Police Recruiting and Hiring – Police Department**

Chair Manwaring welcomed Police Chief, Steve Russo, to talk about Keene Police Department (KPD) recruiting, hiring, and retention. He said that in NH, unlike for certain other skills, there is only one place that can certify a police officer in the state – The New Hampshire Police Standards and Training Council. The Police Department cannot simply recruit someone who went to school to become an officer as is possible in some other states. Officers certified in other states can be hired but they still must be certified by the NH Police Standards and Training Council, though their prior certification usually expedites the hiring process.

The Police Chief continued explaining KPD recruiting procedures:

- Word of Mouth
  - Officers who would like to move from other local departments
- Websites and Facebook
- Alliance Testing: Primary Source
  - An alliance between most Departments in NH, in conjunction with Great Bay Community College in Portsmouth – where most advertising and candidates come from after passing a written exam.
  - Candidates sign-up directly with Great Bay, which conducts all testing for KPD.
  - The New Hampshire Technical Institute and River Valley Community College have a separate testing alliance due to their independent Criminal Justice programs.
- In-House Testing: Certified Officers, Veterans
  - The KPD does not want to turn anyone away who may be a qualified candidate.
- Radio is not used
- Ads were used infrequently in the past but their value does not justify the cost

The Police Chief continued explaining the KPD hiring process, which every applicant must go through regardless of professional history/certification. The entire process takes approximately two months:

1. Initial Process
  - a. Written Exam

- i. KPD only administers a cognitive test; some other departments also administer a personality test, which KPD is exploring adding to their hiring process.
    - b. Physical Fitness Test
    - c. Oral Boards
  2. Polygraph
  3. Background Investigation
  4. Psychological Evaluation
  5. Medical Evaluation
  6. Command Staff Review
    - a. When the decision is made a recommendation will be made to the City Manager to hire a candidate.

Chair Manwaring asked if there are minimum qualifications for police officer candidates. The Police Chief replied a high school diploma or GED and a driver's license.

The Police Chief said that hiring is a numbers issue. In 2016, the KPD was short anywhere between one and five officers. Four probationary officers were hired in the 2016 calendar year, resulting in 43/44 filled budgeted positions. However, four months later the number reduced to 39 because two of the four hired did not complete the Field Training Evaluation Program (FTEP) – one resigned for personal reasons and the other did not pass; two other officers left the KPD during 2016 as well. So far in 2017, two officers have been hired. One is a certified officer from Cheshire County Sheriff's Office and the other is non-certified and currently completing FTEP followed by the 16-week academy in August. The KPD is currently at 41/44 sworn positions.

The Police Chief provided further details on the 2016 hiring processes:

- Four Hiring Processes
  - Two Mixed Processes – involves candidates from both the testing alliance written exam results as well as in-house written exam testing.
  - Two General Processes – the vast majority of invitees are garnered from the testing alliance written exams, in addition to second time invitees.
    - Candidates who failed the physical fitness test are invited back from previous processes, with an emphasis on getting female and minority candidates to return, if possible.

The Police Chief shared a quote from the Testing Administrator: "It is getting harder and harder to find good candidates in today's climate. I did notice there are a few full-time certified officers, and a number of vets. We are still low on the number of female applicants but this is always something we struggle with." He added that the number of people testing is continuously trending downward and those that do test are not always qualified candidates – meaning they cannot make it through the entire hiring process successfully.

- In 2016, the following number of candidates were invited (anyone who passed the written test by KPD standards)

- 539 Males
- 75 Females
- **614 Total**
- Invited candidates that actually showed up for the physical fitness test: 44 (7.16% of total invitees)
- Passed the physical fitness test: 32 (72.72% of those that showed up)
- Passed the oral boards: 15 (46.87% of those who passed the physical fitness test)
  - Consists of a lieutenant, sergeant, a senior field training officer – moderated by the Captain.
- Passed Background Investigation: 4 (26.66% of those who passed oral boards)
- Hired: 4
  - 26.66% of those who passed oral boards
  - 100% of those who passed background check
  - 9.09% of those who took the physical fitness test

**0.65% of all those invited –**

Councilor Filiault asked if there is any follow-up to find out why invited candidates do not show up for the physical fitness test. The Police Chief replied it is believed that most seek positions in more desirable living locations, like the sea coast.

The Police Chief addressed possible reasons why only approximately 1% of invited candidates are hired:

- Location
  - Keene is not the most desirable location in the State to live, despite the City being a great place to work.
- Lack of Qualified Candidates
  - So few meet the NH standard requirements to be hired.
- KPD is competitive in pay and benefits with like-sized Departments.
- KPD has a very good reputation within law enforcement community and offers some diverse opportunities for growth within the Department.
  - Barriers for advancement have been removed and opportunities are solely based on competence and ability.

The Police Chief discussed possible steps moving forward to increase hiring of qualified candidates. This is not only a problem for KPD, but a trend across the State:

- Discussions have taken place with HR and the City Manager.
- Have reached out to other Departments with little response. Some departments have increased pay and Claremont, for example, now offers a \$10,000 hiring bonus. The Police Chief does not think monetary incentives are the answer. Other options need to be explored so that the demand on KPD does not result in officer fatigue.

The Police Chief continued explaining police officer retention. He said part of hiring qualified candidates is having a plan in place to retain them:

- Almost all losses outside of retirement are for personal reasons – moving to Departments closer to families and in a few cases leaving law enforcement entirely. Few officers are lost to other agencies, like State Police.
- KPD offers very competitive opportunities for lateral assignments, specialty team membership, and promotion.
- KPD offers good pay and benefits, a well-regarded work environment, and a well-regarded law enforcement reputation.
- KPD offers organized training opportunities, both centralized (in-house) and decentralized (state-wide), to promote competence and development.

The Police Chief welcomed questions.

Councilor Lamoureux said with the state of the world he does not anticipate numbers increasing anytime soon. He asked the percentage of officers today eligible for retirement. While the Police Chief did not have that official list with him, he believed at least 11-12 officers are eligible to retire at any time. Councilor Lamoureux noted it is not only the hiring process that impedes a full police force, retirements are also a critical factor; the Police Chief thanked him for making that point, noting that one year there were four retirements within the same month.

Chair Manwaring asked if there is any outreach to high schools to raise awareness about opportunities; she added she thinks the general perception of what a police officer does is much narrower than their actual diverse roles. The Police Chief replied there used to be a Criminal Justice Club, started by Councilor Lamoureux, but he is unsure if that club still exists. He said there is difficulty in promoting in high schools because candidates cannot be invited until they are 21 years old. Still, the Police Chief is interested in expanding the fire department program at the high school to include law enforcement, to expose students to something they could pursue later on or after college. All local Keene job fairs are utilized for recruitment with no results; but that effort will still continue. There is also constraint of available personnel to send to these events when already understaffed.

Councilor Filiault thanked the Police Chief and the KPD for their hard work, particularly in light of recent demanding events in the City. He noted in the past there has been an effort to over-hire to keep the maximum number of police officers needed. The Police Chief agreed that has been an effort, but the problem of insufficient qualified candidates continues to be the deterrent.

The City Attorney asked if when sending out job notices, if the KPD contacts the Department of Employment Security, which is a free resource. The Police Chief replied no, he was not aware of that resource but will look into it. He added they also post on some military boards, particularly to the National Guard and Reserve Leader in New England. He continued that, more broadly, a critical aspect is bringing more diversity to the KPD. Great Bay advertises farther south, which brings them a fairly diverse pool of candidates.



Councilor Lamoureux made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Filiault.

On a vote of 5-0, the Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee recommends the report from the Police Chief be accepted as informational.

**4) Departmental Presentation: Science and Equipment Troubleshooting Required to Operate and Maintain Wastewater Systems – Public Works Department**

Chair Manwaring welcomed Donna Hanscom, Assistant Public Works Director. Ms. Hanscom indicated there would be two presentations by Aaron Costa, Operations Manager, and Tom Moran, Utilities Maintenance Manager. This was a continuation of Public Works Department presentations about the challenges and lesser known things the Water and Sewer Fund Division does.

Mr. Costa explained he was there to help demystify some of the science behind waste water treatment. The Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP) came online in 1995 and was originally designed to treat a flow of 6 million gallons/day (MGD) though the average daily flow is only 3.4 MGD. The WWTP discharges to the Ashuelot River, for which the EPA permit is based on the size of the river and the dilution factor. For example, if the WWTP were on a larger river, the permit would be less restrictive because the dilution factor is much greater.

The EPA issues a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit with very specific parameters.

Mr. Costa continued showing pictures to demonstrate what waste water looks like; cloudy and dark, with Total Suspended Solids (TSS). He continued demonstrating a virtual tour of the steps waste water goes through in the WWTP.

Mr. Costa presented a photo showing the difference in water from start to finish. Typically 99% of the Oxygen-demanding compounds and TSS are removed. The WWTP puts out a very clean product to meet their strict EPA permit. Mr. Costa concluded reminding the public of what should and should not be put into toilets.

Mr. Costa welcomed the public to come and tour the WWTP at any time. Chair Manwaring asked Mr. Costa the qualifications for someone interested in his job. Mr. Costa replied a high school diploma or GED and many years of experience. NH has various certification levels and this plant requires a level four certification, the highest level possible. He has a Bachelor's of Science in Biology from Keene State College and a level four Waste Water Treatment License. His job requires a lot of math, biology, chemistry, and engineering.

Next, Mr. Moran spoke about the types of troubleshooting that take place in the waste water treatment facilities. Utilities Maintenance maintains everything throughout the waste water treatment process – plants, wells, and pump stations. Utilities Maintenance supports Waste water Operations, Water Operations, and various other City departments. Maintenance responsibilities performed by four personnel members include:

- 1 WWTP
- 5 Waste Water Pump Stations
- 1 Water Treatment Facility
- 12 Remote Water Sites – wells, control facilities, etc.
- 6 Water Storage Tanks

Within the maintained sites there is a vast amount of equipment used and monitored:

- 59 pumps in the waste water treatment and collection system.
- 64 pumps in the water treatment and distribution system (total of 123 pumps)
- 2 Pressure Reducing Valves (PRVs)
  - Lowers high pressure zones for typical use
- 2 vacuum and air relief valves on the untreated drinking water main
- 4 air relief valves on the raw sewage main
- Many supporting pieces of process and electrical equipment for handling the pumping and treatment processes at 25 sites – blowers, instrumentation, hydraulic units, HVAC, etc.

All of this equipment requires significant troubleshooting abilities on the part of personnel. For this presentation, Mr. Moran used pumps as the primary example. The first example was of troubleshooting an issue with pumping at the Martell Court Pump Station on June 5, 2017 after a rain event:

- New 250 horsepower (HP) raw sewage pumps in addition to a smaller 50 HP pump, which handles the majority of low flows.
- Infiltration occurred during the rain event, which increased flows.
- Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) flow trending data showed spiking and after some investigation, staff realized that a large pump was cycling on and off.
- The small 50 HP pump can handle up to 3.6 MGD before a larger pump is required to come on. These pumps are controlled by a Multi-Smart Controller.
- Through visual inspection, it was found that the larger pump #4 was being called for but was not coming on because it was air bound. This means there is air in the pump that needs to be bled. Bleeding the pump resolved the issue.
- Once the pump was back in service, technicians verified the pumping rates, motor speed, and power outputs.
- Other issues that could cause this malfunction are plugs in the system from disposal of improper materials into the wastewater system.
  - If plugged on the suction side, an area must be isolated and staff must enter the pump to remove the blockage; this is not ideal for staff.

Electrical issues are also possible and must be analyzed by the Master Electrician, who assists in troubleshooting these issues. He can set up electrical monitors to download to a laptop and look for any voltage inconsistencies. Mr. Moran provided an example of a voltage log. He showed a graph displaying a voltage reading of one of the power legs coming into the West Street well. While it displayed some spikes, it was within the acceptable range.

Mr. Moran explained a power issue leading to the WWTP when a tree branch interrupted power last month. When the generator came on, the transfer switch was only powering certain things. Technicians looked for a hot power leg, via an infrared test, that is usually an indication of a loose fitting or unbalanced power source. Once per year this test is performed to ensure there are no loose connections. Other troubleshooting included checking for voltages, amps, milli-amps, and resistance.

Mr. Moran continued explaining the wide variety of special tools the Division has for troubleshooting electrical issues:

- Rotation meter
- Circuit tester
- Tachometer – checks speed of a motor
- Power tracer
- Data logger
- Megger – tests for shorts in motors
- Current generator – used for instrumentation, motor flow, and testing equipment
- Additional safety equipment and precautions

Mr. Moran said this is just a summary of what Utilities Maintenance does. There is a wide variety of tasks and equipment.

Chair Manwaring recognized Councilor Carl Jacobs. He said both presentations make clear the level of training and competence amongst City staff. He said this presentation supports City Council when they have to make decisions about replacing equipment; all of this data helps to choose efficient and cost-effective equipment. The Water and Sewer Division consistently makes decisions based on efficiency and effectiveness. Mr. Moran agreed proactivity and efficiency are top priorities.

Chair Manwaring asked the qualifications for someone interested in Mr. Moran's job. Mr. Moran replied a minimum of a high school diploma or GED and excellent experience in maintenance, particularly industrial or military. He began as an Air Force mechanic. Also, people are trained on the job to make the transition from other types of maintenance. He said it is an interesting and challenging field that people enjoy being in.

Councilor Filiault made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Lamoureux.

On a vote of 5-0, the Municipal Services, Facilities, and Infrastructure Committee recommends the Public Works Department presentation be accepted as informational.

**5) Adjournment**

Hearing no further business, Chair Manwaring adjourned the meeting at 7:38 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Katie Kibler, Minute Taker