

City of Keene
New Hampshire

FINANCE, ORGANIZATION AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, September 22, 2016

6:30 PM

Council Chambers

Members Present:

Mitchell H. Greenwald, Chair
Carl B. Jacobs, Vice-Chair
Thomas F. Powers
Terry M. Clark
Jay V. Kahn

Councilors Present

George Hansel

Staff Present:

Rebecca Landry, Asst. City Manager/IT
Director
Thomas Mullins, City Attorney
Andrew Bohannon, Parks, Recreation and
Facilities Director
Dan Langille, City Assessor
Steve Thornton, Finance Director
Don Lussier, City Engineer
Kurt Blomquist, Public Works Director
Mary Alther, Revenue Collector
Liz Sayre, Human Services Manager
Brian Costa, Police Chief
Duncan Watson, Asst. Public Works
Director

Chair Greenwald called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

1) Presentation - Charter Communications

Melinda Poore of Charter Communications addressed the Committee and stated she has been with Time Warner for 16 years but is now employed with Charter Communications. Before the merger, Charter Communications had six million customers in 28 states. Post-merger they have 23.9 million customers in 41 states. Their headquarters is in Stamford, CT and they have 90,000 employees nationwide and offer TV, internet and voice products to residential customers and businesses. Ms. Poore then listed some of Charter Communication's commitment to New Hampshire customers; faster speeds, better video, lower costs and next year Charter will be rolling out Spectrum and we will see trucks with that brand name. Pricing and packaging is simplified and they are committed to not charge modem fees. Charter will also be merging its mobile app with Time Warner's mobile app which means a customer could watch TV anywhere. Charter is also committed to free and open internet and added that Netflix is supportive of this merger.

Ms. Poore then talked about Charter Communications investment – they are committed to extending into more areas, they will be extending into more unserved areas, increasing up to about 33 networks, investing 2.5 billion to expand into commercial areas, as well as providing low cost broadband service for families who have children on the lunch program and for seniors 65 and older receiving SSI benefits. The cost of this service will only be \$14.99 per month.

Charter also has a commitment to American jobs. Charter will be relocating call centers back to the US and adding approximately 7,000 jobs.

Ms. Poore then talked about the foot print they serve in New Hampshire. Charter serves 53 communities, Charter's network passes through 85,715 homes and businesses, serving 50,000 residents, and about 1,000 businesses throughout the state. In Keene, their coverage accesses through 11,079 homes and businesses and they have about 6,700 customers. Ms. Poore asked that if anyone hears of a customer who can't connect to their service, that she be informed so she could look into this.

Ms. Poore then showed the Committee the packages they will be offering and once the Spectrum packaging is offered, the minimum speed is going to be 60mb x 5mb and noted at the present time their highest speed is 50mb per second x 5 mb per second.

Councilor Kahn felt term definitions is important to understand what these numbers mean. Ms. Poore explained the 60mb would be the download speed and the 5mb will be the upload speed. Councilor Clark asked whether this chart would mean his rates would change. Ms. Poore stated this chart shows how broadband speeds have grown from 2008 through 2016 and this is just a demonstration of what the speeds looked like. Ms. Poore stated once their packaging is rolled out, it would be advantageous for customers to call in and compare prices.

Councilor Jacobs clarified that once the transfer is complete if a customer was on one of the plans on the chart, those speeds will be available to them if they were on the coverage map. Ms. Poore stressed the slowest speed they would offer is 60mb x 5mb but customers would have the option to stay where they are and not switch over.

Ms. Poore added most of their customers currently subscribe to the 15 mb x 1mb and less than 1% subscribe to the 50mb x 5mb service.

She further stated they also offer a full service business offering. Residences and businesses have very different service offerings. For instance, if fiber optics is required to be brought into a business, this cost is rolled into their price. At the present time there are different levels of services offered to businesses based on their need. The examples of services offered to businesses are cloud based services, symmetrical services (upload and download is the same), work from home solutions, security services, voice solutions and many such offerings. Business class teams are broken down by industry.

What's coming for Keene residents? Video and broadband will be brought early next year. Cable infrastructure will be fully digitized by 2018 which will provide for better TV viewing experiences, better utilization of the network and this opens the door for future innovation and faster broadband speeds. Ms. Poore noted a typographic error – once it is fully digitized the top residential speed would go to 100mb x 10mb. This concluded Ms. Poore's presentation.

Councilor Jacobs stated there has been great interest in the community for broadband but there are infrastructure challenges in this community to providing same. He continued he it seems Ms. Poore's feels there are no such challenges and asked for clarification. Ms. Poore stated their engineering staff is constantly making changes to their network to be able to meet consumer demand and for them it is more of a matter of seeing what obstacles some of these residences are having.

Councilor Kahn asked for added clarification of what Ms. Poore had said about Wi-Fi hotspots. Ms. Poore stated if someone is a Time Warner customer today they can download the app and for instance if someone is travelling to Washington DC today they can get on for instance on Comcast's Wi-Fi hot spot and because someone is a Time Warner cable customer today they can access this Wi-Fi hot spots nationwide. The app which should be downloaded is TWC Wi-Fi.

Councilor Kahn noted the median size of a business in the community as per the Chamber of Commerce is four and asked how this company would help those businesses that are more like a residential client. Ms. Poore stated she has heard this as well where smaller companies that look more like a residence are paying a lot more, but these companies do have much back end support that go along with these start-up companies so they stay up and running. The Councilor stated what he is trying to advocate is for lower costs as there are many small businesses that start-up in a home before they expand.

Councilor Clark asked whether Charter Communications has any tiered services for a business of four versus a business of 300. Ms. Poore stated a lot is based on the number of seats and the speed a business would need. She stated this is information she could obtain for the Committee.

Mr. Kopczynski stated the Marlboro Street rezoning is looking at a lot of small businesses and the live/work and felt the City was embracing the concept of small business opportunity and felt it was important to note we are not in Boston and we have a genuine need for a product that would serve the business incubator concept.

Ms. Landry stated the city has about 300 employees and does use Charter Communications as one of their providers. The city uses email services, video conferencing, IP address services, internet research etc. Her family of six who have different needs have the same broadband speed as the city does. It is not the size of the company but it is what they do with it. She stated she loves the start-up company concept but felt it was important for these providers to know the city is not going to cut anyone short as they are tech savvy and tech ready.

Attorney Mullins asked what kind of upload and download speed would a company of about eleven employees need. Ms. Landry stated at the present time Time Warner Charter is limited to 50MB and she is glad to hear that speed is going to be doubled. She noted 100 MB is not enough for that small business. They are a very rural company and may have a package they she doesn't know of. Ms. Poore stated Charter has what a company needs at the present time. She added Charter Communications is a rural company and they already have some small business packages she might not know about and stated she would look into this.

Chair Greenwald asked whether all this is about marketing. Ms. Poore stated it is not, it is about the back-end work that is done daily such as changing of hubs to better use the fiber that is on the poles; there is a maintenance and upgrades costs that happen yearly.

Councilor Powers asked whether fiber is the key element to high speed. He noted there might be fiber downtown but there is no fiber where he lives. Ms. Poore stated there is always fiber into a neighborhood.

Councilor Kahn asked whether there is line of sight where Charter Communications cable exists where it can be expanded in a cheaper manner but with greater breadth to serve this community and beyond. Ms. Poore stated past 2018 she wasn't sure what the company's plans are for a hybrid wireless solution. However, they do prefer a wired solution because of the type of weather this region faces but indicated she would look into this. The Councilor mentioned the Economic Development Master Plan and other such visions for the city and inquired if Charter Communications is looking at a merger and asked whether any partnership opportunities (experimental in nature) could be considered which would provide both the City and Charter Communications in a more cutting edge technology options. Ms. Poore stated she was willing to keep the lines of communication open to see how we can move forward with this.

Public Works Director, Kurt Blomquist clarified that every neighborhood has fiber optic cable but from the pole it is cable. He asked if a customer wants to put in a box to bring in fiber whether there was a cost to the customer. Ms. Poore stated they do this for business but are not set up to provide that service for residences but this is not a concept which is foreign to the company and the technology they have is definitely scalable.

Councilor Clark stated the question every customer is going to have is how this change is going to happen. Ms. Poore stated the change would happen overtime and the city would get a 30-day notice. A customer will need to call in to make the change but if they don't want to change they will remain where they are.

Councilor Kahn stated it was indicated 11,079 homes and businesses have connectivity and asked how many homes exist in Keene. City Assessor Dan Langille stated the city has 7,949 parcels; within a parcel there might an apartment complex that has 100's of units. There are about 4,000 single family homes.

Councilor Clark made the following motion which was seconded by Councilor Powers

On a vote of 5-0, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends accepting this item as informational.

2) **Acceptance of Donation - Sumner Knight Chapel - Parks, Recreation and Facilities Department**

Parks, Recreation and Facilities Director Andrew Bohannon stated the Committee has before it a donation of \$792 from the Keene Music Festival - Mathew Lees was the person behind this event. The donation exceeded his expectation.

Councilor Powers made the following motion which was seconded by Councilor Jacobs.

On a vote of 5-0, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to accept a donation of \$792.00 and that the money is used by the Parks, Recreation and Facilities Department.

3) **Acceptance of Donations - Holiday Family Sponsorship - Human Resources Department**

Human Services Manager, Liz Sayre stated this matter is in reference to the holiday family sponsorship event. Ms. Sayre explained every year the city matches needy families with sponsors to provide holiday gifts and food. The purpose of this program is so that recipients will use their resources to pay for their basic needs. This past year there were 40 sponsors who participated – 298 individuals received gifts, 74 persons received gift cards and 41 elderly house bound folks received a check from the Trust Fund. This program helps the community's struggling families.

Chair Greenwald asked whether an interested individual or company would contact the Human Services Department. Ms. Sayre answered in the affirmative. She added individuals, companies, city employees, and service organizations support this program.

Councilor Jacobs made the following motion which was seconded by Councilor Powers.

On a vote of 5-0, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to accept donations associated with the City's 2016 Holiday Family Sponsorship Program.

4) **Acceptance of Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program Grant – Police Department**

Police Chief Brian Costa explained each year New Hampshire's Special Operations Units attend monthly training to maintain and improve their skills both individually and as a team. That monthly training is critically important and necessary to be prepared for the extreme high risk type of calls they respond to. Equally important is the ability for the

Special Operation Units to be able to work together with unified command, mission and task sharing and communications interoperability. On Sunday, October 23, 2016 New Hampshire's Special Operations Units will come together to test those skills, working together on two problems that will present themselves on the same date, and which will occur close in time.

The exercises will test the response capabilities of the teams' abilities to effectively respond to, and manage, multiple critical incidents at the same time. Upon arrival, the requested teams will be asked to deploy in conjunction with other assisting teams in order to mitigate the incidents. All teams on scene will work under the Incident Command System (ICS) and must be able to work fluidly together, in order to work towards positive resolutions of both incidents.

Chair Greenwald asked where this training will happen. Chief Costa stated the location is yet to be determined but it is being planned in the eastern part of New Hampshire in a large commercial facility.

Councilor Kahn made the following motion which was seconded by Councilor Powers.

On a vote of 5-0, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to accept a grant of up to \$3,710.13 from the FY 2017 Homeland Security Grant Program for the Keene Police Department to participate in a State wide training event.

5) Acceptance of New Hampshire Highway Safety Grants 2017 - Police Department

Chief Costa stated the next item is three grants from NH Highway Safety. The first grant is a Bicycle and Pedestrian Grant for \$13,136.00, the second is the Sustained Traffic Enforcement Patrol (STEP) Grant for \$15,237.76 and the third is the Impaired Driving (DWI) Grant for \$11,822.40.

Chief Costa stated because NH Highway Safety has been through a transition is the reason for one of these new grants. The significance for the community with the Bicycle and Pedestrian Grant and the STEP Grant is that communities are given discretion where units are deployed; whereas in the past the State dictated where the units could to be posted. Chief Costa stated the City as a result will be able to have a higher presence downtown and asking officers for instance to spend an hour on foot downtown.

Chair Greenwald stated this should be done in conjunction with better signage downtown especially for those bicyclists who ride on sidewalks. Councilor Powers stated these bicyclists know there are signs they just choose to ignore them but this might be a way to convey that message again.

Councilor Clark asked whether the STEP Grant will give the Police Department the discretion to patrol in "hot spot" neighborhoods. Chief Costa answered in the affirmative

and added it will also enable the bicycle patrols downtown and as well as on bike paths, which is not seeing much patrolling today.

Councilor Jacobs asked whether this type of patrolling will require additional staffing. Chief Costa stated it will be accomplished with overtime patrols.

Councilor Kahn felt the bike patrols were important because of the miles of bike trails the city has. Chief Costa added the bike patrol has gone through an evolution. 20 years ago there were officers who wanted to patrol streets on their bikes in January, but this is not a reasonable expectation for everyone. The department is now in a position where there is interest in these bike patrols; it won't be 24/7 but it will be more than what has happened in the past few years.

Councilor Clark made the following motion which was seconded by Councilor Powers.

On a vote of 5-0, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to accept three (3) 2017 grants from the New Hampshire Highway Safety Agency:

- 1.) Bicycle and Pedestrian Grant for \$13,136.00
- 2.) Sustained Traffic Enforcement Patrol Grant for \$15,237.76
- 3.) Impaired Driving (DWI) Grant for \$11,822.40

The City Manager thanked the Police Chief for seeking out this grant as this will help with the city's recent efforts in the downtown.

6) Acceptance of Funds - Athletic Business Conference - Parks, Recreation and Facilities Department

Mr. Bohannon stated he had entered a contest to attend an Athletic Business Conference. 20 individuals were selected and Mr. Bohannon was one of those selected. The Conference pays for airfare, lodging and registration which is a significant cost and this conference has been on the Director's radar for a while. The conference is in November in Orlando.

Councilor Kahn stated Mr. Bohannon's creativity as well as other city staff like Director Blomquist and Chief Costa puts the city in good standing outside this community.

Councilor Jacobs asked for added explanation of how these funds work. Mr. Bohannon stated the Conference pays airfare up to \$500, two nights lodging, the cost of the conference (\$449), pre-workshop (\$64) and additional \$25 to attend other sessions to gain credit for Mr. Bohannon's professional developmental and continue his certification. Mr. Bohannon stated the only funds he will need is one night's lodging, transportation from airport to the hotel and meals, funds which the department has in its budget. The city's portion would be \$550.

Councilor Powers made the following motion which was seconded by Councilor Clark.

On a vote of 5-0, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to accept professional development funds for the Parks, Recreation & Facilities Director to attend the Athletic Business Conference from November 16-19, 2016.

7) Haying Maintenance Agreement 03-15-43 - Parks, Recreation and Facilities Department

Mr. Bohannon stated in the past the city has had a haying lease which has brought in minimal response. Last year there was someone who bid on the lease but did not follow-through and the city lost an entire haying season. This year in discussion with the Agricultural Commission staff has decided to switch from a lease to a maintenance agreement. From switching to this process the city eliminates some of the work attached to a lease. This is the property located in the Bent Court area.

Councilor Jacobs stated the concern of the Agricultural Commission is that the area be kept mowed and by trying to derive money from this operation we were losing someone maintaining the property.

Councilor Clark asked what happened last year. Mr. Bohannon stated the contract was never executed. The Councilor asked what the bottom line difference would be. Mr. Bohannon stated the contract would be for \$500, \$250 for each piece of property. The City is still making the same amount.

Councilor Powers clarified because this is a maintenance agreement the Council does not take action on it. Mr. Kopczynski stated because this is a departure from history, staff felt it was important to bring the matter before Council. This is a two year maintenance agreement and the applicant has the option to renew at the end of the two years.

Councilor Jacobs made the following motion which was seconded by Councilor Powers.

On a vote of 5-0, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to enter a two year agreement, expiring October 31, 2018, for a haying maintenance agreement with Rocky Knoll Farm.

8) Tax Deeds for Unpaid 2012 & 2013 Property Taxes - Finance Department Public Works Director

Revenue Collector, Mary Alther stated in June waivers were received on 38 properties to September 1st. There are 25 on the list of which three have paid as of today. Of the remaining 22 properties, staff is requesting deed waivers for two properties. Ms. Alther stated she would like to make a change to have the 0 Route 9 property also be waived as more information was received from one of the ten heirs. Hence, staff has to do more research on that.

Chair Greenwald asked where 0 Route 9 was. Mr. Langille stated this property is close to Otter Brook on Sullivan Road.

There was a typographic error noted on the Memorandum, and the extension date should read as November 2016 not November 2017 as well as the date in the background notes that indicate January 2017.

The reason the properties are broken into two sections is because the first section is manufactured homes and the second section is not. Ms. Alther stated of all these properties 11 owners have payment plans and six are on the market for sale.

Chair Greenwald pointed out the Revenue Collector works extremely hard with the property owners.

Councilor Kahn asked for more information about the property on 0 Route 9. Ms. Alther stated she has tried to locate the owner for the past two years and the mail keeps getting returned and they have not paid their taxes in the last three years. The Chair asked whether the abutters have been approached. Ms. Alther stated this cannot happen until this process is complete.

Councilor Kahn made the following motion which was seconded by Councilor Jacobs.

On a vote of 5-0, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends that the City Manager be authorized to extend the deed waivers as enumerated to November 16, 2016 and the deed taking of 0 Route 9, and 0 off Wetmore Street properties.

**9) LED Streetlight Demonstration Project - Public Works Department
City Engineer**

Asst. Public Works Director, Duncan Watson addressed the Committee and stated that the downtown and Wells Street lot are retrofitted with LED fixtures. The technology with these fixtures has changed and the demonstration being proposed is for the Cobra Head lights. This project contemplates changing 25 of the 30 lights on Marlboro Street using two vendors in the region. The wattage on Marlboro Street ranges from 65 watts to 135 watts. The plan is to convert the 135 watt lamps to 65 watts and the 65 watt lamps to 25 watts. This is to give people an idea as to what a wholesale conversion would look like and get an opinion via some sort of survey.

Mr. Watson stated there is a grant opportunity through Eversource, and upon completion of the demonstration there would be an RFP issued to replace all the street lamps to comply with the terms of the grant.

Mr. Watson explained there are no meters attached to these street lamps and you are charged by wattage. These smart lamps have a module which will allow even the 25 wattage lights to be dimmed. The city is looking at a reduction in cost of nearly 50%, the

line item for electricity for the city is nearly \$185,000 – the full conversion and the grant program would result in a payback range of 3 years.

At the present time if a street lamp burns out the city contacts Eversource, with this new program the city will own these lamps. However, the expected life span of LED lights is about 20 years so the replacement cost is expected to be reasonable.

Chair Greenwald asked whether this program is only available for municipalities. Mr. Watson stated municipalities are the only entities he has heard about so far. Councilor Powers noted many lights are always out and this is something Eversource should know.

Councilor Clark made the following motion which was seconded by Councilor Powers

On a vote of 5-0, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to contract with Tanko Lighting and Affinity Lighting to supply and install a total of twenty five light emitting diode (LED) streetlights on Marlboro Street for a total estimated cost of \$6,981 to be funded by the street lighting operating budget.

10) Reallocation of Project Funding - Public Works Department

City Engineer, Don Lussier and Airport Manager, Jack Wozmak were the next two presenters. Mr. Lussier stated in February Council approved the City Manager to apply for a grant for FAA and DOT funding. Last week the NHDOT advised the city that they are the recipients of this grant.

This item is in reference to reallocation of project funding. Mr. Lussier indicated these types of projects are funded 90% by FAA, 5% by DOT and 5% by the City, so the city is essentially paying 5 cents on the dollar for these approved airport projects. Through the CIP the Council approved \$14,450 for the city's share of the Runway 14/32 upgrade. This amount was based on preliminary estimates but since February exact scope of ssservices have been derived. The final fee was higher than the estimate. The final negotiated design fee is going to be \$20,581. This action proposes to take unspent monies from the Runway 2/20 project which was recently closed out and reallocate those monies to the Runway 14/32 project.

Councilor Powers asked for explanation on how airport funding is done. He asked if the almost \$7,000 appropriated and the balance of \$30,000 will be held for future airport projects. Finance Director, Steve Thornton explained the Runway 2/20 will be closed back to the general fund, fund balance. Mr. Lussier stated the intention of the recommended motion is so that all of the unspent money from the Runway 2/20 project will be transferred into the 14/32 project. This is only a design project and because something is going to be built in the future, the plan was to keep the monies with the runway project until 14/32 is closed.

Councilor Powers made the following motion which was seconded by Councilor Jacobs

On a vote of 5-0, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends the reallocation of unobligated project balance from the Runway 2/20 Rehabilitation Project (90274) to the Runway 14/32 Rehabilitation Project (90802).

11) Acceptance of Grant Application - Runway 14/32 Reconstruction - Public Works Department

Mr. Lussier stated this item is simply allow the Manager to accept and execute the Grant. The dollar amount is 95% of the design which would be \$391,036. The City's match will be \$20,581.

Councilor Powers clarified this is just the design phase; the construction comes later and also asked whether the city pays up front and gets reimbursed later. Mr. Lussier agreed and added part of the design contract is to prepare and submit contract for the construction phase. Councilor Clark asked whether the city will end up with approximately \$9,000 after this work. Mr. Lussier stated the Council appropriated \$14,450; Runway 2/20 has \$30,000 left bringing the total for \$44,450. The city will be taking out \$20,581 the 5% match. The remaining balance will stay in the fund until it's used as a match for the construction project.

Councilor Kahn asked for the schedule. Mr. Lussier stated the check for the grant is expected in the next day or so, and the design work will begin shortly. The big milestone is in April when the city has to submit a grant application with definitive cost estimates.

Councilor Jacobs made the following motion which was seconded by Councilor Powers.

On a vote of 5-0, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to accept and execute a grant offering from the New Hampshire Department of Transportation, Bureau of Aeronautics for the design phase of the Runway 14/32 Reconstruction Project at the Dillant-Hopkins Airport.

12) Professional Services Agreement for the Runway 14/32 Reconstruction Project – Public Works Department

The final item is for the professional services agreement for the design project. Now that the contract is agreed upon, it gives the Manager authority to enter into and execute this contract. The Chairman read the following into the record: *On February 18, 2016, City Council authorized the City Manager to negotiate and execute a contract with BACS in an amount not to exceed \$289,000. This amount was based on the budgeted design fee included in the FY17 Capital Improvement Program. The negotiations concluded with an agreed-upon design fee of \$411,617.01.* The Chair went on to ask why there were two different amounts. Mr. Lussier stated the \$289,000 was estimated years ago before the scope of services were completely understood. The \$411,000 is from the detailed scope of service. According to FAA regulations an independent agency looks

over the scope of services fee - AECOM of Rocky Hill, Connecticut placed the cost of the design work at \$449,200. In addition, NHDOT has reviewed the proposed scope and fee and found that it is comparable to the fees charged for similar airport design projects. Chair Greenwald felt this was a lot of money. Mr. Lussier agreed and added this was because of the FAA design standards such as performing geo technical work on a runway that is already constructed. But this is a requirement of the FAA. The total project cost at the present time is an estimate of about 2.3 million dollars.

Councilor Kahn felt the work that is being done is to get these runways to an acceptable standard. Mr. Wozmak agreed 14/32 is deteriorating fast, and bringing this to an acceptable level is important so that the marketing development being done can be maintained.

Councilor made Kahn the following motion which was seconded by Councilor Jacobs.

On a vote of 5-0, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends that the City Manager be authorized to negotiate and do all things necessary to execute a Professional Services Agreement with Ballantine Aviation Consulting Services, PLLC for the Runway 14/32 Reconstruction Project at the Dillant-Hopkins Airport in an amount not to exceed \$411,617.01.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted by,
Krishni Pahl, Minute Taker