

**City of Keene**  
**New Hampshire**

**FINANCE, ORGANIZATION AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**  
**MEETING MINUTES**

**Thursday, June 26, 2015**

**6:30 PM**

**Council Chambers**

**Members Present:**

Mitchell Greenwald, Chairman  
Terry M. Clark  
Thomas Powers  
Kris E. Roberts

**Members Not Present:**

Randy Filiault

**Councilors Present:**

Carl B. Jacobs

**Staff Present:**

City Attorney, Thomas Mullins  
IMS Director, Rebecca Landry  
Finance Director, Steve Thornton  
Public Works Director, Kurt Blomquist  
Police Chief, Brian Costa  
Asst. Public Works Director, Donna  
Hanscom  
Utilities Maintenance Manager, Tom  
Moran  
Revenue Collector, Mary Alther  
Parks, Recreation and Cemeteries  
Director, Andrew Bohannon  
Scott Martin  
Asst. City Manager/Human Resources  
Director, Beth Fox

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

**1. MEMORANDUM: Parks, Recreation and Cemeteries Director -  
SCA Trails Crew**

Parks, Recreation and Cemeteries Director Andrew Bohannon stated this item is in reference to an agreement to be signed between the City and the Student Conservation Association in the amount of \$34,484.44. He explained this item is being funded through the Rachel Marshall Trust at 20%.80% will be funded by the Recreation Trails grant.

Mr. Bohannon explained last summer the Rachel Marshall Trust funded the entire project, but this year staff applied and received the Recreation Trails Grant, which allows the Rachel Marshall Trust the capacity to fund other projects like Carpenter Field and Robinhood Park. The project before the Committee will begin mid-July and run for four weeks.

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

On a vote of 3-0, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to execute an agreement between the City of Keene and the Student Conservation Association for \$34,484.44 funded through the Rachel Marshal Trust Fund and the Recreational Trails Grant program.

Councilor Roberts joined the session at 6:35 pm.

**2. MEMORANDUM: Project Manager -- Parking Management and Planning - Electric Vehicle Charging Station Grant**

Parking Project Manager Gary Lamoureux recalled when the Commercial Street lot was being rehabilitated one of the items that staff looked at was the possibility of installing electric vehicle charging stations. Staff was asked to look at alternate funding. Staff applied for and the City has been awarded \$6,000 towards the \$6,780 purchase for the charging stations.

He explained the installation will be two electric chargers on one pole. He added that during the reconstruction of the parking lot, underground conduits were placed to be able to accommodate this addition. Mr. Lamoureux stated during one of their coordination meetings with Eversource Energy, the City was advised of a \$1,000 Community Grant which is available and Mr. Lamoureux is in the process of applying for this grant. This would offset the \$780 difference. He added the \$780 will be taken from the operating budget which will be reimbursed when this grant is received.

Chair Greenwald referred to the following language from the background notes "...*The user will pay for the use with a credit card and the City will be reimbursed by Serna Connect...*" The Chair stated this is a concern he had had going into this, that the City was giving away free electricity. Mr. Lamoureux explained the City gets charged a rate for electricity from its vendor and the vendor will figure out how much it costs to charge one of these vehicles which will also include the 20 cents per hour lot fee. When a customer uses their credit card, the charge will go to Serna Connect which will eventually reimburse the City.

Councilor Clark asked how one would keep other cars from blocking this station. Mr. Lamoureux stated Keene is one of the first municipalities to install such a unit in New Hampshire, although Dover has one as well. There will be an ordinance introduced which will say that only electric charging vehicles can use the charging space and this will give authority to parking enforcement officers to issue violations. The biggest issue communities face in terms of these charging stations is poor signage and Keene will be addressing that issue.

Councilor Roberts stated when he lived in California there was also a time limit placed on how long a vehicle can use a space. Mr. Lamoureux stated one of the recommendations is to place a two to three hour limit and added if a vehicle is at 50% capacity it should take only about an hour to charge that vehicle.

Councilor Clark asked how many of these units were going to be located. Mr. Lamoureux stated that it will only be two and if the units are popular then staff will look for more grants to install additional units. Mr. Lamoureux noted that during the rehabilitation of this parking lot five extra spaces were added and even with the use of these two spaces, there will still be three extra spaces.

Chair Greenwald stated he has received more than a few compliments about how well this parking lot is looking. Mr. Lamoureux stated the appreciation goes to Public Works for all the beautification work which has gone into this project.

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

On a vote of 4-0, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to accept a grant from the State of New Hampshire, Department of Environmental Services in the amount of \$6,000 to purchase two electric vehicle charging stations to be installed at the Commercial Street Parking Lot.

**3. MEMORANDUM: Police Chief- Justice Assistant Grant- 2015**

Police Chief Brian Costa stated that the Police Department submitted an application for this grant under the Justice Assistance Grant and is expected to be awarded \$13,898 jointly with the Cheshire County Sheriff's Department. For the purposes of this grant, the Sheriff's Department will be the Fiscal Agent. These duties are alternated between the Police Department and the Sheriff's Department from year to year. The City's portion of the grant will be \$6,949 and this year the monies will be used to continue the department's communication diagnostic evaluation and operational continuity assurance project. He further stated that additionally, the 2015 grant funds will be used to purchase and install a camera video and surveillance system for their offsite property impound lot which is located in the City Highway Department building.

Chair Greenwald asked how the department finds out about such grants. Chief Costa stated the Department of Justice sends out an email with the available grants, but recalled that as far back as 2010 the department was submitting applications.

Councilor Powers credited the Congressional Offices in the State which advises the communities about such grants.

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

On 4-0 vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommend the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to accept a grant of \$6,949.00 awarded by the US Department of Justice, Justice Assistance Grants program.

**4. MEMORANDUM: Public Works Director- Additional Road Work**

Public Works Director Kurt Blomquist stated last year was a difficult winter and many roads were greatly impacted. He explained the capital planning efforts are typically scheduled 18- 24 months ahead of the required work. In this case there are a few roads whose conditions deteriorated quicker than expected.

The first two roads Mr. Blomquist talked about were Pearl Street and Crescent Street, which were identified for in FY16 CIP. Both of these roads were bid as alternates under an overlay contract that is currently ongoing. When the contractor provided bids for FY15, these roads were included in that estimate. Staff is recommending these two roads be completed this summer.

The next road was Chesterfield Road, which has received much attention lately. This road was also projected to be completed in FY16; however, this road has fallen apart and efforts to hold it together might not be the best decision. The plan is to mill the asphalt down to the concrete and place a two inch overlay over it. He added that removing the concrete on this road could cost millions of dollars and the concrete is still in good shape. Estimate for this road has come in at \$220,000. This money is in FY16 budget and the recommendation is being made to bring that money forward to FY15.

The next road Mr. Blomquist referred to was Peg Shop Road, which was scheduled for FY19. This road has also deteriorated and in talking with the Street Superintendent it is suggested that the ruts be shimmed and the road chip sealed. This should get about eight to ten years of acceptable condition and the estimate for this work is \$85,000.

The next section of road is on School Street between Gilbo Avenue and Emerald Street. The plan is to mill this area from curb line to curb line and then add an inch and a half of overlay for an estimate of \$45,000.

A few other roads in FY15 have also been looked at. These roads also had severe damage over the last 12 months. They included Wilcox Terrace where a sidewalk needs to be replaced; and the south side of Davis Street (between Blake Street and Ralston Street) where there is an area of deterioration which could use some curbing.

The Director continued that because of the heavy pedestrian traffic from the student housing on Ralston Street this area needs work. The plan is to install a concrete sidewalk starting at the Arcadia Hall entrance then from Davis Street going south to and to widen the overlay and provide a paved area. The project will also include the restriping of Ralston Street to ten foot wide lanes, which will narrow up the street to keep the drivers within the lanes.

In addition, there are sections of existing curbing on Pearl Street that have deteriorated quickly and the plan is to replace 1,000 feet of sidewalk repair.

The total cost for this entire work is \$752,000. Mr. Blomquist explained that funding for this work will come from project balances that are available. He complimented the Finance Department for working with Public Works staff on this. He indicated there is about \$500,000 of FY16 funds and that staff is proposing to utilize as well as four project balances which are being proposed to be closed out.

The project balances being considered are the Robin Hood Dam Project which is now complete and the Bradford Road Sidewalk Project which the Council decided not to move forward with because of property acquisition issues with the neighborhood. This project has a balance of about \$20,000. There are also two infrastructure projects in 2009 and 2010 which are complete and can be closed out. For School Street there are monies that can be carried over to FY16.

Mr. Blomquist stated the first motion staff is looking for is a Resolution so that project balances can be moved over. The reason for a Resolution is because these projects were funded through bonds which have restrictions. The other two motions are for the Manager to be authorized to negotiate and execute a contract with the existing contractor.

The first contract to be amended is to add \$447,000 which will add Pearl, Crescent, School and Davis, Ralston Streets and Wilcox Terrace. The second contract (phase 2) adds \$305,000 to include Chesterfield Road, Peg Shop Road and School Street into the scope of work.

Chair Greenwald clarified this will zero out these project balances. Mr. Blomquist answered in the affirmative. The Chair noted this might be the only time these streets are going to see this kind of work. The Chair further clarified this would mean that Peg Shop Road would be off the CIP schedule for any future work. Mr. Blomquist agreed and added this work will replace the FY19 project. He indicated that during the road reconstruction discussion it was indicated that Peg Shop Road could be completely redone but this could cost millions of dollars. He noted in the 25 years he has been with the City no work has been done on Peg Shop Road or to the Jordan Road areas. The Director continued there used to be a time when the City used to have roads which were referred to as chip seal roads but in the late 90's there was a desire to move away from this program. The Director noted it might be time to reconsider this type of work.

Chair Greenwald stated he remembers a discussion, not in this depth, happening about 18 years ago but now Peg Shop Road is falling apart again. Mr. Blomquist stated the issue that exists in the infrastructure business is that rural roads have low volume. What needs to be considered is the City's expectation for these roads. He felt that doing this kind of chip seal work will extend the life of these roads. The Chair stated he wants to make sure this is not short term work. Mr. Blomquist noted it will be another 20 years before the City gets back up to Peg Shop Road. He added the City might be on a program that is not affordable; adding the City might not be able to do the kind of work it is doing on Washington Street on the rest of City streets. The Washington Street work is costing a million dollars per mile and the City has 126 miles of roadway. The State does not have this kind of funding in its

road budget and he felt the City might need to come up with a different approach to address its roads.

Councilor Roberts stated that for an average person trying to understand using money from prior budgets and at the same time changing funding in the CIP might not be easy to understand. He indicated he agrees with the work being proposed, but the one thing he doesn't agree with is the \$45,000 carry over and questioned how the new Council will address a budget that is already closed. Mr. Blomquist explained that one of the processes within the City's financial policy is that when they approach the end of a fiscal year if there are funds that are not going to be spent and the department can identify an appropriate use; staff can request that those funds get carried over to the next fiscal year. This is the plan for the \$45,000 that was budgeted for use in FY15.

Councilor Roberts felt this was a good use of money but his issue is accomplishing this task with the FY15 City Council and not with the FY16 City Council and he felt the budget should be closed out on January 2. Mr. Blomquist explained that the FY15 budget closes out on June 30 not in January and what he is doing is identifying money which is not going to be used before June 30. He added this type of carryover is not done for reoccurring work, but for one-time projects.

Finance Director, Steve Thornton added the process for doing what the Public Works Director just explained is the department submits a memorandum to the City Manager who approves or denies the carryover. This carryover is then sent over to the City Council as an informational memo. Councilor Powers noted this process was set up in 1992. He added that prior to that this type of expenditure had to be approved by the Council. Even though he is not quite in favor of spending money from a prior fiscal year, this process makes the proposed roadwork very effective and the money is being used for like projects (for streets and roads) and added there is the likelihood that some of this being completed by next Tuesday, June 30<sup>th</sup>.

Councilor Roberts stated he is comfortable with the Finance Director saying this type of item will be provided as informational to the Council but what is before the Finance Committee tonight is a recommendation. Mr. Blomquist stated what he is trying to show is the balancing of funding sources. He noted that the \$45,000 is not included in any of the motions and if the funding in the motions is added up the amount will come up \$45,000 short. The \$45,000 is only included in the description for informational purposes.

Councilor Clark asked why East Surry Road is not included in this plan and clarified that the reason these roads were chosen is because these are "red listed" roads. Mr. Blomquist indicated that East Surry Road is not as bad as Chesterfield Road. The Councilor agreed that Old Chesterfield Road is in very bad shape. Chair Greenwald referred to correspondence received from Susan Doyle regarding Old Chesterfield Road.

Mr. Blomquist extended his appreciation for the community's patience as much road work is going on at the present time.

Councilor Jacobs requested clarification of the \$500,000 expenditure. Mr. Blomquist explained that in the CIP document (FY16 – 21 capital program) for FY16 the appropriation is 1.1 million dollars. In this budget there is Chesterfield Road, Pearl Street and Crescent Street. The original plan was to use this money during the summer of 2016 but because of the rapid deterioration of the roads, he is asking that these roads be moved up to calendar year 2015. The Councilor clarified that this will not affect the tax rate. Mr. Blomquist agreed. Councilor Powers noted that the section of Chesterfield Road that is going to be completed is the section from Stone Arch Bridge to Route 9.

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

On a vote of 4-0, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends that a Resolution be drafted for the reallocation of project balances from the following project accounts to be used to fund additional road rehabilitation work.

Robin Hood Dam Project (90275) \$77,188  
Bradford Road Sidewalk Project (90235) \$20,000  
FY09 Infrastructure Project (90213) \$50,406  
FY10 Infrastructure Project (90225) \$59,322

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

On a vote of 4-0, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to negotiate and execute a contract amendment to add Pearl Street, Crescent Street, School Street, and additional work on Davis Street, Ralston Street, Pearl Street and Wilcox Terrace to the Road Rehabilitation Phase I contract with BDM/Arlington Paving for an amount not to exceed \$447,775.

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

On a vote of 4-0, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to negotiate and execute a contract amendment to the Road Rehabilitation Phase II contract with BDM/ Arlington Paving for road rehabilitation work on Chesterfield Road, Peg Shop Road and School Street for an amount not to exceed \$305,000.

**5. MEMORANDUM: Revenue Collector - Tax Deeds for Unpaid 2012 Property Taxes**

Revenue Collector Mary Alther stated the 2012 taxes that were due three years ago have been lienied and are up for deeding, which was scheduled to happen on May 1<sup>st</sup>. Property owners have asked for extensions and staff is requesting an extension be granted until August 1, 2015.

Chair Greenwald noted that when you get to the end of the liening process, there has been much communication that has transpired between the City and property owners and the last

thing the City wants to do is to take someone's property. Ms. Alther agreed and added that most of the individuals will have the amounts paid by August 1<sup>st</sup> and at that time staff will be back to re-evaluate this issue.

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

On a vote of 4-0, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends the City Manager be authorized to waive tax deeding of the properties identified in the memorandum from the Revenue Collector until August 1, 2015.

**6. MEMORANDUM: Assistant Public Works Director- Rebate Incentives from Eversource Energy**

Assistant Public Works Director, Donna Hanscom began by introducing Paul Housman of Eversource Energy and Tom Moran the City's Utilities Maintenance Manager. Ms. Hanscom stated Ever source Energy had given the City an incentive rebate for pumps installed at the Martell Court Pump Station. The City has also been working on rebates for work done at the Waste Water Treatment Plant. Two rebates have been received, one for new aeration blowers which are estimated to be 30% more energy efficient and would save the City \$20,000 in electricity costs. Over the 15-year life of the blower the expected saving is 2.5 million less in kilo watt hours in electricity.

Eversource Energy has another program for the retrofit of municipal buildings and they have offered the City \$7,875 in rebates for installing three energy efficient hot water heaters and boilers.

Mr. Housman indicated these projects have a short pay and the new rebate for the municipal project is funded through the RGGI budget which is a short term program. He complimented the programs the City is involved in. Mr. Housman had a copy of the check to present to the Committee.

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

On a vote of 4-0, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to accept rebate incentives totaling \$63,775 from Eversource Energy for energy saving equipment installed at the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

The meeting adjourned at 7:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Krishni Pahl, Minute Taker