

CITY OF KEENE
PLANNING, LICENSES, AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, September 9, 2015

7:00 PM

Council Chambers A

Members Present:

David C. Richards, Chair
Emily P. Hague
Bettina Chadbourne
Carl B. Jacobs
David R. Meader, Vice-Chair

Staff Present:

Ed Mattern, Airport Director
Med Kopczynski, Asst. City Manager

Members Not Present:

Others:

Councilors Present:

Terry Clark
James Duffy
Jan Manwaring

Mayor Kendall Lane

Chair Richards called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM welcoming the viewers of Cheshire TV, Channel 10.

1. COMMUNICATION: Will Coleman/Citizen's Bank – Request to Use City Property – ADA Ramp

Chair Richards noted the request to place this matter on "more time". Mr. Kopczynski confirmed the request noting there was a meeting today and the details will be worked out.

There being no questions or comments from the Committee or public, Chair Richards asked for a motion.

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

On a vote of 5-0, the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee put the request from Citizen's Bank for an ADA ramp on City property on more time, until the next Committee meeting to allow for staff review.

2. COMMUNICATION: Carol Laughner – Request to Use City Property – 28th Annual Walk for Animals

Carol Laughner, of 101 West Swanzey Road, Swanzey thanked the Committee for their continued support noting last year's event raised \$40,000. Ms. Laughner also noted this is their 140th year of serving the community. Ms. Laughner also verified for Chair Richards there are no changes from prior years.

Mr. Kopczynski reported no concerns from staff.

Councilor Chadbourne noted her surprise at the amount raised from the one walk. She commented on her support of, and the importance of the Human Society to the community.

Councilor Hague seconded Councilor Chadbourne's comments; she then referred to the request and Ms. Laughner's question whether the City would prefer a Police Officer be present. Mr. Kopczynski confirmed he is unaware of such a request at the moment.

There being no further questions or comments from the Committee or the public, Chair Richards asked for a motion.

Councilor Hague made the following motion which was seconded by Councilor Chadbourne.

On a vote of 5-0, the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee recommends that the Monadnock Humane Society be granted permission to use City Property for their Annual Walk for Animals fundraising event that will be held on June 18, 2016. Said permission is subject to the customary licensing requirements of the City Council and compliance with any recommendations of City staff.

3. COMMUNICATION: Mayor Lane – Fall Festival Committee

Mayor Lane reported that last spring he established a special committee to start examining the possibility and the needed parameters for a Fall Festival to be held in Keene. Mayor Lane continued the Committee has been meeting on a regular basis, and they are ready to move forward with some specific proposals.

Mayor Lane noted the Committee recognized it is difficult for one organization to run a successful Fall Festival. He listed the stakeholders who are interested in holding a Fall Festival downtown, which included: the downtown merchants, the Chamber of Commerce, Keene State College (KSC), and the City of Keene. The Mayor described the City's role in the past adding the Committee proposes the City become more of an active and equal participant with the other stakeholders. Mayor Lane reported KSC has come forward indicating they would adjust their fall calendar by moving Parents Weekend to the same weekend as the Fall Festival. The Chamber of Commerce is willing to take on the publicity and other functions necessary to hold the festival. Kevin Dremel and his organization the Keene Music Festival will take responsibility for obtaining the permits, and overseeing various groups participating. Mayor Lane continued the downtown merchants are working together to organize a variety of events that could take place. Mentioning security, the

Mayor noted there are many other things the City can do, adding it fits in nicely with the Spirit of Place because what we are trying to do is promote the things that are the strongest, best, and most positive about Keene.

Mayor Lane continued what we are asking for is the PLD Committee, and the City Council to approve the concept of the four organizations working together to put on a Fall Festival. If endorsed by the City Council a MOU would be developed between the four organizations specifically spelling out the responsibilities moving forward. A public forum would also be held for the purpose of encouraging organizations within the community to participate. Each of the four members are going back to their root organizations to ask for approval of this concept. Mayor Lane noted we need the City Council to indicate a willingness to participate. Mayor Lane also reported the letter in the packet was primarily drafted by Councilor Jacobs and Councilor Manwaring, and was based upon what is taking place within the Fall Festival Committee.

Councilor Jacobs noted it has been exciting coming through the process to this point. He continued by noting this is a celebration of diversity, not a contest. Councilor Jacobs commented including the college parents is intriguing. Getting the students families to know what Keene is and being a part of it is very positive. He also commented we need to know if City Council is willing to support this before we get in too deeply.

Councilor Chadbourne asked if the Committee will approach non-profits regarding ways to make money. Mayor Lane responded this has been part of the discussions; he continued we do not anticipate closing Main Street however we do anticipate establishing a Food Court as part of the Fall Festival. He added the reasoning behind the public forum is to solicit their ideas about what they would like to see to make this attractive to a number of people. We anticipate the non-profits will play a significant role in developing the theme and encourage people to participate. Following up on the public forum Councilor Chadbourne asked if the non-profits would be contacted. Mayor Lane replied if the concept is endorsed by City Council at our next meeting (September 26, 2015) we will start discussing what organizations and non-profits we're going to invite. He added we will also be targeting those organizations that did not participate in the Pumpkin Festival.

Councilor Jacobs pointed out that people are already stepping forward and understanding the situation of the non-profits. He cited the Music Festival and the event at the Fairgrounds as examples; adding this won't be the only opportunity the non-profits have between now and then for fundraising.

Mayor Lane agreed with Councilor Jacobs noting the Pumpkin Festival was fairly well run and successful. Not wanting to disparage the Pumpkin Festival the Mayor also pointed out it was so large it sucked all the energy out of the community for weeks before the event. He noted the difficulty other events had because of this; noting the success this year of Arts in the Park and the Music Festival. Continuing his comments the Mayor added we're not talking about one single event; we're talking about an event that fits into the scale of other events going on in the community.

Councilor Hague noted the work of the College/City Commission pointing out this is a great example of a way in which the college and the City can come together to create a new tradition that is appealing to both members of the community, students at the college, and their parents. Mayor

Lane also commended the college for their efforts in trying to reintegrate into the community after last year's unexpected events.

Chair Richards asked for public comments.

Jim Gardner, of 27 Birch Street praised the work done by the Fall Festival Committee, and added he thought they brought up a variety of perspectives (good process). Mr. Gardner noted he read the minutes from four of the meetings. Mr. Gardner indicated the minutes from these meetings were not made public or listed on the City website. After reading the minutes Mr. Gardner suggested there are many issues within the minutes that suggest the Fall Festival is not such a good idea. Mr. Gardner proceeded to read excerpts from the minutes (dates/pages not identified) to illustrate his point. Mr. Gardner requested the Chair poll the Committee to see how many had read the minutes. Chair Richards declined. Mr. Gardner recommended the Committee table this issue, place it on "more time", and put the minutes up on the City website.

Chair Richards agreed the minutes should be on the City website. Chair Richards asked Mr. Kopczynski to contact the City Clerk's Office to let them know the minutes are not on the website and to get them up as soon as they can.

Mr. Gardner continued to read excerpts from the Fall Festival Committee minutes; Chair Richards interrupted Mr. Gardner to clarify with Mayor Lane that what is being put forward is a concept and not a particular plan. Mayor Lane did verify this fact. Chair Richards encouraged Mr. Gardner to continue with his issues noting although his concerns are valid we are not there yet; reiterating the proposal is a concept only.

Councilor Hague shared her support for the concept; adding she appreciated Mr. Gardner's concern for this matter. She noted she had not read the minutes. Referring to the Mayor's letter she noted the discussions were lively and diverse, which indicates to her the Committee had a lot of different perspectives. After additional comments Councilor Hague suggested this is a good step forward for the community, and encourages the Committee to continue to work on this.

Councilor Chadbourne also indicated she had not read the minutes, and noted her appreciation for what Mr. Gardner is doing. She reiterated this is a process; people will have different opinions, the public input will produce different opinions also, and that's how you figure out how things are going to work. Councilor Chadbourne noted her support for continuing the process and the dialog.

Mr. Gardner continued to read excerpts from the minutes; he addressed event protocol meetings where security concerns are discussed, noting his concern that the public does not have access to minutes from these meetings. Chair Richards indicated that staff meetings where security concerns are discussed would not be open to the public. He deferred to Mr. Kopczynski to comment on protocol meetings and staff hours. Mr. Kopczynski noted that staff works on so many projects, and their hours are not tracked like lawyers with billable hours. Mr. Kopczynski agreed with Chair Richards regarding security concerns; he also noted that minutes are not taken during protocol meetings, as they are considered a normal business meeting. Councilor Chadbourne suggested it is premature to be discussing protocol meetings at this point; they only happen after an event has been established. She also suggested at this point the discussion is going down the wrong path.

After additional comments Chair Richards noted his support for this concept proposal, and he was pleased to see we are taking a year off from this type of event.

Councilor Jacobs addressed Mr. Gardner's comments by commenting in the beginning the Committee had a lot of ideas, and the Pumpkin Festival was fresh in everyone's mind. He continued after discussions the idea of a community festival that celebrated the wonderful things about Keene came to the forefront.

Playing the optimist, Councilor Hague noted her involvement with the International Film Festival; adding the beginning meetings also sounded very nebulous and pie-in-the-sky, but went quickly into being a functional festival largely due to the help of a lot of partners here in the community. She added what's encouraging about what this committee is bringing forward is that it is engaging with a lot of partners that will be able to get a lot done in a short amount of time.

Mayor Lane agreed with Councilor Jacobs, this has been an evolution from the first meeting to the present; bringing us to coalesce into a single concept. He noted this will be a small scale, local festival and the timeframe is working well for what we're doing in 2016/2017. Mayor Lane continued at this time we are just trying to coalesce around what the organization needs to look like; specifics regarding the timeframe and locale are still to be determined.

There being no further questions or comments from the Committee or members of the public, Chair Richards asked for a motion.

Councilor Meader made the following motion which was seconded by Councilor Chadbourne.

On a vote of 5-0, the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee recommends the approval of the community based Fall Festival concept beginning in 2016. This concept envisions that the City will partner with others in the community specifically the Greater Keene Chamber of Commerce, Keene State College, Keene Downtown Group, the Keene Music Festival, and will celebrate our diversity.

4. MEMORANDUM: Airport Director – Request to Use City Property – Parking – Monadnock Pumpkin Festival

Ed Mattern introduced Jennifer Matthews and reported that on October 24, 2015, the Monadnock Pumpkin Festival will be held at the Cheshire Fairgrounds in Swanzey. The Monadnock Pumpkin Festival organizers have requested the use of a turf field adjacent to Airport Road to be used as automobile parking, should it be required. This same field has been used for parking during a number of previous events. Festival organizers will provide staffing to assist with parking vehicles. A shuttle bus will also be provided to transport individuals to the Fairgrounds. Granting this request will not have any impact on the operation of the airport. Mr. Mattern also noted that at its meeting on September 3, 2015, the Airport Advisory Commission discussed this matter and voted to recommend the Council grant the request.

Chair Richards asked for questions or comments from the Committee.

Councilor Hague asked if there was a need for security or police. Mr. Mattern deferred to Ms. Matthews.

Jennifer Matthews, of 21 River Road, Westmoreland responded that has not been discussed. She added the fairgrounds are so close that if the need were to arise the police could be onsite quickly. Chair Richards clarified we are only talking about the parking lot, not any events happening there.

There being no further questions or comments from the Committee or members of the public, Chair Richards asked for a motion.

Councilor Chadbourne made the following motion which was seconded by Councilor Hague.

On a vote of 5-0, the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee recommends that the City Council authorize the use of a portion of the Dillant-Hopkins Airport by the Monadnock Pumpkin Festival on October 24, 2015, for automobile parking subject to the execution of a Revocable License and Indemnification Agreement, the receipt of an insurance certificate in the amount of at least \$1 million naming the City as an additionally insured party and all other requirements of city staff.

Councilor Chadbourne commented she thinks it's great that this is being tried, and that the community responded in carrying out the tradition in some fashion. Ms. Matthews agreed the community support has been phenomenal.

There being no further business Chair Richards adjourned the meeting at 7: 49 PM.

Respectfully submitted by:
Mary Lou Sheats-Hall, Minute-taker
September 12, 2015