

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

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

**Thursday, November 12, 2015**

**6:30 PM**

**Council Chambers**

**Members Present:**

Mitchell H. Greenwald, Chairman  
Kris E. Roberts, Vice Chair  
Terry M. Clark  
Thomas F. Powers  
Randy L. Filiault

**Staff Present:**

Acting City Manager, Med Kopczynski  
City Attorney, Thomas Mullins  
City Clerk, Patty Little  
Human Services Director, Elizabeth Fox  
Finance Director, Steve Thornton  
Public Works Director, Kurt Blomquist  
Parks, Recreation and Facilities Director,  
Andrew Bohannon  
IT Assistant Director, Andrew Mueller  
Parking Manager, Ginger Hill  
Police Chief, Brian Costa  
Fire Chief, Mark Howard

**Kendall Lane, Mayor**

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

**1. MEMORANDUM: Parks, Recreation and Facilities Director – Acceptance of Donations**

Parks, Recreation and Facilities Director Andy Bohannon stated there are two donations before the Committee this evening totaling \$170.00. The first donation is for \$150.00 from Kevin Dremel on behalf of the Keene Music Festival. They host an ongoing concert series to raise money for the needed repairs in the Sumner Knight Chapel. In total, the concert series has generated \$8,389.00 to-date.

The second donation is \$20.00 for the Robin Hood Park Swing set from the Southeast Keene Neighborhood Group. The addition of this donation brings their total fundraising efforts to \$3,501.00.

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

On a vote of 5-0, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends that the Acting City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to accept donations totaling \$170.00 and that the money be used by the Parks, Recreation and Facilities Department.

**2. COMMUNICATION: Jack Dugan/MEDC – Relinquishment of Easement to Parking Spaces on Railroad Property**

Public Works Director Kurt Blomquist explained these parking spaces were part of the Railroad Property Development when the City owned the Railroad Street parking area. The City gave up the land associated around the lot, with MEDC to maintain the 14 spaces. The Director noted that staff is recommending the communication be placed on more time so staff has time to do some research. He further noted the petitioner is aware of the staff's recommendation.

Councilor Roberts stated he agrees with the more time recommendation because there is concern about the City giving up these 14 parking spaces. He noted there are not too many parking spots that the City controls and he wants to make certain that they are not doing something that would be a detriment to the City.

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

On a vote of 5-0, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends that the request from MEDC regarding parking spaces on the railroad property be placed on more time until the first meeting cycle in December to allow for the needed research.

**3. MEMORANDUM: Cities for Climate Protection Committee – NH Net-Metering Cap**

Dr. Ann Shedd of 59 Greenwood Avenue identified herself as the Chair of the Cities for Climate Protection Committee. At a recent Committee meeting at which the membership was discussing the net metering cap and a desire to increase the cap; it was suggested by Councilor Powers, who is a member of their Committee, that it would be helpful for the City Council to provide a draft letter to send to New Hampshire Legislature, the Governor and the Public Utilities Commission.

Dr. Shedd continued by reading portions of the Commission's draft letter that would be addressed to the Public Utilities Commission, Keene's State Senator and the State's Legislators requesting that the net metering cap be raised as quickly as possible. She noted

the current limit is 50 megawatts and only one percent of the total generation is allowed to be net metered. Dr. Shedd added the State is approaching the net metering cap. This puts many pending projects at risk and discourages new projects from being developed. The longer the limit stays in effect the greater economic loss to ratepayers, businesses and municipalities.

Dr. Shedd noted the limit was set by the State Legislature in 2010 and it has been widely demonstrated that significant amounts of renewable energy can be easily integrated into the grid. Dr. Shedd referenced a July Department of Defense report which recognizes the reality of climate change and the significant risk it poses to U.S. interests globally. The report identified climate change as a growing threat to national security in terms of natural disasters, refugee flows and conflicts over basic resources such as food and water. These impacts are already occurring and projected to increase over time. Dr. Shedd noted New Hampshire is poised to respond with the State's Climate Action Plan of 2009, which calls for a goal of reducing greenhouse gas by 80% from 1990 levels by the year 2050.

Keene's Comprehensive Master Plan, adopted in 2010, calls for an increase in renewable energy sources. Keene's Climate Adaption Plan calls for Keene to generate 50% of its energy needs from renewable sources by 2027. She noted that distributed energy generation is identified as contributing to Keene's goals with regard to energy security, emergency services, public health and local economic development. None of these goals can be achieved without taking measures that must include raising the net metering cap. Dr. Shedd encouraged the Council to support legislation that will be introduced in the 2016-2017 legislative season.

In conclusion, Dr. Shedd noted that in preparation for this meeting she attempted to determine how many kilowatts the solar panels on the roof of City Hall are rated. This information is not available through the City's website. To get a sense of scale, the Public Works Director noted that the Waste to Energy facility at the Transfer Station is 62 kilowatts; the new Peterborough photovoltaic installation generates 960 kilowatts; which alone would account for 2% of that 50 megawatt cap.

Chair Greenwald asked if net metering means panels are producing energy in excess of consumption and are put back on the grid for consumption; what the argument for having this cap is. Dr. Shedd explained the utilities argue for the cap because distributed generation of grid tied uses their transmission lines and they are losing consumers by allowing this. Senator Bradley is introducing legislation that would raise the cap, but lower the reimbursements so utilities would still get some benefit from locally generated energy.

Councilor Clark commented it is time to remove the cap and time to look at what is best for the citizens and ratepayers of the State and not for the utility companies. Councilor Clark indicated he fully supports the intent of the letter.

Councilor Roberts explained there is a conflicting legislation on this issue which needs to be resolved. He continued the net metering cap should be lowered and not increased until the conflict is resolved between the two pieces of legislation.

Councilor Roberts made the motion recommending the City Council have the Mayor write a letter to the New Hampshire Legislature, the Governor, and the Public Utilities Commission, asking for an increase to the net metering cap. The motion was seconded by Councilor Powers.

Councilor Clark, moved to amend the motion to remove the cap. Councilor Powers seconded the motion to amend. Councilor Clark noted this is about the future of energy in New Hampshire and we need to stand firm that the citizens of our city need to have the best and the most productive way to produce electricity without respect to how much money Eversource is going to make.

Councilor Roberts indicated he would not be supporting the amendment because there is a fine line between a utility staying in New Hampshire versus relocating. Councilor Powers stated the Council needs to discuss the options. Ratepayers are at the whim of the utilities, but he was not sure if a majority of the Legislature would act positively on a total removal of the cap.

Dr. Shedd, stated that ideally it would be wonderful to remove the cap altogether, but realistically it might not be an option. Doubling the cap would allow some projects, but the issue of raising the cap will come back again.

On a vote of 4-1, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends the Mayor write a letter to the New Hampshire Legislature, the Governor, and the Public Utilities Commission, asking for the removal of the net metering cap. Councilor Roberts voted in opposition.

#### **4. MEMORANDUM: Police Chief – NH Drug Task Force Grant, FY 2015-2016**

Police Chief Brian Costa stated the Keene Police Department has one detective assigned to the NH Drug Task Force. This assignment creates open shifts in the Department. The purpose of the grant is to cover some of the cost associated with these open shifts. He anticipates that this grant will last until the end of the fiscal year.

Ian Freeman, 63 Emerald Street, stated that the war on drugs is a failure and recommended that the Council reject the grant and have their officer removed from the drug task force.

Councilor Clark agreed that that the country has a lot of work ahead of them and enforcement agencies are evolving in how to best deal with the drug issue. Ultimately, he believes the focus should be on security at the U.S. border, but it would be premature to make that decision at this point.

Councilor Roberts stated it is not a war on drugs, but a war on drug dealers. As indicated by Police Chief Costa he is not arresting his way out of the drug problem. He is arresting

the people who are contributing to the drug problem. This grant will be helping and treating the addict, but this is to assist the removal of dealers.

Councilor Filiault stated that regardless of one's position on the drug war; the issue before the Committee is a motion to accept a specific grant to offset costs that would be passed onto the Keene taxpayer.

TJ Freeman, 74 Leverett Street, asked where does the State of New Hampshire get the money come from. Chief Costa noted that he believes the money is coming from the State's general fund.

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

On a vote of 5-0, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends the Acting City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to accept a \$40,000 grant from the New Hampshire Department of Justice to offset costs associated with personnel assigned to the NH Attorney General's Drug Task Force.

**5. MEMORANDUM: Fire Chief – 2015 Homeland Security Grant Program Award – Competitive Award**

Fire Chief Mark Howard explained that on August 31, 2015, the City of Keene Fire Department was given approval by the City Manager to apply for the 2015 Homeland Security Grant Program Award – Competitive Award. All funds and equipment awarded by this grant are 100% funded by the program with no local contribution.

On October 19, 2015 Chief Howard was notified by the Grants Management Unit that the Fire Department has been approved for \$34,890.00. The funds will allow the Department to expand their response and training capabilities when dealing with medical calls during active shooter incidents. Medical personnel response into what is called "warm zones" during active shooter incidents with police personnel is the new standard across the country. The Keene Police and Fire Department have worked jointly on this for over three years.

Chief Howard reviewed the items that would be secured through the grant; but noted that in reality, he hoped that they would never have to use this specialized equipment.

Councilor Clark noted that every year the City Council is asked to accept grants for ballistic vests which have a life expectancy. He inquired when these items expire will the Department need to replace the items. Chief Howard responded the Department would need to review their needs at that time and, if needed, they would be either replaced through the budget or another grant.

Councilor Clark asked if they would be putting the fire department personnel in with the active shooter in the situation. Chief Howard responded that there is an obligation by

medical personnel to be prepared to provide assistance to injured individuals who need medical attention. No medical personnel would be allowed into these warm areas without escort by police personnel. The protection equipment is for the “what if” situation that might arise.

Councilor Clark stated he is concerned with homeland security at the national level and wondering whether this is going to go in the future. Chief Howard explained fire services have changed dramatically for their people. He felt it was beneficial to have applied for the grant. This is to better protect and treat police officer in these situations.

Councilor Roberts recalled an incident where fire personnel responded to an incident and the incident became an active shooter situation. This equipment would be critical for a situation like that.

Councilor Filiault stated we can argue national topics, but he feels we need to stay on topic. The Councilor stated that hopefully the department will never need to use it, but the need is there.

Joseph Mirzoeff, of 50 Summit Road, stated the way we are doing these grants, it makes the cost higher for everyone. Secondly we are losing our freedom. Instead of treating the addiction as an illness we are treating the addiction as a crime, strings are attached to the acceptance of these grants. He continued when there are three levels of government it becomes very difficult to track information. In a particular incident on forfeiture fines he could not find the information he was searching. He asked that the Committee request that all staff provide the various contact information relative to the acceptance of any grants. Rather than making more ties with the Federal government, the City should be looking for more freedom.

The Fire Chief stated that there is the Department of Safety contact on the letter in the packet.

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

On a vote of 5-0, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends the Acting City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to accept a grant in the amount of \$34,890.00 from the 2015 Homeland Security Grant Program Award – Competitive Award.

**6. MEMORANDUM: City Attorney - Taco O'delay - Lease**

City Attorney Tom Mullins stated that Ashley Sheehan is moving his business to Main Street and was before the Committee a few weeks ago relative to the lease of 12 Gilbo Avenue. At the time the Committee did not take action as the leasehold was to remain the same. The City Attorney explained that subsequent to that, he received a letter from Mr. Sheehan relative to a business loan they are seeking. Because the letter came in unsigned and is time sensitive, the Attorney submitted the letter along with a memorandum to

comply with the Council's Rules. He noted he is recommending a revised recommendation for the Committee to consider. He stated the first item would be to suspend the rules to introduce Mr. Sheehan's letter unsigned.

Chair Greenwald made a motion to suspend the Rules of Order to introduce the letter which was seconded by Councilor Powers. On a roll call vote, with 5 Councilors present and voting in favor, the motion carried.

The Attorney went on to recommend that after the Committee hears Mr. Sheehan's comments, they revise the recommendation listed on his memorandum to remove the portion requesting the acceptance of the unsigned communication, as the Committee just took that step.

Mr. Sheehan came forward. He stated that they are requesting the City of Keene execute a Landlord Waiver allowing the Mascoma Savings Bank to collect collateral to which it has a security interest from the premises should the business fail. The Attorney noted the documents must be submitted to the City in a form acceptable to the City Attorney. The current language that has been submitted would allow the Bank to take all fixtures, but there are some fixtures on the premises owned by the City of Keene which would need to be identified. This will need to be more precisely delineated.

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

On a vote of 5-0, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends that the Acting City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to negotiate and execute documents with the Mascoma Savings Bank acceptable to the City Attorney to facilitate the granting of a business loan by the Bank through Ashley M. Sheehan, member of Taco Odelay LLC, which is currently leasing 12 Gilbo Avenue.

**7. MEMORANDUM: IT Assistant Director & City Clerk – Waiver of Council Policy Resolution R-2014-02 Relating to Special Equipment Purchase Standardization – To Allow the Purchase of Chromebooks for Council Chambers**

The City Clerk and Assistant IT Director, Andrew Mueller came forward. Mr. Mueller stated that they are looking for a waiver of the Council Policy relating to Equipment Purchase Standardization to allow for the acquisition of Chromebooks. Resolution R-2014-02 states that the IT department will exclusively purchase HP hardware with Windows Operating Systems for City personal computing and server needs. Although that still remains the logical choice for the majority of the City's needs; an exception has presented itself while IT was working with the City Clerk on agenda management software. The Chromebooks are a laptop that would facilitate City Councilors on-line access of City Council and Standing Committee agenda packets through. The Chromebooks would offer the best, most cost effective alternative. He noted they do not run a Microsoft Office operating system, but rather a Chrome OS. With this waiver they will be able to veer away from Microsoft for this purchase.

Councilor Roberts stated his support for this acquisition, noting the School Board has been using Chromebooks for some time now and they have been very happy with them and it has been a cost savings.

The City Clerk state that the funding source for this will be the Cable Franchise fund, and that the fund has exceeded the \$50,000 threshold set by the Council. The Council set this threshold with the understanding that if the fund exceeded that amount, staff would come back with options for use of the funding. These Chromebooks are definitely one of the things that staff would like to purchase out of the fund. She continued that we have three ongoing maintenance line items that hit this account as well, which includes the Granicus video web streaming application and support services contract as well as a contract through My Sidewalk, which is a social media tool.

Ms. Little continued that we are on the cusp of determining which agenda management software to purchase, and that would also become an ongoing service that would be paid for with the Cable Franchise fund. She noted that there will also be some one-time expenses charged to this account, including replacement of the servers for the video component, which are past their warranty. We have been holding off on their replacement pending the selection of an agenda management solution. There will also be the acquisition of a mobile charging cart for the Chromebooks that will stay in Council Chambers.

Ms. Little continued the agenda management tool will really revolutionize how staff creates items coming to the Council as well as how her office compiles and distributes the information. She noted that currently, the City Clerk's Office is piloting two different web based technologies that would automate the agenda creation, production and electronic distribution of City Council and Council Standing Committee agenda packets. Once we make that selection we will have the challenge of potentially reengineering our processes. There will be a lot of discussion with City staff relative to review and approval, and collaboration on various items that come to the Council.

She noted we are very close to choosing this paperless agenda solution, and with a new Council starting in 2016, this seems like the appropriate time to make the Chromebooks purchase and allow our new Council to access the packets online. We are already creating a packet that would be accessible via the website, so these Chromebooks could be useful before the agenda management solution is chosen. She noted use of the Chromebooks will not be mandatory until 2018.

Chair Greenwald confirmed the date to start using the Chromebooks as January 2016.

Councilor Clark stated he was very happy and agreed it was about time. He confirmed that this application is cloud based and councilors will be able to open the agenda packets from home and be able to make individual notes. The City Clerk concurred. He added this would mean his personal computer would not be subject to any scrutiny because they are accessing this information via the cloud. Ms. Little agreed.



The Acting City Manager commented that the City Clerk has been working on this for a long time and he wanted to emphasize that this would be available for other public bodies as well, not just for the City Council agendas. He continued that potentially all agendas and paperwork would be done this way. The faster the City Council can adjust and support the use of an electronic packet the greater the savings of both money and staff time.

Councilor Powers stated that he support this acquisition, and asked if the staff would have to ask for a waiver of the standing policy for future purchases should they need to acquire a spare Chromebook. The City Clerk responded we are planning to order 15 or 20 Chromebooks, and that should serve their needs. She continued that these will be available for use by other committees as well.

The City Attorney suggested that the acquisition of these Chromebooks should also include a waiver for the maintenance, repair or replacement of the Chromebooks if needed. Mr. Mueller commented that there is a 3 year warranty that is included with the purchase of the Chromebooks.

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

On 5-0 vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends that the technology standards in Resolution R-2014-02 be waived to allow for the acquisition, maintenance, repair, and replacement of Chromebooks for use in Council Chambers in accessing City Council and Council Standing Committee agenda packets.

**8. ORDINANCE: O-2015-04-A: Traffic, Parking & Public Ways**

Police Chief Brian Costa and Finance Director, Steve Thornton came forward. Chief Costa stated in July 2015, the Parking Division was reassigned back to the Police Department. As background, Chief Costa stated that there has been a lot of conversations and a lot of work on this over the last 18 months. He stated that on March 13, 2014, the FOP Committee meeting included a discussion on parking hours, fees and fines. The discussion included fund projections as well as potential changes to the parking hours and fees in order to financially sustain future operations. The resulting recommendation was that staff should prepare an ordinance. In April of 2014, Councilor Greenwald requested information regarding parking revenues and expenditures for review prior to consideration of the pending ordinance. That information was made available to the City Council in an informational memo dated May 2, 2014. Chief Costa continued that the information provided at the March FOP meeting showed that expenditures exceeded revenues in both FY 12 and FY 13. That trend continued in both FY 14 and FY 15. He noted it is anticipated if there is no adjustment to user fees, the fund balance will be depleted by FY 17. Changes to the parking revenue and expenditure structure in FY 16 changed the timing of this deficit, but the current rates are not adequate to provide for continued preventative maintenance or unscheduled repairs, operational costs, or future development. Leaving the rates as they are will result in a deficit in the parking fund which would shift these financial responsibilities from the users to the taxpayers by

requiring the use of general fund dollars. The March 2014, discussion included suggested increases in parking meter rates, rental rates, parking violation amounts and a change in the hours of operation of the parking division to better serve the downtown merchants. This caused some members of the community and Council concern, related to specifically the change in rates in long-term parking lots surrounding the downtown as this would affect those working in that area.

In response to the concern, revenue adjustments options were developed by staff to satisfy the fiscal policy goal of a self-sufficient fund. In addition, Parking Services had continued to review procedures and policies to assist with downtown workforce parking concerns. He went on to discuss the various changes made to accommodate workforce parking. The Parking Division also maintains a strong relationship with the Keene Downtown Group and they are in agreement that rates need to be adjusted. The April 9 FOP agenda included Ordinance O-2015-04 which included various changes to the parking meter rates and fees.

He went on to state that before the Committee are two potential options from City staff, one of which would be the adoption of Ordinance O-2015-04 as previously presented. The Ordinance contemplates moving forward with the rate changes and the change in hours of operation. The Ordinance would make the following changes:

- On Street Meter Rates: change from \$.50 per hour to \$.75 per hour.
- Long Term Lots: change from \$.20 per hour to \$.30 per hour.
- Violation fees: remain as a three tier system. The initial violation would increase from the current rate of \$5.00 to \$10.00 and, if paid within five days of the issue date, a 20% or \$2.00 reduction will be assessed. The second tier will increase if not paid within 14 days of the issue date and will increase from \$15 to \$20. The third tier will remain the same at \$35.
- Handicap Parking: from \$50 to \$250 (State law).
- Fire Lane: from \$50 to \$75
- Rental rates: Uncovered rental rates will increase from \$115 to \$130 and covered spaces will increase from \$140 to \$155 per quarter.
- Hours of Operations: change from current 8:00 AM to 5:00PM Monday through Saturday to 9:00 AM to 7:00PM Monday through Friday and 9:00 AM to 5:00PM Saturday.

Relative to option two, which would be Ordinance O-2015-04-A, the amendments would be the same as option one with the exception of the Hours of Operation, which would not change from the current hours of 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM Monday through Saturday.

Chief Costa went on to explain that rate adjustments were last authorized in January of 2002, and only then after a lengthy discussion and presentation by the former Downtown Parking Commission and City staff. Expenses increased while the revenues were level, which caused the depletion of the fund balance. At that time, the Parking Commission recommended and the City Council adopt a 100% increase in the meter rates. It had been 13 years since the previous rate change in 1988.

Chief Costa noted the Finance Department developed a projection of the parking fund based on the changes made to the fund operation during FY 15-16 operating budget. The projections assume that demonstrated trends in expenditures and revenues will continue into the near future. Both options of the Ordinance O-2015-04 would authorize rate increases in metered and reserved spaces in FY 16. Current projections account for additional rate increases in FY 19 and FY 20. These future increases would provide funding for current levels of operations, routine maintenance of downtown parking areas, parking decks, and parking lots through FY 24. It would also include larger-scale rehabilitation and maintenance projects included in the FY 16-21 CIP; funding of capital reserves for the City Hall and Wells Street Parking Decks (\$25,000 each per year); and allowances of \$100,000 per year in FY22 and FY24 for which specific projects have not yet been identified.

The projected Parking Fund balance, incorporating these assumptions and rate changes, would fluctuate between \$230,000 to \$375,000 in the years from FY 17 to FY 24. The rate changes contemplated do not raise funds for improvements and operations beyond those noted. It is the intention of staff to continue to review funding for operations and capital needs annually in the context of future CIP and operating budgets as authorized by the City Council. Should funding needs change, staff will offer proposed rate changes at the appropriate time to meet changing needs.

Councilor Roberts asked if there was going to be a cost associated with the parking being back under the Police Department. Finance Director Steve Thornton stated that before the parking division was transferred from the Police Department, there was a Lieutenant assigned to the Parking Fund who was charged to the Parking Division. When the parking division moved away from the Police Department two to three years ago, that assignment ceased. They are only charged a fee when services were completed by the Police Department. This new set up will continue in the future.

Councilor Powers stated we have had the rates discussion in the past. He commented that parking needs to be defined through an Administrative Directive that would document how the operation is managed.

Councilor Clark noted he was confused as to why it was pushed back into the Police Department, when there is a Parking Operations Manager in place. He understands the Contract Manager left, but he feels there is a Manager in this Division. The Acting City Manager explained there never was a Department Head for the Parking Division. He noted the Division was moved to City Hall and a Contract Manager was put in place to work out a number of particulars; however, the parking fund has never left the Police Department. His understanding is that the Division has remained part of the Police Department, but the Department has now resumed the management of the Parking Fund.

Chair Greenwald stated no one ever wants to raise fees. He went on to summarize what happens if the parking fees remain as they are currently. If we make no changes, this fund will go broke. He noted we use this fund to pay for things like the Wells Street

rebuilding, the Commercial Street Parking lot resurfacing, and essentially the maintenance of parking lots. In addition, we could cut back on maintenance and improvements needed to keep us moving forward. We could choose to shift some of these expenses to the general fund. This of course would not be in line with Fiscal Policies. By utilizing the parking meters we are able to extend the fees to the surrounding areas that come into Keene. Do we choose to eliminate staff? He stated he feels the staff is needed and the program needs to continue. It comes down to having enough revenue to keep this solvent. And although this is a painful decision, it is necessary.

The Acting City Manager added to Chair Greenwald's comments, by stating the Parking Fund is also used for capital programs for future, landscaping. The downtown maintenance itself will be eliminated if the fund is depleted.

Councilor Filiault asked Mr. Thornton on Ordinance O-2015-04, if we were just to go with increasing the rates to \$0.75 per hour, and \$0.30 on Wells Street, how long would this allow the fund to remain solvent. Mr. Thornton stated this will not impact our finances enough to make a difference, adding at a minimum we would also need to include the change in rental rates. Mr. Thornton confirmed if everything stayed the same as the predictions these changes would make the fund solvent. Councilor Filiault commented he feels no need to exceed further than what we need to be solvent.

Councilor Roberts stated he supports option 1 in its entirety, and believes the prices are reasonable. He noted as history has shown we do not like making these decisions, and if we do something for only one or 2 years, this makes planning for the the CIP impossible. His only concern had been paying money to a temporary position. We also worked really hard to ensure that if a Police Officer wrote a ticket, that that money was put into the parking fund. The fees collected should be reverted to the Parking Division not the Police Department. The Finance Director stated this has been incorporated into our finance processes at the request of the Council and that it will continue to occur.

Councilor Clark stated he agrees with Councilor Filiault. He continued he feels we are all set with our CIP. He could support option one with some revisions.

Councilor Filiault commented that the issue with option 1 is that extending the hours of operation to 7:00 PM could hurt the restaurants in downtown; the two hour maximum could have a negative effect. He does not support increasing times for the ticketing and fines. He can go along with the hourly rate increases downtown and in the longer term lots as well as the rental fees, but he does not support the change in hours, or the change in fines.

Councilor Roberts made the assertion that their needs to be a 3<sup>rd</sup> option to the Ordinance.

Discussion ensued relative to the appropriate next step for the Committee to take on the Ordinance options.

The Acting City Manager stated that if there is not support for the original Ordinance which includes the time changes, then he suggested they dispose of that version. The Committee could then move to the A version, which does not include the changes in hours of operation, and amend that version with the changes relating to fines, etc. It was clarified that with these changes incorporated this would become a “B” version of the Ordinance.

Ian Freeman, of 63 Emerald Street, reminded those present that over the past 18 months there have been multiple petitions with close to 400 signatures against this Ordinance, 30+ signatures from downtown business, and just about 6 months ago a petition was put together by a local business owner with another 160 signatures against the increase. People are not accepting of this. This is already seen as an impediment to doing business in the downtown. It seems like going from \$5 to \$10 is not that much extra to pay, but it can be difficult to pay. He understands that it could increase taxes if something is not done; however, he believes that Parking should not be the business of the City, but rather the responsibility of the business owners. He feels the Parking Division should be shut-down.

Councilor Clark stated he has seen other places that leave beautification to business owners to their detriment. He understands that a tax increment financing district is not a palatable choice, and some of these proposed amendments need to be done.

Councilor Roberts asked if a study has been done about how our fees relate to other cities. Ginger Hill, Parking Operations Manager stated that she has been in contact with several other cities, and it is a quite a mixture. Some of them have a two tier system and some have 3 tiers. She continued that most of the communities she spoke with start at \$10 for the initial fee.

Councilor Roberts stated that he has no issue with people who follow the rules. The real problem we have is with those that do not pay the fines once they have been levied. The way this is set up if you pay within 5 days it is an \$8.00 ticket. The ones that would feel the brunt of the increase in fines are those that do not pay their fine promptly.

Councilor Foliault noted that Boston charges more for fines, but we are not Boston. The point is to make the parking fund solvent. He agrees we need to make it solvent, but we do not need to go beyond that. He recommended the ordinance go on more time for a little longer to come up with a viable 3<sup>rd</sup> option.

Chair Greenwald state this could be done this evening by amending Ordinance O– 2015-04-A which was the option two presented this evening.

At 8:05 PM, the Chair called for a 10 minute recess to allow staff to pull this information together for review.

Chair Greenwald called the meeting back to order 8:15 PM and invited further public comment on the proposed changes.

Joe Mirzoeff, 50 Summit Road, stated if we take a full time employee, working 2,000 hours at the lowest cost to park, that person would go from paying \$400 per year to \$600 per year. People working at \$7.25 an hour would need to work about 80 hours to pay the \$600 per year cost. People he spoke with today did not show up tonight, but many were very upset about this proposed increase. This is hurting businesses and their employees. He further stated the goal is to keep the cars moving during the hours that downtown is crowded. He stated that before 11:00 AM, there is not a lot of traffic during the week, and the areas around the Library should be at the lowest parking rate. We are thinking finances and not what is best for the public. He further commented he does not agree with allowing City employees to park for free. They should have to pay like everyone else. He feels this fund is a lot of accounting "fiction." The Council needs to think about what helps the citizens, the customers, etc, not just about the money.

James Cleaveland, of 661 Marlboro Street, stated it has been brought about similar towns, noting he feels Amherst is good choice for comparison with Keene. He noted the various rates and fines in Amherst, including an on-street and off-street hourly rate of .50 cents per hour, and their tickets recently went from \$8.00 to \$10.00. He continued that the CIP increases appear to be for the parking structures, Wells Street and City Hall. Mr. Cleaveland continued he believes the parking on the upper level of Wells Street is free. He continued that for the last couple weeks that structure has been closed and it has not been a huge impact on parking as far he can see. Not many people use the City Hall lot either. All these increases seem to be to pay for things the public does not use. There is still a reserve and he does not view this decision as an emergency.

Ian Freeman, 63 Emerald Street, stated he wanted to encourage the Committee to put this on more time. He believes that the next Council starting up in 2016 should have the opportunity to take a look at it.

Councilor Roberts stated he does not support more time. He was elected to serve until December 31<sup>st</sup> and he intends to continue serving and making decisions until his time in office ends. We have been given options to make a decision tonight.

Councilor Filiault stated he recognizes there is a minimal amount that needs to be increased to keep the fund solvent. He is looking to remove the changes in violation fees and hours, due to the impact it would have on downtown restaurants. With that said, he supports the meter rate increases and the rental rate increases.

A motion was made by Councilor Filiault for the adoption of Ordinance O-2015-04-B with the violation fees being eliminated, and the hours of operation for the Parking Division remaining the same. The motion was seconded by Councilor Clark.

The Acting City Manager clarified that the Ordinance would also amend the fine for

parking in a Handicap space to \$ 250, and the fine for parking in a fire lane would go to \$75.

Councilor Roberts stated he has put a lot of thought into this, and has read *Governing Magazine*. He noted outside towns come to Keene and use our infrastructure systems. People are not coming downtown because it's too expensive. He supports option one and feels it is best for the long term.

Councilor Clark asked if we increased time does this mean we need to create a new position. Mr. Thornton could not answer that question at this time.

Councilor Powers stated he supports option one, but not having enough votes he doesn't want to leave this on more time and feels they need to decide this evening. We need a decision to move forward to the full Council; he ended that he will support this B version.

On a vote of 4-1, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends the adoption of Ordinance O-2015-04-B. Councilor Roberts voted in opposition.

**9. RESOLUTION: R-2015- 41: Relating to an Appropriation for the Acquisition of a Fire Engine**

Chief Howard introduced Resolution R-2015-41: Relating to an Appropriation for the Acquisition for a Fire Engine. He explained that in order to replace Fire Engine 1 it will cost \$450,000, and this will be appropriated in the FY 16 Capital Improvement Program. He continued this request is for use of additional funds from the Fire Apparatus reserve account totaling \$44,930.77 to fund the total price of the new fire engine. The total purchase price is \$494,930.77 through the Houston/Galveston Area Council HGAC. He continued that this is due to a price increase in the fire apparatus industry and the trade in value of the current engine not meeting the projected value of \$50,000.

Councilor Powers asked if this will be enough to purchase the specified fire engine and went on to ask if this money will need to be put back into the CIP budget for future purchases. Mr. Thornton commented we will address this in the CIP.

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

On a vote of 5-0, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends the adoption of Resolution R-2015-41.

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Heather Fitz-Simon, Minute Taker