

City of Keene
New Hampshire

FINANCE, ORGANIZATION AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, December 10, 2015

6:30 PM

Council Chambers

Members Present:

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

Staff Present:

Acting City Manager, Medard Kopczynski
City Attorney, Thomas Mullins
Human Resources Director, Beth Fox
Finance Director, Steve Thornton
Public Works Director, Kurt Blomquist
Andrew Bohannon, Parks, Recreation and
Facilities Director
Captain Steve Russo
Ginger Hill, Parking Operations Manager

Kendall Lane, Mayor

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

**1. MEMORANDUM: Parks, Recreation and Facilities Director -
Acceptance of Donation**

Parks, Recreation and Facilities Director, Andrew Bohannon stated the first donation is from Kevin Dremel in the amount of \$150 for the care and upkeep of the Sumner Knight Chapel. To date Mr. Dremel has raised \$8,539.

The second donation is for \$40 for pickle ball equipment. Mr. Bohannon explained pickle ball is a cross between tennis, badminton and ping pong. He stated when the courts at Jonathan Daniels were resurfaced this summer pickle ball lines were drawn and a small group of people showed interest and this sport has become a regular event every Monday,

Wednesday and Friday, from 9:00am – 10:30 am. Mr. Bohannon indicated this is a growing sport. Councilor Clark asked how many individuals participate in this event. Mr. Bohannon stated he had someone from Peterborough contact him last week expressing interest; there are about 12 people on the team at the present time. This was a sport introduced to Keene in the early 90's and the equipment was stored at the Recreation Center since that time.

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 the Acting City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to accept donations in the amount of \$190.00 and that the money is used by the Parks, Recreation and Facilities Department.

2. MEMORANDUM: Youth Services Director & ACM/Human Resources Director - Acceptance of Funding for Youth Services

Assistant City Manager/Human Resources Director Beth Fox stated she was before the Committee to request approval for the acceptance of funds allocated by the County for the youth services program. These funds support the youth intervention program and the juvenile court diversion program. These funds allow for the City to reach outside city limits for youth issues. These funds are anticipated in the budgetary process and hence there are no additional costs because of its receipt.

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 Acting City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to accept and administer funds provided by Cheshire County for Youth Services Programs.

3. MEMORANDUM: Jack Dugan/MEDC-Relinquishment of Easement to Parking Spaces on Railroad Property on behalf of Monadnock Food Co-op

4. MEMORANDUM: Police Captain- Monadnock Food Cooperative Request for 14 Parking Spaces

Mr. Jack Dugan of Monadnock Economic Development Corporation and Railroad Land Development LLC addressed the Committee and stated as many are aware the east side of the Railroad property was an open over grown area not producing any economic activity until MEDC responded to an RFP to develop the property. The original development agreement had several conditions. One of the conditions was that the City could still retain parking at the front of the site which were 14 spaces the city was leasing (14 spaces), in the form of an easement. MEDC also agreed under the same agreement to provide 13.2 million in the development of the site. But a lot has changed since that time and three times that amount has been derived. With that investment came the creation of new jobs and a lot of economic activity. One of the recent projects is the Monadnock

Food Co-op, and even though there were concerns they would outgrow their available parking, they located at the Railroad property.

Mr. Dugan stated over the past eight months he has heard from the Manager about the parking concerns they are experiencing – customers drive around and when they can't find parking they don't return. Mr. Dugan stated this is the reason for his letter asking the city to revisit that easement for the 14 parking spaces.

Mr. Michael Faber of the Monadnock Food Co-op was the next speaker. Mr. Faber stated since the Co-op opened in April 2013 they have seen a steady growth, growing at an average of 40% in the second year; and they are expecting a 15%-20% growth during the third year. This growth has a large impact on the community, with the Co-op employing nearly 80 staff. They expect to pay out about two and half million dollars in wages and benefits, and are on track to produce local products of nearly three million dollars. He noted the Co-op will also be paying out nearly \$70,000 in real estate taxes. There are certainly times when there will be empty spaces depending on the time and day but increasingly during the busy times between 12:00pm to 1:00pm and 4:00pm to 5:00pm on Thursdays and Fridays, the Co-op is hearing from customers that they have to drive around looking for places to park.

Mr. Faber went on to say, in talking to consultants who work on designing food co-ops what he has learned is that a co-op of this size needs to have about 60-70 spaces and another formula calls for about 72 spaces. The Co-op currently has 40 spaces; Mr. Faber felt because of the walk-in traffic this site can survive in the mid-50 range for parking spaces and felt another 14 spaces would make a huge difference in getting to this benchmark, and he hoped the City would consider providing them access to these spaces.

Councilor Roberts asked whether Community Way is a City street. Mr. Dugan stated it is a private street built according to city specifications but it is being used as a public street, however no parking is permitted. The Councilor asked when the Co-op was being designed was this amount of growth expected, and why wasn't additional parking considered at that time. Mr. Faber stated they worked closely with MEDC in trying to get as much parking as possible on the site during the development process. In terms of looking at the growth for the first three years, they have exceeded what was projected.

Chair Greenwald noted this project was approved by the Planning Board with inadequate parking but unfortunately the City now has to work with what is before them. The Chair asked Mr. Dugan whether any other buildings are being planned for the Railroad land. Mr. Dugan stated two more buildings are being planned and the goal is to cause 50 million dollars in investment on this site. The first building would be located east of the Food Co-op but the Planning Board does not want any temporary parking located here. The second site would be on the narrow strip of land on Cypress Street. Chair Greenwald felt locating parking on this strip of land would be the solution to the parking issues and felt two more buildings would only exacerbate the parking situation that already exists here.

Chair Greenwald asked whether the City is receiving revenue for these 14 spaces. Mr. Dugan answered in the affirmative. The Chair asked for input from the Acting City Manager. Mr. Kopczynski stated the 14 spaces are permit spaces creating revenue of nearly \$7,000. He noted there are two issues the City would have to deal with; the permit users would need to be relocated and the lack of income stream would also need to be looked at.

Councilor Clark stated his understanding the reason the City relinquished rights to these spaces is because there was to be a parking deck constructed in that location. Mr. Dugan responded by saying that MEDC responded to the City's RFP and signed a purchase agreement to purchase the property. When the property was purchased from the City the parking area was included in the sale but MEDC provided the City with a permanent easement to access those spaces. Mr. Dugan stated there has been talk about a parking deck but what they are trying to do is to avoid that type of investment especially because of the close proximity to the Wells Street lot. There was also a proposal to construct a solar panel array roof over the second deck of the Wells Street lot which could provide electricity that can be sold and also provide for a cover and people who lived on Cypress Street could rent spaces on this lot. This would provide revenue for the City and ease the parking issue for MEDC. This would be much less of an investment compared to a multi-million dollar parking deck investment.

Councilor Powers asked what the foot traffic to the Co-op is. Mr. Faber stated they get about 1,000 customers per day of which a third to a quarter might be foot traffic, but he wasn't quite sure. Mr. Dugan stated they had some foresight in that they did locate a bus stop, relocated the bike path and the City used tax increment financing for improvements to Cypress Street, Railroad Street, Eagle Court and Grove Street to make this site more accessible.

Councilor Roberts noted the additional 14 spaces will only provide about 54 total parking spaces, but at the rate they are growing (15% yearly) he felt his might be just a temporary fix. Mr. Faber stated the consultants he spoke with each make an accommodation for a downtown store which would have access to a lot of foot traffic and could live with a number below that. He felt getting parking into the mid-50 range would be a good place. He added they have tried hard to make this a non-vehicular site.

Captain Steve Russo of the Police Department and Ms. Ginger Hill, Parking Operations Manager were the next two speakers. Ms. Hill stated the memorandum the Committee has in front of them was prepared by Captain Russo regarding the background for the 14 spaces. She stated there are a few different options that have been outlined and stated they were here to answer questions regarding what has been outlined.

Chair Greenwald noted the loss of revenue for relinquishing these 14 spaces would be \$7,280 per year. These spaces are being leased by employees of downtown businesses. The options to relocate these users will be to the Wells Street Deck, Commercial Street lot and Gilbo Avenue West. Relocating to Wells Street could be an additional cost for some of these businesses. Captain Russo stated the City always has the option of leasing these 14

spaces to MEDC or selling them these spaces to recover the loss of revenue. He added the 14 spaces are for day use, Monday through Saturday and the co-op could use the spaces after 5 pm as well as all day on Sunday. The same might be the case with other businesses in the area.

Chair Greenwald asked whether there was a staff recommendation as to how to handle this item. Mr. Kopczynski stated staff wanted to bring to the Finance Committee the facts. He stated this was a difficult situation and there is no clear recommendation staff can make. He went on to say if the Council wanted to approve the request of the Co-op which he felt was a reasonable request given the success of the Co-op, the City would take a loss in the parking fund of nearly \$7,000 per year besides having to relocate the displaced individuals. If staff was to have a specific recommendation it would be to retain the easement and enter into a lease arrangement so the revenue could be retained from the spaces. The Chair felt this would be the best option but added he would also like to hear from the people who are leasing the spaces at the present time.

Councilor Roberts felt there is value to the City in retaining the easement; it is a valuable piece of property and it yields revenue for the City which the taxpayers would now have to take on. Chair Greenwald asked staff to reach out to the current users of these spaces to see what they would do if they can't park at this location anymore. Chief Russo stated staff has already brought solutions for the Committee's consideration; parking at Wells Street at a higher cost or at the Commercial lot, both of these options would be a loss of revenue to the City.

Councilor Powers asked whether there wasn't revenue which comes in through the TIF District which paid for some of the infrastructure in this area. Mr. Kopczynski stated he was not sure what the balance in the TIF District was but could get that information for the Committee. He added most of the money that came from the TIF District has been expended on improvements to the roadway system, sewer system, relocation of the electrical system, bike path and the other improvements mentioned by Mr. Dugan previously.

Chair Greenwald felt the Food Co-op and MEDC have heard the concerns raised by staff and even though he doesn't like to place items on more time, he felt this would give staff the opportunity to come to an agreement with the general public and the parking fund users.

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 that MEDC's request for parking spaces on the Railroad Property on behalf of Monadnock Food Co-op be put on more time.

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 that the memorandum from the Police Department regarding the Food Co-op's request for 14 parking spaces be accepted as informational.

5. COMMUNICATION: Public Works Director - Winchester Street/NH Route 10 Bridge over Ash Swamp Brook

Public Works Director Kurt Blomquist stated the first item he has for the Committee is the Route 10 Bridge over Ash Swamp Brook. This bridge is located south of the Route 101/Winchester Street roundabout and is a bridge which is on the State's red list for deficient bridges. This bridge sees about 16,000 cars per day of which 7% is truck traffic. The bridge is in the State's municipal bridge program which means the State would provide 80% funding and the City would provide 20% funding for any repair work.

He continued the City went through an RFP process several years ago and has selected Clough Harbour & Associates (CHA) as the bridge engineer and this would be the second bridge this firm would be working on for the City. All work needs to be approved by NHDOT and the negotiations with CHA has been approved by NHDOT and they have authorized the \$61,707 estimate.

Chair Greenwald asked whether the entire \$61,707 would be City funded. Mr. Blomquist explained the \$61,707 was the cost for the engineering study of which 80% would be covered by the State and 20% would be covered by the City.

Councilor Powers asked whether this work would cause for widening of the road. Mr. Blomquist stated this was the plan, to at least add an additional lane.

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 Acting City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to negotiate and execute a professional services contract with Clough Harbour & Associates, for an Engineering Study Phase of the Winchester Street/NH 10 Bridge over Ash Swamp Brook Replacement Project, for an amount not to exceed \$61,707.

6. MEMORANDUM: Public Works Director - NH Route 12/Main Street Bridge Replacement over Beaver Brook

The next bridge Mr. Blomquist spoke about is the Route 12 Lower Main Street Bridge which dates back to the 1960's. This bridge is also on the State's red list and sees about 22,000 cars per day with 8% truck volume. It is a heavily travelled bridge. Mr. Blomquist explained the detour for this project is going to be challenging as trucks are going to have to detour through Route 119. He indicated the traffic control plan is more of a concern to him than the bridge work itself.

The Louis Berger Group has been selected to do this work and one of the design elements was the water and sewer lines. There is currently a 1920's water and sewer line under this bridge. The plan was for the previous City Engineer to perform the design work for the utilities and then combine that with Louis Berger Group's work. Because the sewer work is more complicated and also because the Department currently has no City Engineer he would like to use the services of The Louis Berger Group for this work as well.

As this is a municipally managed bridge, the State will cover 80% of the costs and the City will cover 20% of the cost. The state has reviewed the scope of service and they concur the cost is reasonable. Mr. Blomquist stated he is before the Committee to request construction amendment and the reason it is before the Committee is because it is over the City Manager's authority. The Manager's authority is for change orders which are 10% of the original contract and this is just over 11%.

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 Acting City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to negotiate and execute a change order with The Louis Berger Group Inc. for additional technical services for the reconstruction of the water and sewer utilities for an amount not to exceed \$16,494.

7. MEMORANDUM: Public Works Director - Municipal Work Zone Agreement

Mr. Blomquist thanked the Committee and the City Clerk's indulgence in permitting him to bring this matter before the Finance Committee. He stated municipal work zone agreements typically go before the MSFI Committee but because he was unavailable on Tuesday and Wednesday this week, it is before the Finance Committee.

He continued that when the Department of Transportation is performing a project within the boundaries of a community they put forth an agreement indicating they are responsible for the project. They are also liable for the management of traffic control. Some communities have their own ordinances which dictate how traffic control should happen for construction projects but the DOT has a plan they are asking communities to sign.

The authorization before the Committee is for two projects; the first is the Route 9/Base Hill Road reconstruction which is on schedule for construction to begin next season. The second project is the Multi Use Bridge/South Bridge over NH Route 101. Bids have been received for this project and they are being reviewed. Construction will happen next spring.

Councilor Powers asked whether the Main Street Bridge and the Winchester Street Bridge are also scheduled to begin next summer. Mr. Blomquist explained the Winchester Street is scheduled for FY17 and Main Street is scheduled for next summer.

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 that the Acting City Manager be authorized to sign the New Hampshire Department of Transportation Municipal Work Zone Agreement for the State Multi-Use Bridge over NH Rt.101 (State Project 10309-P) and the Base Hill Road/Rt. 9 Intersection Project (State Project Keene 26765).

8. MEMORANDUM: Public Works Director - Rule Street/Sullivan Street Drainage Improvement Project

Mr. Blomquist stated this is the City's first stormwater flood management project addressing severe flooding issues in the area of Rules Street and Sullivan Street. Mr. Blomquist reminded the committee of how the neighborhood talked about the flooding issues during the review of the CIP.

During the design phase of the project outcropping of bedrock was discovered and geo technical work was performed in areas where there was concern. During this process the City Engineer did find bedrock in the Sullivan Street area and minor bedrock removal was performed. The rest of the borings indicated there wasn't any bedrock present. When staff moved onto Rule Street they hit a ledge of bedrock which resulted in having to blast out an area of about four feet to a depth of about eight feet to about 10 to 15 feet. Mr. Blomquist indicated this is not uncommon but this meant a more expensive style of blasting as well as additional time was required.

In closing out the project there were adjustments to various line items. The total of all changes is \$67,690 which exceeds the City Manager's authority. He indicated there were three projects that have been now closed out. They are the Depot Road Drainage project, Drainage Spot Repairs project, and the 2013 Infrastructure Project. Councilor Roberts stated he appreciates staff closing out these projects that date back to early 2000.

Councilor Clark asked how much damage properties sustained because of the blasting. Mr. Blomquist stated no complaints have been received and staff has learned how to "spec" out this work. He added there was also pre-survey work offered to homeowners so if something really did occur, insurance issues could be avoided. Some homeowners did take advantage of that.

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 Acting City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to negotiate and execute a change order with Philip J Mathewson Companies for additional work associated with the Rule Street/Sullivan Street Drainage Improvement Project for an amount not to exceed \$67,690. Further, that funds from the Depot Road Drainage project (90293-A), the Drainage Spot Repairs project (90022-16) and the 2013 Infrastructure Project (90254-A) be reallocated to the Rule Street/Sullivan Street Drainage Improvement Project.

9. RESOLUTION: R-2015-45: Approving an Application for CDBG Funds

Linda Mangones of Keene Housing and Gary Barnes of MAPS Counseling Services were the next two speakers. Ms. Mangones indicated this item is in reference to an approval from Council to submit a CDBG application for the relocation of MAPS Counseling Services from its current location at Federal Street to the third floor of United Church of Christ on Central Square. Ms. Mangones stated when she visited this site about ten years ago she realized how small this site was and since that time the services they provide have grown considerably. They are the major provider of outpatient services for mental health counseling in this area.

Dr. Gary Barnes, Executive Director of MAPS Counseling Services, asked permission to read the following for the record:

Since 1973, MAPS Counseling Services has been providing compassionate outpatient mental health care to the Monadnock Region. Our mission was, and continues to be, to support the mental health needs of the region and to ensure that this care is available to all, regardless of income or resources.

To achieve our mission, MAPS provides services for all ages and accepts most insurance plans, including Medicaid and Medicare. MAPS also offers the Client Subsidy Fund which is funded by private donations and by the Monadnock United Way. This fund allows uninsured or underinsured clients to receive up to 12 hours of low cost mental health counseling with a licensed therapist. Our graduate students also see people at very low cost, and without limits on how long they are seen. Since our founding, hundreds of clients each year benefit from the client subsidy fund, obtaining critical mental health care that is not available elsewhere.

I joined MAPS in 2006 after nearly twenty years in community mental health in New Hampshire. During my previous position as Chief Operating Officer for Monadnock Family Services, I was witness to the impact of state budget cuts on the community mental health system, and the reduction or elimination of important mental health services as a result of these cuts. Most severe were the cuts to outpatient services that were directed towards adults who were not disabled.

When I joined MAPS, I believed that we had an opportunity to help offset these cuts by expanding the outpatient counseling that MAPS provided. As a private non-profit agency, MAPS is not impacted by much of what happens at the state level and this allowed us to expand services at a time when state agencies were forced to cut back. In the past 9 years we have nearly doubled our staffing and our revenue, and we added services that were not previously available. In particular, we made substantial increases to our child and family services, offering therapy in several local schools and providing assessment and treatment for children with severe emotional problems such as autism spectrum

disorders. We are a major training site for students from Antioch University New England, and we are expanding our services for substance abuse and for seniors.

As a result of this growth, MAPS has become the largest provider of outpatient mental health services in the Monadnock Region, serving approximately 1000 unique individuals and families each year. We are also the largest provider of low cost outpatient mental health services for people who are uninsured and lack the resources to afford counseling. With support from private donations and the Monadnock United Way, MAPS offers free support groups to people with cancer and with chronic pain. We regularly network with other social service agencies such as Monadnock Family Services, The Monadnock Center for Violence Prevention and Southwestern Community Services, just to name a few. Because of all that MAPS has accomplished, the Monadnock Region has not been impacted as badly as other regions by state cuts to mental health services.

This growth has, not surprisingly, created some challenges for MAPS. When I arrived at our facility in the Jonathan Daniels building in Keene, most of the space was underutilized. We had several rooms standing empty or being used for storage, and we had less than a handful of full time clinicians. MAPS now has 14 licensed psychotherapists and three students, and offices in both Keene and Peterborough. Every office is in use and we have even turned what was a closet into a student office to meet the demand for space. Currently we simply have no further space to grow. The Keene office is not handicap accessible and the waiting room cannot sustain the number of clients we now see every day. Children with behavioral problems are waiting in cramped spaces, and both privacy and security are less than optimal. Although this site has served MAPS very well for the past 23 years, it no longer is able to sustain our services in the future.

At our strategic retreat in 2014, finding a larger space that would better support our services and future growth of MAPS became our greatest priority. We began a search, which led us to the United Church of Christ and their church annex which had considerable, underutilized space. Appropriately, MAPS began as an agency in the basement of the UCC church in 1973, and now we have an opportunity to return to this location for our permanent home.

This year MAPS obtained a \$10,000 feasibility grant to determine the cost of building a suitable counseling center in the UCC annex. Our goal is to obtain grants and donations to build a state of the art facility that will increase the number of clinical offices, provide handicap accessibility, and create security and improved privacy in all offices, all with a low operating cost that will sustain our services for years to come. This facility will support our continued mission: to ensure that the Monadnock Region continues to receive high quality mental health and substance abuse services, and to guarantee that these services remain available to all in need, regardless of income.

Chair Greenwald asked for explanation of the Community Development Block Grant program. Ms. Mangones stated this is a federal program through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, handled in the State of NH by the Community

Development Finance Authority (CDFA). It is a competitive program and every year (twice a year) there is an opportunity to apply for housing and public facilities funds. She indicated the feasibility study has gone through well and the project before the Committee is a 4,000 square foot space which would be renovated. The grant would go to MAPS and not to the UCC, but they would get permission for use of the grant funds. Municipalities have control over what type of projects happen and hence the City has to approve this request. Ms. Mangones stated they have applied for \$500,000 and hope to receive something a little under that amount.

She indicated there is a public hearing scheduled for December 16, 2015 at 4:00 PM in City Hall with reference to the feasibility study.

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 adoption of Resolution R-2015-45.

10. DISCUSSION: Salary Range - City Manager

Chair Greenwald stated the Finance Committee has before it a non-public session pertaining to personnel matters as allowed under RSA 91A-3 II, sub-paragraph b and c.

On a roll call vote the session adjourned for a non-public session at 7:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Krishni Pahl, Minute Taker