

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

**MUNICIPAL SERVICES, FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE**  
**COMMITTEE**  
**MEETING MINUTES**

**Wednesday, May 23, 2018**

**6:00 PM**

**Council Chambers**

**Members Present:**

Janis O. Manwaring, Chair  
Randy L. Filiault, Vice-Chair  
Stephen L. Hooper  
Gary P. Lamoureux  
Robert B. Sutherland

**Staff Present:**

Thomas Mullins, City Attorney  
Kürt Blomquist, Public Works Director  
Andy Bohannon, Director of Parks,  
Recreation and Facilities  
Mike Cox, Water Meter Technician  
Rob Chaput, Water Meter Technician

**Members Not Present:**

Chair Manwaring called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM, welcomed the public, and explained the rules of procedure.

1) **Skate Park Location-Parks, Recreation and Facilities Director**

Chair Manwaring recognized Andy Bohannon, Director of Parks, Recreation and Facilities. Mr. Bohannon referred to the Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee meeting held April 11, 2018, stating that the current group is looking to solidify the location of the skate park. He requested that the Committee designate the skate park to remain at the current location on Gilbo Avenue.

Mr. Bohannon explained to the Committee that in 2010, an ad-hoc relocation committee was convened to learn about potential sites around Keene that could better serve as the location. The report listed multiple sites, all of which may or may not work, but the current location remained.

In 2014, another group created a concept plan of Wheelock Park and a space was designated for a skate park. He noted that the fundraising efforts for the project were not achievable and the group moved away.

Mr. Bohannon stated the current group came to him last year during the CIP process. During this time he mentioned to the City Council that a new group approached the

department looking to move forward with the project. However, the group was only interested in keeping the skate park at the current site.

He stated that the current group feels that the skate park is best located in the downtown because it is good for the economy. Mr. Bohannon reported the group has received one grant from EverSource in the amount of \$2,000. In addition, there are several other grants in the cue.

Mr. Bohannon reported the group is using Pathways for Keene as their fiscal agent in order to have a nonprofit status.

Councilor Sutherland commented it is encouraging that the group has a formal organization that is already raising money. He asked if Mr. Bohannon was aware if any of the former groups fundraising efforts could be added into the project. Mr. Bohannon replied that the current group is the only group that has been active with fundraising. He stated that Kathleen Burke is spearheading the fundraising campaign for the group. Ms. Burke's goal is start building the skate park by next fall.

Councilor Filiault asked if the department would continue making modifications and repairs to the park until the next phase. Mr. Bohannon replied they have received three quotes for the pliers and additional materials are on order. He noted this would ensure the park is much more enjoyable until the next phase. Councilor Filiault asked if the park would continue to be used by skateboarders and BMX bikes. Mr. Bohannon replied in the affirmative.

Mr. Bohannon reported an individual that helped build the original skate park is now involved in the current project. He noted this individual added a lot to the project in terms of their knowledge and connections to sponsors.

Councilor Sutherland stated that he knew of an ice cream truck that goes to the local ball fields and shares a portion of their profits to local charities. He asked if this truck would be permitted at the skate park. Mr. Bohannon replied that the group is actively seeking opportunities of this nature. He reported that June 21, 2018 is Go Skateboarding Day and the group is holding a fundraising event at Railroad Square. The group is teaming up with Local Burger to help host the event. In addition to the food, there will also be an auction and a local DJ will play music.

Chair Manwaring welcomed public comment. With no comment, Chair Manwaring asked if there was a motion.

Councilor Sutherland made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Filiault.

On a vote of 5-0, the Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee recommends that the designation of the skate park remain at its current location on Gilbo Avenue.

## 2) Department Presentation-Water Meters

Chair Manwaring recognized Rob Chaput and Mike Cox, Water Technicians with the Water Meter Department. Mr. Cox began the presentation by describing how a water meter works. He explained that water enters a chamber containing a disc and the water pressure drives the disc to rotate. The disc rotates counter clockwise as water passes through the meter. As the disc spins the magnet in the disc turns the numbers on the meter head. Mr. Cox presented a nutating disc to the Committee to demonstrate how water flows through the disc. He noted that if the magnet breaks the numbers will automatically stop.

Chair Manwaring asked if the top part of the disc breaks will the water stop flowing. Mr. Cox replied that the water will continue to flow.

Mr. Cox stated that it is important to know where water meters are located in homes. He explained that this is important because the stop tap, which controls the flow of water to the house, is located inside the water meter box. Mr. Cox noted that water meters are located in cellars, under kitchen sinks, buried in the dirt and even in walls.

Mr. Cox then demonstrated how someone would turn off the water in case of an emergency. He presented two different valve options that a home may have. The first is a ball valve that is designed with a ball inside the valve that controls the water flow. The second valve presented was a gate valve. The gate valve opens by lifting a round gate out of the water. Mr. Cox noted that ball valves are more durable, reliable and close more securely after long periods of use. He noted that a gate valve is a problem waiting to happen and suggested having gate valves replaced by a plumber.

Mr. Cox continued explaining that a water meter can also help to detect possible leaks. He stated that a simple check involves turning off all taps to the water system. Once everything has been turned off, check the meter to see if any of the numbers are still recording. If the numbers continue to record this is an indication of a leak. Mr. Cox noted that the number one culprit is the toilet. In addition, he stated that the toilet is the most common cause for a high water bill. The other causes for high water bills can be caused by dripping faucets, broken pipes and outdoor spigot left running.

Mr. Cox reported there is a new device that the City uses to help detect leaks in homes. He reported there is a new technology called the RV4 that is used to help customers understand their water usage patterns when there is a high water bill. Mr. Cox explained that the device is attached to the house, free of charge, in order to find the cause of the leak. The device provides the exact date, time and total water consumption.

Chair Manwaring asked why a water meter would be installed in the ground and what a home owner should do if the meter is buried in the ground. Mr. Cox stated that the best thing a home owner could do is to hire a plumber to get the meter out of the ground. He also explained that a lot of the older homes buried the water meters in the ground due to cost.

Chair Manwaring welcomed public comment. With no comment, Chair Manwaring asked for a motion.

Councilor Filiault made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Lamoureux.

On a vote of 5-0, the Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee accepts the Department Presentation on Leak Detection as informational.

**3) Report Out – Discussion Regarding a Proposed Ordinance for Disorderly Residences**

Chair Manwaring recognized the City Manager, Elizabeth Dragon. The City Manager stated that the Committee asked for an update on all of the more time items. The proposed Ordinance for Disorderly Residences was put on more time because there was more work that was being done. She said some of the challenges they faced when looking at implementing the Ordinance had to do with tracking and having a system in place in order to track. In addition, there were some concerns and questions about the legality of enforcement in relation to a Disorderly Residence Ordinance. The City Manager stated this year the Legislature had taken up a bill but this did not make it through the House and Senate. She stated based on that information, she spoke with Mayor Lane and he would like to see this verbally reported out. The City Manager stated that if something should change with the Legislature, a new item will then be added to the Committee's agenda.

Councilor Hooper asked if the City Manager was stating that if this has action legislatively, it would then be brought back before the Committee. The City Manager replied that they were hoping that the Legislature might add some more guidance. She added that she is not stating that there cannot be a Disorderly Ordinance but there are some gray areas that need further clarification. The City Manager stated that if the City decided to go forward with the Ordinance locally, the City would need to work on tracking the calls of service. Councilor Sutherland stated that his understanding of this to some degree is there are issues with penalizing an owner of a property for another person's actions. He stated that this does not seem legal under any construct.

With no further comment, Chair Manwaring asked for a motion.

Councilor Hooper made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Lamoureux.

On a vote of 5-0, Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee recommends that the Discussion Regarding a Proposed Ordinance for Disorderly Residences be reported out of the Committee with no further action.

**4) Report Out - Reconstruction of the City Roadways and the Addition of Sidewalk Construction to Reconstruction Projects**

Chair Manwaring recognized Kurt Blomquist, Public Works Director. Mr. Blomquist stated that this item goes back to 2013-2014 and this communication was put in by Councilor Duffy and Councilor Richards. He said what happened at that timeframe was the City was maintaining a list for new sidewalk constructions around the City and that program list was over 4 million dollars. Mr. Blomquist noted that the City Council had not been expending any funds toward that list for a number of years. At the same time, large reconstruction projects on Washington Street and Court Street were taking place and Councilor Duffy and Councilor Richards felt new sidewalks were not moving along as they should be. Councilor Duffy and Councilor Richards then decided to speak with this Committee to determine priorities with regard to building new sidewalks.

Mr. Blomquist stated that in his opinion the Committee can report this item out due to the City Council adopting the Complete Streets Guidelines. In addition, Mr. Blomquist stated that the City has stepped back from major street reconstruction to focus more on rehabs and maintenance of existing streets. In addition, Mr. Blomquist stated that the City Council at the previous CIP cycle, decided to eliminate the new sidewalk list. Mr. Blomquist stated for the reasons he mentioned he felt that the Committee could report this item out.

Councilor Sutherland asked if there would be a new sidewalk on Bradford Road. The Public Works Director replied there would not be a new sidewalk in that neighborhood because no one was interested in having the sidewalk on their side of street. In addition, the City Council did not want to take property to put in a sidewalk.

With no further comment, Chair Manwaring asked for a motion.

Councilor Lamoureux made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Filiault.

On a vote of 5-0, the Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee recommends that the Reconstruction of the City Roadways and the Addition of Sidewalk Construction to Reconstruction Projects be reported out of the Committee with no further action.

**5) Relating to the Absolute Discontinuance of a Public Way Known as Wells Street Parking Lot and For the Return of Layout of a Public Right-of-Way Known as Wells Street**  
**Resolution R-2018-12 Resolution R-2018-13**

Chair Manwaring stated that she was not present at the site visit for Wells Street parking lot and layout of public right of way. Chair Manwaring turned the meeting over to

Councilor Filiault. Chair Pro Tem Filiault recognized Kurt Blomquist, Public Works Director.

Mr. Blomquist displayed a layout of the Wells Street Parking Lot. He stated that the process is both code related and statutory. He noted that both of these Resolutions did receive first reading and that City Council has done a site visit for the return of layout.

Mr. Blomquist stated that back in the early 1970's the City was working with a number of organizations with regard to the construction of an elderly housing complex, known as the Cleveland Building. He said this was an area that there were a number of different properties. The City did go through and acquire these properties through friendly processes and through eminent domain. Mr. Blomquist stated that the City did take these buildings down in order to facilitate construction for the building. In 1976, the City discontinued Church Street from where it ends today. In addition, they laid out what is known as the Roxbury Plaza and this property provided the frontage for the Cleveland Building. At the same time, the City decided that it was going to layout an area to be used for public parking. Wells Street was discontinued to make this happen.

Today, Mr. Blomquist stated that the City is interested in doing long term leases on the ground level in the Wells Street facility. He noted that long term leases have been done on the second floor of the parking structure. Mr. Blomquist said when that occurred in late 1998, the City Attorney at that time, looked at it and said that it was not an issue. Mr. Blomquist stated that this was not an issue because the second deck is in the air.

Mr. Blomquist stated due to the interest in ground space today, we run into the issue of long term leasing of the public way. He said to resolve this issue the City must reverse the action of the City Council back in 1976.

Councilor Sutherland commented that he was concerned at what point does public parking facility no longer become public if it is not accessible to the public. He asked if the City would consider selling the parking garage. Mr. Blomquist stated that the City Council would be learning more about parking on June 19th at their meeting. He continued that from his perspective the City never gives up property because of what could happen in the future.

Chair Pro Tem Filiault welcomed public comment. With no comment, Chair Pro Tem Filiault asked for a motion.

Councilor Sutherland made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Lamoureux.

On a vote of 4-0, the Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee recommends the adoption of Resolution R-2018-12.

Councilor Sutherland made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Lamoureux.

On a vote of 4-0, the Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee recommends the adoption of Resolution R-2018-13.

Chair Manwaring abstained from voting on the Resolutions.

7) **Adjournment**

Hearing no further business, Chair Manwaring adjourned the meeting at 6:38 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Jennifer Clark, Minute Taker

Additional Edits by,  
Terri M. Hood, Assistant City Clerk