

**ADOPTED**

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

**COLLEGE CITY COMMISSION**  
**MEETING MINUTES**

**Monday, October 22, 2018**

**4:00 PM**

**Room 309, Young Student Center,  
Keene State College**

**Members Present:**

Bart Sapeta, Co-Chair, City Councilor  
Bettina Chadbourne, City Councilor  
Marcia Kayser  
Dr. Chris Cusack  
Davis Bernstein  
Victoria Bergstrom  
Kelly Ricaurte  
Kim Schmidl-Gagne  
Dottie Morris  
Steve Fortier  
Robin Picard  
Dick Berry

**Staff Present:**

Rhett Lamb, ACM/Community Development  
Director  
Elizabeth Dragon, City Manager  
Kim Schmidl-Gagne, KSC Liaison

**Others Present:**

**Members Not Present:**

Frank Richter  
Phil Jones, City Councilor

**1.) Call to Order**

Co-Chair Sapeta called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM and roll call was conducted.

Co-Chair Sapeta reported there will be some rotation with the Commission over the next few months. The terms for some of the members are expiring, which will be addressed at the next CCC meeting.

**2.) Approval of Minutes – August 27, 2018**

Dr. Cusack noted a correction of page 6, third paragraph “Kamal Adkins” needs to be changed to “Kamal Atkins”. In addition, he referred to the same paragraph stating that the conversation the City Manager and Kamal Atkins were two separate conversations. In addition, the City Manager and Mr. Atkins were not at the same meeting.

Co-Chair Sapeta noted that Frank Richter should be moved to the member's present list.

Councilor Chadbourne made a motion to approve the minutes of August 27, 2018 as amended. The motion was seconded by Co-Chair Sapeta and carried unanimously.

### **3.) Commission Charge Discussion**

Co-Chair Sapeta introduced the President of Keene State College, Dr. Melinda Treadwell and the City Manager.

President Treadwell reiterated that the CCC is very important to her and Mayor Lane. The work of the Commission is helping to improve the relationship between the City and the College. In addition, she stated that the Commission is also helping with important issues. President Treadwell noted there has been a delay in getting a charge document back to the Commission. The Mayor is currently on an exchange visit to the City of Keene's partner of Einbeck, Germany. Due to his absence she stated that she along with the City Manager will talk about some broad items for the charge of the Commission. She stated the CCC will be able to discuss these ideas and share their thoughts on a new charge. President Treadwell and the Mayor will finalize the charge once he returns back from Germany and submit the charge in the next few weeks.

President Treadwell announced there will be some changing roles on the Commission. Co-Chair Sapeta will be ending his term as the College's Co-Chair. She has reached out to Steve Fortier due to his role as External Relations with KSC. She stated that his experience along with his ability to facilitate relationships is the perfect person for this position. She noted the Mayor has not informed her of his final selection for the City's Co-Chair position. President Treadwell stated there will be a strong collaboration to lead the CCC forward. Co-Chair Sapeta will be mentoring Mr. Fortier in the upcoming weeks and will be taking over as Co-Chair at the beginning of January. President Treadwell thanked Co-Chair Sapeta for his service and all of the work he has done for the Commission.

President Treadwell moved the conversation to the topic of the CCC report. She stated this report was extremely helpful and that she hopes the Committee will see a sense of momentum in the charge based on this work. She stated there are two things underway that are happening for the City and the College at the same time. One is that KSC is working to finalize a bridge strategic plan which will take the College from 2018 until 2021. KSC is currently in the midst of taking feedback from the students, faculty and alumni association. She stated the theme in part of the charge statement is that the Commission would review and inform KSC of the bridge strategic plan and KSC's capital plan. In regards to the capital plan, it would refer to the resources that will be put into building improvements or building changes. One of the buildings that is first to be renovated is Elliot Hall. President Treadwell noted that Elliot Hall shares Main Street and is also an opportunity to improve the Wyman Way entrance to campus. This is also an area with a Main Street extension. She noted that idea was for the College to create more continuity on Main Street with nice aesthetics. She stated that one charge element for the Commission would be reviewing these plans. President Treadwell explained this will affect residential property owners, off campus housing plans as well as residential master planning. In reading the CCC's report President Treadwell noted these areas are the important threads for the Commission to continue.

President Treadwell stated the City at the same time has a master planning process underway. The College and City are going to work together in order to make sure the College is aligning

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investments and echoing what the City is trying to do. She said as the City's master plan goes forward another area for the CCC is to help review that master plan. President Treadwell explained the Commission can be available to help with both the City and College by asking questions and help shape these plans.

She stated that another area for the CCC to assist with is planning activities that will come out of the strategic plan. President Treadwell stated that Ms. Picard, the City Manager and herself will meet with another concerned neighbor's group located on Gates Street on November 19<sup>th</sup>. She stated that it is really important that the planning activities developed from the help of Commission will inform the City and College of any issues.

President Treadwell stated a specific request was that the Commission would look to collaborate between the City and College in specific areas. This included looking at the successes of student off campus housing, student behavior and to identify any remaining challenges.

Another element in the charge document is seeking recommendations from the Commission to help improve relationship between the City and College. She stated the Commission can help in this area by surveying and making recommendations.

President Treadwell stated the final part of the charge would be specific actions for the City and College. The Committee would help determine the best way to increase inclusivity in the region. She stated the Committee is already aware about what it means to create a welcoming community. She noted this is at the forefront of every meeting that she has with the Mayor. In addition, there is a major discussion on campus about how talent is attracted and retained for both student and employees.

President Treadwell welcomed comments and requested feedback on the new charges just discussed. She noted these suggestions and comments would be shared with the Mayor in order turn this into a formal charge.

Co-Chair Sapeta stated that it was great to hear that the report was setup to go into more depth and action. He noted that it was great on the side of neighborhoods and also on side of making the City and College working together.

Ms. Kayser referred to President Treadwell's comments about action. She stated this means events and noted that the Commission does not have a budget. Ms. Kayser recommended the Commission form a bridge between the groups in the area that are doing so well with events. She noted the Historical Society, Jonathan Daniel MLK/JD Committee and the Colonial Theatre. President Treadwell stated that the Mayor is very focused on working very hard on bringing these groups together and to create more of a sense of coherence of events. Part of the work of the Commission would be a discussion with these groups about the specific actions, commitments and funds.

Ms. Morris stated that she does not think it is limited to events and that it has to be a lot deeper. She stated that it is education in the community as well as the opportunity for people to have conversations in order to understand different points of views.

President Treadwell stated she has discussed with the Mayor and the City Manager on how to attract employers and talent to the region. She stated that it is also includes working with the Chamber of Commerce and many other organizations. President Treadwell added that the CCC

can help deepen this conversation by assessment. She noted that if the recommendations are too broad it will feel impossible and if they are too focused an opportunity may be missed.

Co-Chair Sapeta referred to the calendar of events explaining that there should be one point of access in order to find these events. He noted that people miss out on these events that are so rich.

Ms. Ricaurte suggested the theme of the charge have a goal so that the Commission knows what is being or has been accomplished. President Treadwell responded that she and the Mayor will discuss how to set these goals so that they are practical and have a timeline. In addition, she noted there would also be a time for the CCC to celebrate the Commission's success. She acknowledges that the CCC has not been celebrated enough for the work that has been accomplished.

Ms. Kayser recommended figuring out how to get neighborhoods to talk with each other. She stated that if folks in the community are talking to each it will help everyone understand there are a lot of differences but also a shared common interest.

Mr. Berry stated in terms of goals he would like to know what it means when the Commission is done with a goal. In addition, he would also like to have data in order to measure how well the Commission is moving towards accomplishing a goal. For example, he mentioned the police reports. President Treadwell reported that she recently had a conversation with the Chief of Police to inquire about the behavior of students within that last three years. President Treadwell noted the change in behavior is incredible and that students have shown they are committed to being a part of this community. The City Police and Fire have both stated the number of calls has decreased.

Ms. Picard asked President Treadwell to further explain her idea of having the CCC involved in the planning activities. President Treadwell explained this is an effort to pick up on the things beyond the strategic and master plan. For example, what are the interests of the neighborhood associations? She noted these planning activities would include the recommendations in the Commission's report. President Treadwell stated that she will try to define this area more clearly but it will include educational and outreach events. Ms. Schmidl-Gagne stated there could also be a plan to help to communicate better about events on campus. She thinks that people enjoy attending these events but a majority of the time there is not a broad enough approach to the public. She noted the costs of Keene Sentinel ads are prohibited.

Mr. Fortier discussed the shared interest in attracting and retaining young people, especially students. He stated that this interest needs to be included in diversity and inclusion. He noted there are opportunities and that it is mutually beneficial to help students with their successes. President Treadwell added this is an area that she and the Mayor have been discussing. She explained that many times the area of limits is more individual than institutional. The need is to determine how to create more institutional momentum around some of those goals.

Ms. Morris reported that one of the things she spoke with Karen Crawford about is how to coordinate available jobs in the community. She recommended having a solid network with the human resources departments in the area. The City Manager added that this could also be a page that links everything together. She stated that she agreed with Mr. Fortier in terms of thinking about inclusion and diversity. In addition, the City Manager noted that the City must determine how to keep people as well as the making sure the trailing spouses have a job. President Treadwell also recommended asking the students what would make the area more attractive for

them to stay. Ms. Morris recommended polling the students that have decided to stay in the area due to employment.

Ms. Morris reported that the Governor's Diversity Council will hold a listening session at the Keene Recreation Center on October 23<sup>rd</sup> 5:30 PM-7:30 PM. She stated what communities have been asking for them to do is to give them notes from these meetings. The communities will then read through these notes and work on some of those issues themselves. Ms. Morris stated that she will make sure those notes are filtered back to the CCC to see what may or may not be useful. The notes are usually available a few days after the listening session.

President Treadwell announced that Ms. Morris was selected as part of the Governor's Advisory Council on Diversity and Inclusion.

Ms. Schmidl-Gagne noted that a successful group that the CCC may want to contact is Healthy Monadnock. She explained this group promoted health and wellness for all residents of Cheshire County. Ms. Schmidl-Gagne explained that this group had a lot of traction and buy from the community.

Dr. Cusack noted that he was unaware of how much KSC was involved in the previous master plan. He asked if KSC would be more involved in providing input to this plan. Mr. Lamb stated that it was a little soon to determine this because the next master plan was in 2022. He added that KSC was involved in the current master plan and there was a really good result. Mr. Lamb explained the first phase of the master plan process is a visioning process. He continued to explain that across the community they set-up listening sessions and organized groups with a facilitator. There were a total of 2,000 people that ended up participating. Mr. Lamb added that several of these sessions were setup on the KSC campus. Mr. Lamb noted that he would imagine doing something similar to that in the future.

President Treadwell stated that next year conversations will begin about launching KSC's master plan. She noted they would be engaging the commission and other groups to help establish this plan. The vision and scope of their strategic plan would be in 2022 and the next full master plan takes effect in 2022 through 2027, which aligns with the City. She added that the idea is start the conversation and align the strategic investments of the College as well as the capital investments with the City.

Ms. Kayser reported there are 500 people in the CALL program at KSC. She stated students in this program are taking digital complexity, refugees as immigrants, music, and all other kinds of interesting stuff. She said that many of these people in the program are very interesting people and many of relocated to Keene to be closer to family. She added that these people are a great resource for recruiting for commissions and committees.

Mr. Berry added that he has heard discussion about diversity and keeping students in the area. However, he has not heard talk about where is everyone going to work. He asked what is going to be done about attracting new employers to the region. The City Manager responded they have an Economic Development Committee. She stated that in 2017, the committee adopted the Economic Development Committee Action Plan and is working on a list of different objectives associated with that plan. Currently, they are going into an even larger discussion around economic development. The City Manager stated that economic development means redevelopment and development. She stated that means that the City has to take a look at what is already here in the City. The City Manager added that one of the things that she has learned over the last year is that the City has businesses that would like to expand. However, these businesses

say they do not have the workforce. She said that a lot of attention is paid to bringing in new businesses but there is a need to focus on what is here in the City. In addition, she stated that the City needs to help these businesses grow and make sure they have the available workforce.

Mr. Berry asked about the lower paying jobs and the multiple economic needs. President Treadwell stated this is part of the center of the conversation with the River Valley Community College moving out of the Washington Street location. She stated this will give them the ability to access KSC's infrastructure. The RVCC President's and the University System Presidents just met for the first time last week and the conversation was about the talent pipeline. She reported that this needs also to include the high school technical centers as well as the need to understand that we each play different roles. President Treadwell stated that together this will clear the path way and connect businesses and communities to the educational resources that are available to grow that talent pool as well as to attract. Co-Chair Sapeta added that another thing to consider is that the City is a landlocked community and cannot just focus on bringing more employers. He added that it is easier to develop the mindset of future employees and to make sure the pipeline is supplied. He stated that a creative economy that is happening these days does not rely on as much as the place. He noted that it relies on the connections.

With no further comment President Treadwell thanked the CCC for their work and their feedback at this meeting. She stated that she will take the notes from today's meeting and discuss this with the Mayor. The President and Mayor will bring the final charge of to the CCC in the upcoming weeks.

Co-Chair Sapeta then welcomed comment from the CCC.

The CCC briefly discussed the charges President Treadwell presented and how the CCC could adjust to the new charge. Mr. Lamb stated the concept is to continue to develop off the work the CCC has already done. He stated this is in particular to the neighborhoods and behavior and is a refinement of the work that has already been done. Mr. Lamb stated that he loved the conversations that took place at this meeting.

Co-Chair Sapeta stated that one of the tragedies of the work for the last four years of the CCC is that the Commission does not see results in a timely manner. He stated that he spoke with the first two co-chairs of the CCC and they are amazed that so much as happened with the CCC. Co-Chair Sapeta stated that belonging to the CCC is a long term commitment and takes time in order to actually see the results.

In addition, Co-Chair Sapeta noted that the CCC has had trouble with reaching a quorum. He asked the CCC to bring people forward that want to help make a difference in this community.

The CCC briefly discussed potential new members for the CCC.

#### **4.) Next Meeting-**

The next CCC meeting will be held on Monday, November 26, 2018 at 4:30 PM at the City Hall Second Floor Conference Room.

#### **5.) Adjourn**

Hearing no further business, Co-Chair Sapeta adjourned the meeting at 5:26 PM.

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Respectfully submitted by,  
Jennifer Clark, Minute Taker