

City of Keene
New Hampshire

FINANCE, ORGANIZATION AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, May 9, 2019

5:30 PM

Council Chambers

Members Present:

Mitchell H. Greenwald, Chair
Carl B. Jacobs, Vice-Chair
Thomas F. Powers
Terry M. Clark
Bettina A. Chadbourne

Staff Present:

City Manager, Elizabeth Dragon
City Attorney, Thomas Mullins
City Engineer, Don Lussier
Parks Recreation and Facilities Director,
Andrew Bohannon
Asst. City Manager/IT Director, Rebecca
Landry
City Clerk, Patty Little
Finance Director, Merri Howe
Fire Chief, Mark Howard
Asst. City Manager/Human Resources
Director, Beth Fox

Chair Greenwald called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM.

1) Ed and Kathleen (Kennedy) Burke - Beauregard Trust Property and 0 Chapman Road

Ed and Kathleen Burke of 56 Chapman Road were the first two speakers. Mr. Burke stated they have lived at this property since 1990. Mr. Burke explained there are three lots on this lot and the concern they have is between their lot and the adjoining lot is a corridor and if the city acquired the 27 acre lot located on the west side of Beech Hill access would be provided to anyone via Lilac Lane (a private driveway for the first lot). Mr. Burke went on to say they have a swimming pool on their property which has a fence around it which has a cut off on the corner because the fence was encroaching on the 50-foot corridor. Mr. Burke stated their concerns are shared by the other owners of the subdivision as well.

Mr. Burke talked about a garden depicted in the plans he circulated to the committee and noted he has been managing this garden for many years but added he is not claiming any prescriptive rights to this land. He felt the best way to resolve this issue is for the Burkes to purchase Lot 4B, preserve some access for the city but preserving access for the property owners for privacy reasons. An alternative would be to come to an agreement with the city to address those concerns under a mutual agreement. The sale however, would provide for privacy. This lot is about .49 acres in size but the 50 foot area on the top which accesses the 27 acre parcel is not delineated separately and the deed refers to a fifth lot. He noted if a

survey is required to close off lot 4B for the purpose of a sale, they would be willing to pay for the survey. Mr. Burke noted the owner of the undeveloped lot 4A has rights to this corridor as well for access. He further stated there is stipulation in the deeds that anyone who develops one of these lots has shared maintenance of the road.

The Chairman asked for the City Attorney's comments. Attorney Mullins stated staff is recommending placing this item on more time because the City has not completed the purchase of the larger lot from the Beauregard's and also given some of the historical aspects of this property he will be doing a title search of the property.

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

On 4-0 vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends putting this item on more time.

2) Request to Solicit Donations - Fire Department

Fire Chief Mark Howard addressed the Committee next and stated he was before the committee regarding acceptance of donations from local and regional businesses to be used by the Fire Department for events conducted for public education. He went over the various events the department holds for school aged children and noted several businesses have expressed interest in providing donations for these events. The Chief stated if approved these donations will be used to purchase educational handouts, materials to be used to build props for demonstrations for school-aged children.

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

On 4-0 vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to solicit and accept donations from local and regional businesses and service vendors to be used for events sponsored by fire department personnel related to public education in 2019.

3) Acceptance of Donations - Human Resources

Asst. City Manager/Human Resources Director Elizabeth Fox stated she was before the Committee to report out on donations. Ms. Fox stated the city recently conducted its employee and retiree health fair and there were approximately 135 people in attendance. She noted there were local vendors and service providers who provided donations for this event. She called the committee's attention to the list of vendors outlined in the Memorandum – the value of the donations totaled \$1,243.00.

Councilor Chadbourne expressed gratitude for how generous this community is.

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

On 4-0 vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommend that the City Council accept this report as informational.

4. Acceptance of Donation - Cheshire Cats Jump Rope Team

Parks Recreation and Facilities Director Andrew Bohannon addressed the Committee and stated he was before the committee regarding a \$120 donation for the Cheshire Cats Jump Rope Team. Mr. Bohannon stated the Cheshire Cats Jump Rope Team is a program held at the Recreation Department for youth between the ages of seven and 12 years old. He noted this team is raising money to attend these tournaments. This \$120 is from a zumbathon that was recently conducted.

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

On 4-0 vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommend that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to accept the donation of \$120.00 from the Cheshire Cats and that the money is used towards program equipment and travel expenses for future tournaments.

5. Acceptance of Donation - Trustees of the Keene Public Library Head of Youth

Ms. Jane Pitts representing the Next Chapter Library Campaign Drive stated this item is regarding the latest installment of donation in the amount of \$40,188.23 as listed in the Cambridge Trust December 22, 2018 - April 29, 2019 Donor list.

The Chairman clarified donations are on target. Ms. Pitts answered in the affirmative.

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

On 4-0 vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommend that the City Council accept donations of \$40,188.23 as listed in the Cambridge Trust December 22, 2018 - April 29, 2019 Donor list (See attached report) to be deposited into the Library Renovation Temporarily Restricted City Trust as part of the Next Chapter Campaign Drive.

6. Acceptance of 2016 Homeland Security Grant Award - HazMat Decon Allocation Fire Department

Fire Chief Howard stated this item is in reference to a grant in the amount of \$6,578.00 from the 2016 State of New Hampshire Homeland Security Program HazMat Decon Allocation.

Chief Howard explained this is a statewide award to increase the cache for hazmat incidents.

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

On 4-0 vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommend that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to accept a grant in the amount of \$6,578.00 from the 2016 State of New Hampshire Homeland Security Program (SHSP) – HazMat Decon Allocation.

7. Relating to the 2019/2020 Fiscal Year Budget Resolution R-2019-15

Chair Greenwald stated this budget document is available online and noted this presentation will begin with comments from the City Manager.

City Manager Elizabeth Dragon addressed the Committee and began by staff who helped with the creation of this document. Ms. Dragon stated the city has a fiscal policy which aims to limit the property tax increase to a rolling three-year average of the Boston CPI net of any expenses required by law; the calculation this year is 2.37%. Ms. Dragon noted staff worked diligently to bring forward the budget which includes a 1.55% increase excluding debt to fund city operations. Overall there is an anticipated 1.46% increase in the tax rate projected.

Ms. Dragon went on to note the first full payment to the library campus project is included in this budget which is \$161,513 in property taxes.

Other notable changes are reorganization and shifting of positions throughout the city – redirecting funds to address an in-house drain cleaning program as well as other maintenance programs

Pages 191 – 203 outline water and sewer projects – a proposal sewer increase is being suggested for 6.84% (\$54 per year) and water rate increase of 7.92% (\$43.20 per year). Ms. Dragon noted there will be a comprehensive water and sewer rate study conducted this year – the current rate structure was put in place 15 years ago.

Ms. Dragon stated staff feels this budget supports the needs of this community, accommodates the goals set by the Council, includes current labor agreements and includes infrastructure needs of the community.

Finance Director Merri Howe addressed the Committee next. Ms. Howe called the committee's attention to page 25 which outlines the breakdown of taxes paid towards each department. Pages 26 and 27 have the supplemental list which outlines the request by department and what the Manager recommended in the budget

General Fund Revenues – Page 35

Ms. Howe noted interest rates have helped the city over this past year. Motor vehicle revenue is staying flat but there is an increase in ambulance revenue. Chair Greenwald asked whether there is a breakdown the city can obtain for rooms and meals tax from the State. Ms. Howe answered in the negative and noted what the city is given is just a percentage.

Councilor Powers referred to Page 36 which has an overall decrease of \$300,000 (line 44000) and asked whether this is attributed to one area. Ms. Dragon explained the detail

charges are an in and an out. Ms. Howe noted the direct reimbursement is how the repayment for the library loan is being recorded.

General Fund Debt Service – Page 41

Ms. Howe noted in this list is the amount the city went out to bond for which the first interest payment will be in FY20 (for the bond issued in the fall of FY19). The overall debt increase to the operating budget is \$364,826.

Mayor and City Council – Page 45

The Chairman noted this page outlines the overall budget for the Mayor, City Council, and part-time employees

Outside Agencies – Page 50

Senior Citizens Center – Mr. Cameron Tease representing the Senior Center began by thanking the City for its past support. He noted 70% of their members are 70 years of age and older, 16% are over 85 years of age. He noted the Center has 500 members or which 300 are from Keene; 23% make less than \$25,000, 35% make between \$25,000 to \$50,000. He noted they provide scholarships and discounts based on need.

Mr. Tease stated they run this center with 2.5 employees and the majority of the help is from volunteers. He noted the center is growing, there were 65 new members this quarter and most of the seniors live alone. He spoke about the various programs they organize and indicated their membership rate went up from \$50 to \$60 last year. He referred to the various collaborations they have in the area – Rotary Club, youth from the YMCA, HCS Friendly Bus, Keene State College.

Mr. Tease stated they are requesting an increase of \$21,675 which would represent about 12% of their budget and the membership represents about 15% of the budget which leaves about 75% to be raised through grants and fundraisers.

Chair Greenwald stated there is a committee made up of staff who reviews outside agency applications and the applications are forwarded to the City Council. He noted ultimately it is up to the Council to amend what staff suggests.

Big Brothers and Big Sisters – Ms. Karen Brook representing Big Brothers Big Sisters addressed Committee. She noted their office is located at 310 Marlboro Street and her task is to work with the site based program. She explained they work with over 100 children in Keene and their vision is all kids succeed. Ms. Brook felt having a mentor in a child's life is important. Their volunteers come from the High School, College and the local community and there is no age limit to being a volunteer. A child can enroll with this program as young as 6 years of age and can continue until they reach age 18 or finish High School.

All volunteers, kids, and parents are interviewed. There is continuous check-ins that happens. In 2018, there was a collaboration between local agencies so there is no competition between agencies. The business office is located in the eastern part of the

State and any funding received locally stays local. Currently there are 29 kids on the waiting list.

Councilor Chadbourne asked whether these matches keep in touch even after they age out of the program. Ms. Brook stated as far as she is aware the relationship continues especially with today's technology.

Keene Community Kitchen – Phoebe Bray Director of the Keene Community Kitchen began by thanking for the City's past support. She noted the Kitchen operates a food pantry and soup kitchen for all financially qualified persons of Cheshire County. She indicated she is requesting a funding request of \$90,000. Ms. Bray indicated all individuals are verified to make sure they actually qualify to be helped and they are re-verified annually.

In 2018, 2,720 individuals registered through the pantry program of which 1,668 were Keene residents (60%). In 2018, it cost the Kitchen \$655,000 to collect, sort and prepare food. She noted they are only asking for funding for the Pantry Program not for the Hot Meals Program. The true cost for Keene residents would come out at about \$373,000 and added what they are working towards a reimbursement rather than payment from municipalities and are working towards getting a larger percentage from other municipalities.

Currently 27% are seniors, 23% are school age and the rest are the working poor or the unemployed. Ms. Bray stated they collaborate with other agencies and the renovations that were going on are complete and the site looks great. This concluded her presentation.

Councilor Jacobs noted there is a decrease in the number of residents that are served and asked why there is an increase to the request. Ms. Bray stated they still have paid staff, price of things are going up, utilities have increased.

Meals on Wheels – Susan Ashworth representing Meals on Wheels addressed the Committee. She thanked the City for past support and noted last year the organization provided 41,500 meals to residents and this year that number will be increased by about 2,000. A large percentage of recipients have indicated this is their main meal of the day and this program allows them to remain independent at home. The driver safety check helps identify any serious issue before a more costly alternative is necessary. A ¼ of recipients are over the age of 90 and as cost of food and utilities increase the support of the City becomes increasingly necessary. She noted they are requesting a modest increase of \$415 so a waiting list will not be necessary.

The Chairman felt between this program and the help the Kitchen provides, there are is a large need for help.

Councilor Chadbourne noted with an increase of 2,000 people the request of \$415 seems minimal and asked for clarification. Ms. Ashworth stated the 3% increase they are requesting is the 3% increase they received from their food service company.

Councilor Clark joined the session at 6:20 pm

Southwest Community Services – Mr. Keith Thibault representing Southwest Community Services also thanked the city for their past support. He noted SCS supports communities in Cheshire and Sullivan Counties and this type of ask happens in all the communities SCS serves. He noted the ask depends on how much support a community receives, Keene for instance receives \$2,983,000 in support and their ask has been \$10,000.

Mr. Thibault went over the service SCS has provided: 53 pre-school aged children receive different types of screenings, 256 families took advantage of the WIC program, 649 families received fuel assistance, New Hope New Horizons helped 7 families. Mr. Thibault stated they are happy to help the economically disadvantaged population of Keene as well as serve the community.

City Express – Mr. Michael Sarno addressed the Committee representing the City Express as their transportation manager. This year City Express anticipates providing 33,000 rides to critical locations such as the hospital, grocery stores and public agencies. 70% of those rides are provided for those with disabilities He noted they collaborate with the Monadnock Region of Transportation, NH Transit Association to provide maximum transportation opportunities and to prevent duplicate services. Mr. Sarno stated because of request made this past September they expanded their service to cover areas like upper Washington Street, lower Main Street, Water Street, Elm Street and Eastern Avenue.

Councilor Clark asked what kind of a response the bus service has had since the expansion of service. Mr. Sarno stated they have had a good response but they are still trying to iron out some issues. Councilor Clark stated the city is trying to cut back on fossil fuels in the next few decades and felt this organization makes this happen and asked whether the bus company has any ideas to further expand their service so the city can reach that goal, with of course the city's support. Mr. Sarno stated funding is always their issue and anything the city can do will always help. He further stated he has been an advocate for electric buses but this has not caught up yet – he stated they are always open expanding their service.

Councilor Powers noted last year this organization was trying to procure a grant for their fleet and asked whether they were able to do so. Mr. Sarno stated in the past three years they have been able to replace three of their buses and funding for which came from the federal government and noted these are much more efficient. Councilor Powers stressed the importance of expanding the bus service and felt this is an important service. Mr. Sarno noted the Friendly Bus which operates for seniors – the numbers on that has grown as well.

One Hundred Nights Shelter – Chair Greenwald this agency was previously funded at \$20,000, the request is for \$30,000, the Manager's recommendation is \$25,000.

Mindy Cambiar Director of 100 Nights and Doug Yazway Board Member of the Shelter addressed the Committee. Ms. Cambiar thanked the city for their past support and noted in 2018 the shelter provided for 207 individuals, 5,064 bed nights of shelter was provided, 11 veterans, 19 children and 11 families were helped. 53 had Keene ID's, the children were all with parents with Keene ID's, 135 of the 207 claimed Keene as the place of residence. In 2019, the shelter has served seven families with 13 children. Ms. Cambiar noted the need for shelter for young families has grown since 2016.

Ms. Cambiar stated some of the positive things that have happened recently is that they have increased funding from outside towns – last year it was ten towns providing \$9,900 this year that number has increased to 16 towns for a total of \$19,250. This number is more than what it was since the application was submitted to the city in February and added the Town of Harrisville debated at their town meeting to increase funding by another \$1,000.

The other positive thing is funding for United Way - 100 Nights is applying collaboratively with SCS Housing Stabilization Program and Monadnock Center for Violence Prevention Shelter Program. Ms. Cambiar noted working together with these two entities has helped learn about each other; 83 mutual clients were identified, entering data together helped identify people with disabilities.

Ms. Cambiar noted their future goals are to provide emergency housing, provide mutual educational opportunities (bicycle repair, anger management are some of the examples), provide all clients the opportunity to be ready to accept housing as it become available. She felt the collaborative working is going to provide for more of a positive impact. Ms. Cambiar stated they have also applied again for the HUD State funds.

Mr. Yazway added there has been concern expressed about their policy which allows for registered sex offenders to reside at the shelters, he agreed they do provide for these individuals to reside at the shelter. He indicated his experience working in the criminal justice system, the most dangerous individuals are incarcerated, the ones who are coming out of prison will come out with a plan of having housing and won't be residing at 100 Nights, the ones who have lower level of sexual offenses will be on parole and will be monitored; these individuals have to stay in Cheshire County and don't have the option of leaving. He felt having these individuals stay at the shelter as opposed to living under a tent keeps the community safe.

Councilor Chadbourne asked whether sex offenders are segregated from families' with children. Ms. Cambiar stated families with children are the ones who are segregated; they are provided rooms with locks. She added anyone who applies at the shelter has to indicate if they are a sex offender and this has been a policy since at least 2013.

Councilor Jacobs stated he is glad the agencies are collaborating with each other to help the community.

The Chairman urged his fellow councilors to visit the shelter and felt it was a well-run organization.

Monadnock Region Child Advocacy – Mr. Phil Huber from Child Advocacy stated when child abuse is reported to DCYF or law enforcement they are the first agency that is called who immediately form a team consisting of law enforcement, County Attorney, Crisis Center, Cheshire Medical Center, Child Advocacy Center, Monadnock Family Services. After which time the child is interviewed. He noted the center welcomes anywhere between 120 to 140 children each year of which 25 to 30 are Keene residents.

Mr. Huber stated when a child can disclose their abuse, the abuse stops, justice can be served and the child begins to heal. He stated even though this is a depressing topic, with the right support these kids can get better and they can thrive.

Mr. Huber went on to say 25% of children who they see have not yet reached kindergarten.

Mr. Huber concluded by thanking the city for their support.

CASA – Kathy Devlin Casa Program Manager addressed the Committee next. She noted their office is located at 39 Central Square. Ms. Devlin stated her organization has not asked for funding in the past and this year they are asking for \$2,000.

Ms. Devlin went on to say the reason for their request is because the need for their services is increasing in Keene and this is primarily driven by the opioid crisis. They work with referral from the court system and it is about abuse and neglect cases. The volunteers who are employed by CASA try to follow the children through their court process in order to advocate for them. Their clientele range from newborns to age 21.

Ms., Devlin stated their volunteers are put through wide range of training (they are required to have 49 hours of training), and what their goal is to have a significant impact on recruitment. Last year 50% of cases had to be declined because of lack of staff and noted this was distressing.

Monadnock Humane Society – Kathy Collinsworth representing the Monadnock Human Society stated this is the first time her organization has come before the city for a funding request. She indicated they provide many services to this community and just last year took in 246 animals for the city and their cost is \$30 per day per dog and \$10 per day per cat. For the 246 animals it cost the \$40,000. They are also the quarantine facility for the city. They also assist with the feral cat population in the city. 176 animals were surrendered by Keene residents last year.

Ms. Collinsworth noted many humane societies are under the umbrella of their municipalities but they are not one of those but she is not suggesting this. She noted she is here to point out some of the programs they offer to people who are struggling and are of low income backgrounds.

Ms. Collinsworth stated they just started the Animal Safety Net Program and they received a grant to get this program started; this is a program to help men or women fleeing their abusive homes a place to leave their animals as more people won't leave their situations if they have an animal at home. In this community it is mostly for the homeless population during the winter and also with the opioid situation and for people who want to go into drug treatment facilities. Through the Animal Safety Net Program, these animals can be boarded for free and medical care is also provided for these animals.

Emergency pet boarding is also provided for those who might experience a house fire or a flood situation. Ms. Collinsworth noted they also operate a pet food pantry program where they offer food for eligible individuals for up to two months. She added they also operate free spay and neuter clinics; she noted close to 83% admit they do not have regular vet care for their animals.

110 Keene residents were assisted through the Animal Safety Net Program and pet pantry program and 600 residents were assisted through the low cost clinic. In closing stated, the \$20,000 they are requesting is to assist with the low income population and for those navigating difficult life situations.

Councilor Chadbourne asked if the humane society works collaboratively with the Community Kitchen and MCVP. Ms. Collinsworth stated they work closely with the Kitchen, SCS' homeless shelter, 100 Nights and MCVP. She added she recently went to a conference and learned how humane societies are partnering with Meals on Wheels and this is something they would like to start as well. She added they have been lucky to be able to receive assistance from C&S and UNIFI.

The Councilor noted there was a position at the Humane Society who worked with hoarding cases and abuse issues and asked whether there is a plan to bring this position back. Ms. Collinsworth stated the organization was operating at ½ million deficit for past eight years and some serious decisions needed to be made; they are now moving in the right direction and it is in their strategic plan to bring back a cruelty control officer but added her staff go into the field and assist with hoarding and abuse issues. She added they also have a vet on staff. The Chairman noted the city has an animal control officer. Councilor Chadbourne clarified the animal control officer only helps with dogs and not with cats. The City Manager agreed. Ms. Collinsworth noted rabid cats are the real risk to the community.

Serenity Center – Joslyn Goldblatt Director of the Serenity Center was the next speaker. Ms. Goldblatt stated this is the first time they are seeking funding and they are a recovery organization. She explained people who struggle with substance abuse are dealing with a complex disorder and have to choose on a regular basis to manage this disorder. When they make this choice they lose their associations who are users and the center helps them work on their recovery.

She talked about the various programs they have in place such a peer support, community engagement, nurture leadership, etc. They also provide volunteer opportunities for people who have used the serenity center for their recovery.

Ms. Goldblatt talked about the music therapy program they offer, the noon time meetings which family of clients can attend, open mic nights, teaching clients basic life skills to find employment. Ms. Goldblatt stated they are also connected with other organizations that offer substance abuse treatment and recovery and work on projects and grants together. She indicated the city's funding will help cultivate a self-sustaining community of recovery.

She added they also offer simple steps such as forwarding their mail if individuals are in transition, a library of books and movies to explore pathways for recovery, when someone couldn't find housing for instance they were able to find them camping equipment.

The Chairman asked the City Manager why the recommendation to the Serenity Center was zero. Ms. Dragon stated this is because their application is not complete. Councilor Jacobs felt this does not mean this organization is not doing good work and is not worthy of city support. Councilor Powers noted this also does not mean one of the 15 councilors could not suggest a dollar amount for this organization before the end of the budget process. Councilor Jacobs felt what this organization does is important for this community. Councilor Chadbourne suggested Ms. Goldblatt getting together with the Manager to work on some of the missing items.

NH Kids Collaborative – Ms. Liz Chipman Director for the NH Kids Collaborative addressed the committee. She noted the median income for the families they support are approximately \$24,000 and if statistics remain true these kids will remain in poverty as adults and her organization is working to change that so these kids could reach their full potential. 250 of these children attend Keene schools and these kids score far less on standardized tests compared to their more affluent classmates.

She noted the model Kids Collaborative uses is unique; they connect kids to programs in the community. This not only helps the kids but also helps the local economy. Last year \$7,000 was paid in tuition and fees to other organizations. Last year 240 kids participated in 700 separate activities. In closing, Ms. Chipman noted any money they can obtain from the city will help them leverage other funding opportunities.

Councilor Chadbourne asked whether this organization works with the Rec Center. Ms. Chipman answered in the affirmative and added they are sending kids to summer camps, there are kids who participated in the basketball program, and they provide pool passes.

Samaritans – Carmen Trafton Director of the Samaritans was the next speaker. She thanked the city for its continued support and noted the Samaritans is a small non-profit organization created by family members, church people and community members to reduce the incidents of suicide – which is still its mission. The organization functions

solely on volunteers except for Ms. Trafton's paid part-time position. She noted suicide is increasing in this community. Samaritans do not charge anything for their programs and their relationship with the High Schools have been going very well as well as the reinstated relationship with the college.

Ms. Trafton stated the funds they have are spent solely on programming. She talked about their relocation to the Hannah Grimes Center which has been a positive experience for them.

Suicide is 100% preventable and noted the warnings signs are listed on all of their annual appeal envelopes so this will not only be asking for donations but also act as an educational tool. Ms. Trafton stated they try to be approachable to everyone and referred to the seed packets they circulate to the community which has their hotline number listed on them. They try to reach out to as many people as they possibly can. Ms. Trafton stated she is working on providing factual numbers to all the towns they serve. She pointed out suicide is everywhere and noted they are in desperate need of additional staff (program coordinator). Ms. Trafton further stated they are transitioning away from the United Way as she had mentioned last year.

Councilor Chadbourne clarified the funding request is to fund the program coordinator position. Ms. Trafton stated the funding she receives from the city is only used for programing needs – for things they do in the community. A second part time person will help with grant writing and tasks such a that while Ms. Trafton deals with the administrative side of things.

Community Funded Events - Page 51

Pumpkin Festival - Tim Zinn of Let it Shine thanked the city for their contribution last year. Mr. Zinn stated they had hoping for an increase this year to provide for inflation and noted each community funded event contributes to the community but asked the committee to look at the pumpkin fest on its own merits. He went over some of those merits: brings the community together (public schools and colleges), increases volunteering opportunities, gives the community a platform for the community to show off their creativity, celebrates the downtown, fundraising opportunities for non-profit organizations. Mr. Zinn added they plan on bringing more child focused non-profits for the festival. In closing added, they have been able to work through past challenges and get to a good place but stated he believes in this event and it is a win win for all involved. He hoped the city would agree to their increased request.

The Chairman asked the Manager to explain the Festival's requests. Ms. Dragon stated their previous appropriation was \$5,000 they are now requesting an additional \$2,000 – the Manager noted she has the event at level funding.

Councilor Clark asked what the additional \$2,000 is for. Mr. Zinn stated it is to create some breathing room and to make ends meet.

Tree Lighting – Ms. Liz Sayre representing the Kiwanis Club began by thanking the city for its efforts with tree lighting. Ms. Sayre noted there have been requests made to the Kiwanis Club to leave the lights on all year round on downtown poles, instead of the four months they usually keep them lit. She noted the Club pays for the lights and would be looking for longer lasting lights – these are LED lights. Councilor Chadbourne stated she has heard from the communities who have indicated they would like to see the lights on all year round. Ms. Sayre stated they have heard good comments on the tree as well. The Chairman asked whether a solar tree was being planned for the roundabout. Ms. Sayre stated they would for next year.

The Manager noted tree lighting is in the budget at level funding for \$1,000 there was no request for additional funding. The electricity would be part of city cost.

DeMar Marathon – Mr. Alan Stroshine member of the Rotary Club addressed the Committee and expressed his gratitude for the city's funding as well as all partnership and collaboration with all city groups. He noted this will be the 42nd running of the Clarence DeMar Marathon and the 6th running of the half marathon.

The Manager noted the DeMar Marathon is in the budget at level funding for \$5,000 there was no request for additional funding.

She further stated tree lighting actually costs the city \$5,571.40

Music Festival – Mr. Pablo Fleischmann representing the Music Festival stated he has been involved with this festival since 2001. He noted this is a self-funded event and the city pays for what happens on the day. The event happens on the Saturday of Labor Day weekend. Mr. Fleischman stated there might be a mis-print in what the committee was provided, the budget was \$3,300 and what the Festival was requesting is an additional \$3,000. He noted there was a discussion with staff about organizing a block party which would give them the opportunity to include families.

The Manager noted this event was level funded but should the council wish to add more to the event, they can do so. She noted the block party was not added in. She further stated staff has also been advised the block party would cost more than \$3,000. The Manager noted if the festival looks to pull back on some of the requirements for the event, the additional amount could remain at \$3,000.

Councilor Powers clarified in the budget the Manager is looking to level fund community events, in an effort to keep costs down. The Manager agreed. The Councilor asked for clarification on the Memo circulated to the committee. Finance Director Merri Howe explained the additional \$8,197 represents \$2,000 for the Pumpkin Festival and \$6,197 for the Music Festival. The Councilor agreed these events are great but felt these events have become too expensive; he felt if some of these events could be moved to Gilbo Avenue it could reduce some of these costs.

The Chairman went over some additional event costs:

Fire Prevention Parade - \$637

Red Cap Run - \$482.46

Unclassified Items – Page 51

The Finance Director stated the only thing different in this budget is the amount going to outside agency help, instead of using city staff at a higher rate for some of these festivals.

Councilor Powers clarified whether the Marketing and Development is being used as an annual fee. Ms. Dragon stated \$25,000 which is the city's share is being allocated for this position and the individual just started her employment on May 1.

General Fund Capital Appropriations – Page 52

Ms. Howe stated this is the amount that was appropriated in the CIP voted in March, with a minor adjustment – moving of \$66,800 so the drain cleaning program could be taken out of the CIP and moved into the operating budget. Ms. Dragon stated the downtown area is going to be getting a little more attention with this change.

Councilor Clark referred to 560 Main Street site assessment has a million dollar appropriation and asked for explanation. Ms. Dragon stated this has been an amount which has had and in and an out and wasn't sure who created this appropriation – Ms. Dragon stated this item can be eliminated and it will not make a difference to the bottom line of the budget number. The Councilor clarified whether this would make a difference to the item on page 87 – Ms. Dragon stated what staff would do is to eliminated the expense line for this item on page 53 and the revenue on page 87, because they net each other out. The Councilor asked about the sale of the property which brought in \$250,000. Ms. Dragon there will need to be some adjustments made to 560 Main Street such as the liquid waste disposal area, the salt sheds and the work that needs to be pursued is something staff is working with DES on. Ms. Dragon added in the following year's budget there will be a plan for remediation and felt the \$250,000 that came from this sale should be kept in reserve. Councilor Powers noted close to 2/3rds of this property is still left to be developed.

Employee Benefits – Page 54

Ms. Howe stated the increase on this line item is for union employee COLAs which are in negotiation right now. It also includes for funding for all qualified part time employees for health insurance as well as a supplemental request for an increase of \$10,978 for the tuition assistance program.

Councilor Jacobs noted there is a substantial increase to this line from \$197,000 to \$340,000 – Ms. Howe stated there two unions in negotiation and this is a place holder until July 1. Because this is a leap year there are extra days budgeted in this item.

Ms. Fox with reference to the tuition increase request stated this year the city had more than \$50,000 in tuition reimbursement requests (ten employees from seven departments).

The city as a result did a calculation and provided for up to four courses per employee and anything over that the employee will have to fund themselves. The tuition assistance is a reimbursement program for successful completion (75% of books and tuition).

Risk Management – Page 55

Ms. Howe noted there is a decrease in the general liability this year (7.4%). The airport liability is for the underground fuel tanks

Councilor Chadbourne asked about the increase to parking space rental – Ms., Howe noted there is an increase to parking rental and the city pays the same rate as the citizens do and the money goes into the parking fund.

City Manager – Page 56

Ms. Dragon stated she has created a new budget line for the special projects coordinator position (page 230) allocating what he has been using for supplies etc.

Councilor Jacobs asked whether the Economic Development Director under the Manager's budget is for Med Kopczynski's position. Ms. Dragon answered in the affirmative. The Councilor asked whether the Manager sees this as a permanent position. Ms. Dragon stated she could see this position evolve overtime, it is currently a contract position and suggested some form of this position make its way into the salary schedule. Currently the projects this position is working on is the library project, the unified code project but also the economic development piece. In addition to cutting expenses, increasing revenue is also important and the city has been fortunate to have Jack Dugan from MEDC but Mr. Dugan is retiring and wasn't sure what that will bring.

City Attorney – Page 60

Attorney Mullins stated his budget tends to be stable; the most significant line is always the outside legal services – this was created after the assistant city attorney left the city.

City Clerk – Page 65

City Clerk Patty Little and Deputy City Clerk Bill Dow were the next two speakers. Ms. Little talked about the upcoming primaries her department is getting ready for. She noted the Clerk's Office is always looking at the Council Chambers and ways to improve the audio/visual effectiveness of this room. One of the things staff is working on is to be able to use power point during presentations in this room and those who are occupying the head table do not have to vacate their seats; this is a request that came from the Mayor. She noted wide angle TV's have been purchased and they will be unveiled the next time there is the need for a power point presentation. Staff is also looking at track lighting to prevent shadowing.

Ms. Little stated the PA system will also need to be replaced sometime in the future – this was purchased in the 1970's.

Ms. Little went on to say she would also like to look at extending the seating to five seats at the area occupied by the Mayor, Manager and Clerk; When the room is split for the PLD Committee the visual for the TV is too steep.

Mr. Dow then talked about the data conversion of records management. Mr. Dow stated they are currently in the process of data conversion and expect that to be up and running in the next month or so.

Ms. Little stated recodification of the city code is a project staff is holding back on - funding for this work (phase 2) has been pulled out of this budget. Staff feels the land use code project needs to get caught up and then staff will be back in with phase 2. Councilor Jacobs asked whether the reconfiguration of council chambers has funding allocated in the Clerk's budget. Ms. Little stated she has a way of finding funds – this is her vision.

Assessment – Page 72

City Assessor Dan Langille addressed the committee next. Mr. Langille stated his department is a four person department and there are no plans to change that. He noted they were not asking for any changes and the budget has been stable for the past several years. He noted Keene's real estate market seems to be fairly steady and the city sees approximately a 2% increase each year (since the last update in 2016).

Chair Greenwald asked Mr. Langille to explain what overlay meant. Mr. Langille stated this is money retained for abatements, reduction to assessed value or to pay for early deferral.

Councilor Jacobs noted there seems to be a discrepancy between what Assessing is requesting for net property taxes and what the Manager is recommending (page 77). Mr. Langille stated he does not fill in this number it is based on the budget. The Manager stated this is the correct number, however, the departments have requested more funding which is not included in the Manager's budget and in the end this is the amount needed for the City Manager's budget versus what the departments request.

Finance – Human Services – Page 78

Ms. Howe stated this is the first year human services has fallen under the umbrella of finance.

Page 235 – Human Services Manager stated there has not been much changes to the rent and electric costs. There was a steep increase to funeral and cremation expenses because of the opioid crisis. There was an addition to the budget of general assistance which is a software program - moved from the IT budget to human services. With the expanded Medicaid, medical costs have decreases, however should things change this number could increase. Other services as listed is for home making services is for hospice and community services. Fuel assistance has maintained but this number could change based on need.

With respect to changes to the department, there is an online application process that has been set up where clients can apply for services online. The department will be doing basic budgeting workshops, literacy classes, readiness workshops and work fair programs. In 2018, 300 individual received holiday sponsorships from community members and businesses.

Ms. Howe stated the other finance department – accounting section has no changes to report. Purchasing is remaining status quo as well. Revenue Collection has an increase to the budget in the amount of \$4,536 and this is due to an increase in postage. The big change is to motor vehicle registration which will interface with finance software – eliminating dual entries. There will be a maintenance fee each year for this. Ms. Alther stated the total being requested for these fees are \$4,886 - \$3,000 of this is yearly support fees and the rest is for the blue book database to lookup values of vehicles.

Information Technology – Page 93

Ms. Rebecca Landry addressed the Committee next and stated her department has a standard operating budget. There is some fluctuation which will be seen in the system maintenance budget.

Page 96 – 98 – Line 62307 are for contracts paid for software and systems – licensing fees to support the various systems. Some of these are multi-year contracts. She added training for staff is something the department will be concentrating this year.

PC Replacement – Page 171

Ms. Landry stated next year is going to be a heavy year for PC Replacement – there are 140 PC's that need to be replaced which will keep staff busy and it is a huge undertaking. There is a per device fee each department pays.

Human Resources – Page 88

Ms. Fox stated this has been a busy year for the HR Department. She indicated the department has added the application tracking software and users seem to be satisfied with the product. Health insurance transition also added to the department workload. Much of the budget is unchanged. There is a supplemental request to fund internships in the department. The department used two this past year, one who worked on safety and the other on general HR issues.

The Chairman asked whether the department has a new employee. Ms. Fox stated the department has three full-time employees but there is some part-time funding in the budget to reshape how paperwork is managed on the third floor; it is supplemental hours.

Next Meetings: Special FOP Meeting – May 13, 2019 and May 14, 2019

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Krishni Pahl, Minute Taker