

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

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

**Thursday, November 14, 2024**

**6:00 PM**

**Council Chamber,  
City Hall**

**Members Present:**

Thomas F. Powers, Chair  
Michael J. Remy, Vice Chair  
(joined via zoom)  
Bettina A. Chadbourne  
Bryan J. Lake  
Kris E. Roberts

**Staff Present:**

Elizabeth A. Dragon, City Manager  
Thomas P. Mullins, City Attorney  
Natalie Darcy, Human Services Manager  
Rebecca Landry, Deputy City Manager  
Patricia Little, City Clerk

**Members Not Present**

*All Present*

Chair Powers called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

**1) Acceptance of Donations - Holiday Family Sponsorship**

Human Services Manager Natalie Darcy addressed the committee. Ms. Darcy stated annually, the Division of Human Services contacts sponsors to provide gifts and holiday items for families and older adults. The sponsored families and older adults are clients who have received assistance from the Human Services Department within the past year. Families who receive assistance are those who have children with special needs and persons who have been struggling to make ends meet. These individuals are considered for sponsorship. The goal of the program is to provide holiday gifts, gift cards for those in need, so that they will use their own resources to maintain housing and utilities for daily living.

Ms. Darcy stated Human Service staff appreciates the support of the Council for this annual project and are humbled by the generosity of the community. She noted typically they support between 250 to 300 individuals per season.

Councilor Chadbourne made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Lake.

On a 4-0 vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends the City Manager be authorized to accept donations associated with the City's 2024 Holiday Sponsorship Program.

Councilor Remy was not present for this vote.

**2) Cable Franchise Agreement - Deputy City Manager**

Deputy City Manager Rebecca Landry stated this franchise agreement is with Spectrum which is a division of Charter Communications. The current agreement has expired and she noted Federal Law automatically keeps the current agreement active until it is renewed.

She noted the new agreement would be for 20 years. She noted with more and more customers moving from cable services to streaming, she was not sure if this agreement would last 20 years. At the present time Spectrum is required to provide cable services for anyone who is located within 150 feet from their existing cable system; the new agreement increases that limit to 200 feet. The cable TV system would be extended to areas where there are 20 dwelling units or more per mile. Currently the threshold is 15 units. Ms. Landry stated this is not a concern because their coverage is so good at the present time.

With reference to the franchise fee, Ms. Landry stated the City is currently at 3.5% which the is collected from Spectrum. In turn, Spectrum passes the fee on to their customers. The franchise fee supports the community access station, government programming, and provides for things such as mics, cameras, and the control room. Ms. Landry noted the franchise fee can be as high as 5%. This is not likely to change, and added the City cannot increase more than 1% in any on year.

Ms. Landry went on to say that the City does continues to have the opportunity to request an audit of the cable TV revenue. The agreement would continue to require basic cable service. The basic cable package continues to be an important option which may not show up when a customer is looking at their menu of options for cable TV, but this continues to be an option that must be available to customers. Basic cable has a very small list of channels.

The agreement would continue to provide HD format channel to replace current SD channels. Ms. Landry stated standard definition channel is what the City uses government programming and customers do complain from time to time regarding the sound or with picture quality. The City has the opportunity to change that, but it comes at a cost and it would require a special agreement with Spectrum to make that happen. This would also require the performance bond to increase from \$10,000 to \$50,000.

Ms. Landry stated at the public hearing she was asked a couple of questions which would like to answer at this time.

Spectrum currently has about 3,581 cable TV customers in Keene. This number is decreasing as people transition to streaming. The revenue the City is receiving at the present time is about \$175,000 per year, previously is was over \$200,000 a year. \$86,000 of that amount is paid to FACT TV. The City also pays for utilities and lease costs for the space used by FACT TV at the library.

Councilor Remy joined the session via zoom at 6:10 pm. He stated he is travelling for work and is in California. He is not alone in the room he was currently in. The committee had no objection to Councilor Remy joining remotely.

Attorney Mullins noted that Ms. Landry had mentioned the basic cable service a couple of times tonight and again at the public and asked for a little more background to that. Ms. Landry stated basic cable is a bare bones minimum package for the lowest cost. She wasn't sure what was included in it but it was not 200 channels.

Councilor Lake made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Roberts.

On a 5-0 roll call vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends that the City Manager be authorized to negotiate and execute a renewal Cable Television Franchise Agreement with Spectrum Northeast, LLC.

**3) Jaida Carland - Concern over the Impact of Parking Ticket Rates on Small Businesses and their Employees**

Ms. Jaida Carland was the next speaker. Ms. Carland stated she has lived in Keene for eight years and owns a business called The Gilded Main. She stated she was before the Committee tonight to bring change to the way Keene enforces parking violations and to voice some concerns with parking in general. Keene's mission statement for the Parking Division states that they are *dedicated to providing safe, convenient and accessible parking*. She stated her goal for starting the petition which received 300 signatures in three days, was to bring attention and change to the fact that the downtown community doesn't see the Keene parking division as a group that is keeping them safe, nor is parking convenient or accessible.

She explained the convenient part of it is that the parking garages for downtown employees for long term parking is extremely expensive, ranging from \$175 to \$350.00 per quarter. She stated we are in an economy where people are struggling to pay for rent, groceries and gas. She felt in today's economy asking people to pay \$1,400 per year for parking is difficult.

She indicated some businesses have to unload products and equipment, and the kiosks are not user friendly as you have to enter your license plate for 15 minutes, and then go back to your car, to unload. This unloading is only going to take 15 minutes. She felt the meters were a more convenient option than the kiosks.

She noted paying for tickets online is convenient, but the high price of \$4.00 for each violation makes it extremely inconvenient and not accessible for lower income citizens. She asked what this processing fee was for. She noted each violation carries a \$4.00 fee which is not usually the case with other vendors.

Ms. Carland went on to say that all other entities in Keene have the convenience of free parking but when it comes to downtown businesses they seem to be penalized repeatedly. She talked about accessibility for the elderly clients she serves who have difficulty walking long distances or who don't have access to parking apps.

With respect to safety, long term parking options are in areas where there is an increase of flagrant activities, and this is a concern especially for people who work long hours at night. There are homeless people sleeping in stairwells or in the gazebo. She did not feel Keene was taking downtown businesses into account with respect to safety.

She felt visitors are less eager to come to downtown Keene because of parking enforcement. Once reconstruction starts they would be even less likely to come downtown if change doesn't occur. She felt this is an issue that needs continued conversation and parking needs to be fair for all parties involved. She agreed parking enforcement needs to happen to keep the community moving forward but the way it's being addressed today does not seem ok.

Ms. Carland stated she has taken the liberty of contacting surrounding towns and cities to see what their parking enforcement practices are. They all had one thing in common and that is they offer downtown employee parking programs. She indicated she talked to representatives from Portsmouth NH, Portland, ME, Burlington, VT and Durham, NH.

Portsmouth NH has designated parking programs for employees at a lower cost in different zones. For downtown employees, it is \$3 per session and the sessions go all the way up to 10 hours – this is per day.

In Portland, ME, residential and downtown businesses have a sticker program where you pay for a sticker. Businesses can park for eight hours.

Portland, ME the same parking ticket fees that Keene has at \$15 per ticket.

Burlington, VT has free business owners and employee parking in garages.

Durham gives out 200 yearly parking passes for multiple designated parking areas. This concluded Ms. Carland's comments.

The Chair asked staff to respond to comments that were just made.

Deputy City Manager, Rebecca Landry addressed the Committee. With respect to the processing fees for credit cards they go to the credit card processing entity the City has no control over that fee and none of the fee comes to the City.

Dorrie Masten of 326 Matthews Road Swanzey who is also a downtown business owner addressed the committee next. Ms. Masten stated the notice regarding the meeting did not give her sufficient time to notify other tenants who are also having issues with parking. She asked if this item could be put on more time to give others an opportunity to attend the meeting. Ms. Masten stated she does not want the parking that is available to businesses to be taken away, however, it is unsafe. She indicated the task of Keene Police each morning is to move people out of these parking areas before customers arrive. She indicated what they are experiencing with individuals using these lots is getting bad. She indicated the issues are not just in parking garages but also in parking lots. She stated she has photographs of people sleeping in her dumpster. Ms.

Masten stated the downtown is getting dangerous and issues need to be addressed.

She stated not only does the issue with parking and fines need to be addressed but the available parking must become safer.

She added the downtown reconstruction is going to have an impact on downtown businesses and suggested a meeting with the local businesses to figure out how parking is going to be addressed during this construction period. Perhaps at a discounted rate with parking in the City lots being available as an option for downtown business owners.

Ms. Masten expressed her appreciation to Ms. Carland for all the work she has put into this issue.

City Manager Elizabeth Dragon addressed the committee and stated a parking program for both residents and employees is a good idea and while the City is moving forward with the downtown project, she felt it was a probably a good time to revamp the parking system for both employees and residents.

Ms. Dragon added another thing that was in the strategic parking plan was an evaluation of enforcement, and this is something staff will be addressing again. It has been recommended for several years that enforcement of parking go into the evening because that is when the majority of people are parking. She added the City is also looking at neighborhood parking programs as well.

Councilor Chadbourne complimented Ms. Carland for the amount of work she had put into this issue and is happy to hear from the City Manager that the City is already working on a parking program.

Ms. Carland stated adding evening enforcement is opposite of what she is trying to accomplish here. She felt the tickets are already too high. She indicated there are three officers at times within a mile radius who have access to apps that tell them when meters have run out and she felt there is no community connection with these officers. She noted there is one individual who does make an effort to connect with business owners. She stated she understands issues the parking division has faced in the past, but she felt at some point there has to be a connection made between the parking division and downtown business owners/residents.

She felt if things don't get better more and more businesses will be moving away from downtown and she plans on doing the same.

The Manager stated the City has some great people working in the parking department and they have made a lot of strides over the last few years with Mr. Kopczynski overseeing that division and now with Rebecca Landry. She stated it is never fun to give out a ticket, but she felt they have made a lot of efforts to be more engaging. She agreed there is a lot more the City can do in terms of looking at the parking system as a whole. The reason the hours of parking enforcement is currently being discussed is because the Council created a change in the parking ordinance that now allows on street parking which was put in place for the residents who live downtown to park overnight. As a result, we are now getting residents parking in front of businesses. She stated

these are all conversations that need to happen to strike a balance that works for everyone.

The Chair noted the real underlying principle of parking is to turn over the activity in the downtown. He felt you cannot park in the same spot all day and expect customers are going to be able to park; balancing this becomes a challenge.

Councilor Roberts stated the part that concerns him is safety. He talked about the bike path that leads toward Whitney Brothers where trees were taken down to prevent homeless people from sleeping in these areas. He agreed more people are living in the parking garages. He stated whether we agree or not the homeless issue is getting worse due to a variety of reasons. He agreed if people don't feel safe, they won't visit the downtown. He stated safety is his number one concern.

Councilor Lake stated some sort of employee parking program or some parking program for the citizenry makes sense to him. He asked what timeline staff had in mind; whether it will be done individually or as an overall issues. The Manager stated the Council has already been seeing options individually, the first one was the overnight parking in the downtown to accommodate residents in the winter. In the past, beginning on November 1st, everyone would need to move off the streets at by 2:00 AM but now the parking limitations are triggered by snow emergencies.. This was first ordinance change that was requested and put through the system.

Staff is working on a couple more items coming through the system. One Ordinance addresses summertime because there are sections of the Code that doesn't allow overnight parking in the summer.

Another Ordinance addresses Juneteenth, which was something the Council wanted to address.

The Manager added the revenue that is generated from the parking system itself is actually what pays for the garages and pays for enforcement. The parking division is entirely paid for by the fees and fines received as part of the parking system.

Councilor Chadbourne asked whether this revenue also pays for employees' wages. The Manager stated it pays parking enforcement for all parking related activities including maintenance.

The Manager added two years ago the Council reviewed fines and fees and this is because the fund was not supporting itself and there needed to be an adjustment. Unfortunately, what has happened in the past is the City has gone long periods of time without making adjustments and then when an adjustments are made it is for a larger percentage adjustment; instead of making periodic smaller adjustments.

The Chair clarified the parking fund is a non-tax item, it is outside the tax rate and it is self-sustaining to maintain the parking areas.

Councilor Chadbourne stated Keene is going through growing pains and we are starting to see the things that bigger cities are experiencing with crime, drugs etc. We are growing and changing

and trying to adapt. The Councilor recalled years ago something similar was happening at the Commercial Street parking lot and Gina Hamblet, who owned a couple of buildings came to the City with concerns about safety. She stated the City addressed those issues and recalled one of the solutions was adding more lighting.

The Manager stated the homeless situation is creating a variety of issues, parking garages is one of those issues. As the City grows the homeless issue is also growing. She added the manner in which the State manages homelessness is they call municipalities through 211 and if there is a vacant bed, individuals are sent to that town or City if that municipality is accepting money from the State for their shelter. She added we can add more beds and try to get people to come in but this would result in more homeless people coming to the City from everywhere. She stated until the State fixes the way they address homelessness, it is going to be really difficult for Keene to manage this issue.

The Manager went on to say, the last couple of years, the City has been addressing encampments. The encampment behind Hannafords was only recently cleaned up which caused the City to spend money to house these individuals.

She stated this however, is not going to eliminate people from finding different places to relocate. This is a very complex issue and the City will have to continue to work on.

She noted the neighborhood next to 100 Nights was concerned of the same things because of increased activity on the trail and increased activity in that neighborhood in general. They have been talking with the City and with the shelter about ways to address these concerns.

The Manager added changes were made to the State Law with the help of Senator Fenton a year ago which now allows the City to bill other communities that are sending their residents to Keene. The City has asked Senator Fenton to put forward another Bill this year to work with other welfare offices in the State and to see how they are managing welfare and denying their applications. She stated the City has to keep finding ways to address these issues and it is going to be a long time before we make significant progress. She stated the City needs more help at the State level to address the homeless issue.

Councilor Chadbourne stated there is planning and conversations going on, but asked if there is something that can be done immediately so that business owners can feel safer. The Manager stated they will take a look at lighting, but unfortunately, she cannot say she will be able to send the police to these location more often because the City is short between eight to nine officers at the present time. The City has done a variety of things to recruit new police officers; offering competitive wages, bonuses –but it is still very difficult to recruit police officers in general. She added policing is not going to be able to solve this entirely, but she stated the City will try and increase directed patrols but did not want to provide a false expectation that this is going to address this issue as the City does not have the capacity to do it as often as we need to.

Ms. Carland stated there are ways the City could address safety by permitting business owner parking closer to the businesses (side streets – Winter and Court Street areas). She added turnover in the downtown is not happening as we are in an economy that dates back to 2019.

Since, Covid the downtown has slowed down especially with the enforcement officials handing out citations aggressively. She also noted that she hoped the five-day notice she was provided about this meeting was not intentional to prevent other business owners to be able to attend.

The Chair clarified from staff the City has renovated several parking garages and have tripled the lighting in those areas. The Chair also noted some of the areas we are discussing today is on private property and the City only has a certain amount of leeway to address issues in these areas. He stated the concerns raised are valid and they will be looked at.

Ms. Landry thanked Ms. Carland for the work she has put into this item and stated she understands walking downtown when it is late. She explained how the app works – she stated the technology required to know from the app whose payment has expired is very expensive and the City does not have that technology. Until the officer looks up a license plate they don't know if it has expired or not. As far as meters, the coin operated ones are not available anymore. She asked the public and the Council to ask a lot of questions before making any decisions about parking as a change to parking has a domino effect. At the present time, the City is trying to figure out how much revenue will be lost by not giving out tickets during the winter months. There are communities that provide free or low-cost parking to employees and residents – this is not free as it would impact property taxes. Property taxpayers will be paying to support and maintain parking downtown.

Ms. Carland noted to human errors made on the app such a switching a number in a hurry causing a ticket to be issued. Ms. Landry responded by saying parking officials are good about working with citizens when an issue like that comes up. She stated if someone has paid for parking but entered something incorrectly and got a ticket, the City would want to know about this.

Ms. Casey Meyerrose one of the owners of Lucas Mediterranean Cafe addressed the Committee next. She stated she appreciates the City working on solutions for parking and noted she leases property from the City and originally her parking spot was included in her lease (two through the City and one from Keene Housing). This is no longer the case even though she still has a lease through the City and has been trying to work with the parking division on this.

Ms. Meyerrose stated she has experience living in big cities and dealing with City parking. In every situation as a business owner or employee of a downtown business, there is almost always some sort of reduced parking program that is offered. She stated she employs single parents, individuals with disabilities, younger people and noted restaurants schedules can be difficult to manage. She felt extending parking tickets into the night would be extremely detrimental to this industry. Servers make between \$3.27 an hour to \$7.00 an hour, and survive mostly on tips. She noted the restaurant industry was hit hard during Covid and is still struggling. She talked about the issue of servers not being able to get to a meter because of work issues and being ticketed but the parking office refusing to consider such incidents.

Ms. Meyerrose stated the City needs figure out what works for business owners, what works for employees and keeps the parking division going. She stated she agrees there needs to be turnover



with parking. However, there are not too many areas in the downtown where employees can park and go to that space at 11 pm safely with a large sum of cash. She stated for her safety is the first thing that needs to be addressed.

Ms. Masten addressed the Committee again and stated making the parking that is currently available safe is her first issue and encouraged the City to pay higher wages to attract more police and fire personnel.

Councilor Chadbourne stated staff and the Council have been working a lot on the police officer shortage and added this a nationwide trend.

Councilor Roberts made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Lake.

On a 5-0 roll call vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends the communication Concern Over the Impact of Parking Ticket Rates on Small Businesses and their Employees be referred to the Manager and have her bring back proposals to the committee.

**4) Release of Non-Public Minutes - Council Policy - City Attorney and City Clerk**

City Attorney Tom Mullins addressed the Committee and began by saying in 2013 there was statutory change to RSA 91-A that laid out two paths for municipalities to review and release nonpublic minutes. One path is if there is a policy in place and the municipality follows the policy. The second path is if there is no policy in place then you follow the statutory requirement which is, as is stated: *review shall occur no more than 10 years from the last time the public body voted to prevent the minutes from being subject to public disclosure*. The City decided to put in place a hybrid version – rather than rely just on the statutory language. The City had a policy in place with respect to the review of the minutes in this 10 year period. But the policy also provided a more recent review of non-public minutes be subject to release. What was discovered is when dealing with non-public matters, sometimes the non-public minutes can contain pretty relevant information, which is the reason you are in a non-public session. However, the underlying reason for the non-public session may or may not be still valid. The issue with releasing the minutes is that it could also include information that shouldn't be released, and sometimes it can be hard to make that determination.

What staff is proposing this evening is to revisit the policy and to state that in January of every year staff will place the review to the City Council minutes from the 10 years prior. The attorney noted there are some nuances in the statute, even though the City would like to have this policy in place, there may be times when staff would have to come to the City Council and indicate a set of minutes should be released sooner than 10 years, but the general policy would be that 10 year period at this point.

City Clerk Patty Little stated how she envisions this happening, at a council they will be presented with a series of minutes (in 2025 it will be minutes from 2015 in printed form). Staff will be looking to the attorney to give his perspective on whether they need to be retained or released, and staff will be looking for the Council to take positions on those. She stated this will

be an organized and efficient process. She encouraged Councilors not to be curious and inquire about the background of a particular subject contained in a set of nonpublic minutes.

Ms. Little added, in addition she encouraged the City to continue to look for a legislative change because bringing these things to the governing body is difficult. It is time consuming and it would be far more efficient if this was an administrative decision to release. Staff has brought this issue to the Senator Fenton in hopes that he can introduce an LSR.

Councilor Remy stated the only concern he has with the timeline as described is that every other January there is the potential for having brand new councilors coming on board who will have to figure out in their first or second meeting what this means.

Chair Powers asked whether these minutes need to be in paper format and whether they could not be automated. Ms. Little stated it is risky to have them automated and indicated every time staff tries to use SharePoint in this room, there is always a Councilor who loses the online access.

Councilor Roberts made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Lake.

On a 5-0 roll call vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends that the City Council amend its previously adopted policy on the release of non-public minutes to satisfy the statutory obligation under RSA 91-A to review previously adopted non-public minutes for a determination as to whether the circumstances for sealing the non-public minutes no longer apply, and that such review and determination of the release occur annually in January of the tenth year from the year in which the non-public minutes were sealed.

**5) Keene Transfer Station Contract for Transportation and Disposal - Assistant Public Works Director**

Assistant Public Works Director Duncan Watson stated he was before the Committee to discuss the RFP that was issued back in September - RFP 02-25-05, which was for transportation and disposal of waste from the City's transfer station. Mr. Watson noted the transfer station is currently under reconstruction from the fire damage it incurred in April.

He indicated once the transfer station is back in operation in January of next year, the plan is to negotiate a contract with Waste Management which is the entity the City has been doing business with for 17 years. Staff believes they could enter into negotiation and start a new agreement with Waste Management to haul and dispose of trash.

Councilor Remy asked how many bids were received. Mr. Watson stated they received one bid and indicated the reason for this is because the other entities he thought would bid have their own transfer station.

Councilor Chadbourne made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Lake.

On a 5-0 roll call vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to execute a contract with Waste

Management New Hampshire (WMNH) to provide transportation and disposal services for refuse received at the Keene Transfer Station for a period of five (5) years with options to renew for additional years beginning January 1, 2025.

**6) 2025 Flyover and City Base Map Update Project - Bid Award Recommendation - GIS Coordinator**

GIS Coordinator Will Schoefmann was the next to address the committee. Mr. Schoefmann stated he was before the Committee asking for a favorable motion regarding the selection team's recommendation for a firm to conduct the City's 2025 fly over for updates to the City base mapping for the GIS system.

He indicated the City received three bids on its RFP and the selection committee is recommending offering the contract to Kucera International Inc. Mr. Schoefmann stated this entity conducted the previous fly over for the City in 2020 and the City found them to be fiscally responsible and met all of the criteria the City was looking for.

Councilor Lake asked Mr. Schoefmann to provide a quick overview of some of the alternatives included in the RFP. Mr. Schoefmann stated to have an exact comparison which doesn't always work out; the bid alternatives get confusing because the firms like to respond in their own manner. The base bid was for 100 scale mapping which the City currently has. This proposal would increase that with some accuracy levels on the planometric features which are things like buildings, roadways, and other such features. For Wetlands, Infrared, Lidar/Slope and hill shade the City has a model that it uses.

He indicated the one item that the City did not get previously, but are intending to with this proposal is to increase the level of its capabilities with 3D GIS, by adding that with the downtown and airport. The airport has many lease areas and there are many changes going on in the downtown.

Chair Powers asked for the price of the contract. Mr. Schoefmann stated at the present time with everything included it is approximately \$90,000. The City has funding available through the CIP is for \$150,000 which has been allocated. He added some of the 3D modeling that the City is interested might cost a little more, but staff has a directive not to exceed that budgeted amount.

Councilor Chadbourne noted one year on the assessing site they had everything such as water lines, fences in great detail etc, and asked whether this falls under planometrics. Mr. Schoefmann answered in the affirmative. The Councilor stated this is an expensive project, but she felt it was a worthy tool to have.

Councilor Lake asked whether the City expects to see any other costs outside of the \$90,000 estimate and asked whether the 3D modeling would be at an extra cost. Mr. Schoefmann stated the only additional cost would be staff time. With respect to 3D modeling, the City would get something that is 3D GIS in the form of Lidar Point Cloud, but there might be gaps in this because of how the collection occurs. However, for the true 3D view there is no estimate yet but

the Manager would need authorization to negotiate that additional contract. The plan is to keep it within the budgeted \$150,000.

The Chair asked how often this work is done. Mr. Schoefmann stated the complete mapping project is done every ten years but there is interim project for imagery update and limited planometric which alternates every five years.

Councilor Lake made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Roberts.

On a 5-0 roll call vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to negotiate and execute a contract with the selected firm, Kucera International Inc. for their professional services; and should negotiations fail, allow for negotiations with the next highest ranked firms in order.

**7) Relating to the Appropriation of Funds from the Solid Waste Fund to the FY 25 Operating Budget Resolution R-2024-37 Duncan Watson, Assistant Public Works**

Mr. Duncan Watson addressed the Committee again and stated Resolution R-2024-37 is a request to allocate funds from the Solid Waste fund balance to the operating budget to convert a contract position from 10 hours a week to a full time benefited position. This is because the Department has been increasing the volume through the recycling center, but not the tonnage due to changes in packaging, specifically plastic packaging. It now takes several plastic bottles to make the equivalent tonnage or weight of a single plastic bottles compared to a few years ago. This has resulted in a lot more handling of material that is done in the processing line without increasing actual tonnage going through the line.

In addition, as people have discovered all the services that are offered at the solid waste division. The traffic has increased fairly dramatically over the years, particularly over the Covid period and the division is handling 400 to 450 vehicles per day, with this number doubling or tripling on a Saturday. To maintain the standards of this facility, bringing in additional personnel would be beneficial to maintaining the facility in good working order.

Councilor Roberts made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Chadbourne.

On a 5-0 roll call vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends adoption of Resolution R-2024-37.

**8) Tax Deeds for Unpaid 2021 Property Taxes**

Finance Director Merri Howe began by introducing Karen Bell Revenue Collector. Ms. Howe stated Ms. Bell and Maria Castellano have put a lot of work into this project.

The Manager noted the Committee's packet has a few different categories, because for some of these the City is requesting tax deed waivers, but the revenue collection department has been successful in making payment arrangements for certain properties. Approval is needed from

Council to not move forward with tax deeds on these properties.

The second category is for four properties being recommended for tax deeds.

Property located at 31 Oriole Avenue will move up to tax deed waiver portion of the memorandum.

There is a third category of properties that are currently in bankruptcy that don't require a motion of the Council, because legally we cannot move forward while they are in bankruptcy with tax deeding. The Manager commended staff on their work.

Councilor Chadbourne made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Lake.

On a 5-0 roll call vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends that it would be contrary to the public interest to take the following properties by tax deed at this time, and that tax deed waivers be granted for the properties, including 31 Oriole Avenue and continuing as follows predicated upon further recommendations to the City Council after final review of the payment status of each account.

BALDWIN JUSTIN W	796 COURT ST C	219002000009073
BEMIS VIRGINIA E ESTATE OF AND HEI	23 MINERVA LN	240008000000000
BERGERON DONALD J REV TRUST	229 CHURCH ST	573065000000000
BERMUDEZ BRENDA L	39 SCHULT ST	242008000239000
COLBY RICHARD L	18 BLUE JAY CT	219001000117000
DAHOO DOUGLAS M	3 SPARROW ST	219001000105000
FISH NINA	139 CARROLL ST	536045000000000
HANNON LISA	53 STARLING ST	219001000366000
HARPER RICHARD A	27 MINERVA LN	240007000000000
HARPER RICHARD A	38 KELLEHER ST	594020000000000
KARANKO LAWRENCE E	26 STARLING ST	219001000327000
KRAUSS ROBERT R	244 BASE HILL RD	247004000000000
LACLAIR MICHAEL D	50 HILLTOP DR	503025000000000
LATHERS JOEL M	305 ROXBURY ST	570039000000000
LORTIE LEONARD M	163 ISLAND ST	592025000000000
MALONEY EDWARD J	26 ORIOLE AVE	219001000016000
MORAN MARYANN E	21 SPARROW ST	219001000094000
NELSON JAMES A	34 BLUE JAY CT	219001000131000
OLLIKKALA GLENDA M	14 SCHULT ST	242008000214000
PATNAUDE DENA R	115 WOODBURN ST	537014000000000
ROSE AMY	19 BRANCH RD	240022000000000
WILLIAMS DEBRA J	17 CHICKADEE CT	219001000249000
WINSLOW DAWN C	20 WINCHESTER CT	592006000000000

Councilor Chadbourne made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Lake.

On a 5-0 roll call vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends the execution of tax deeds for the following properties excluding 31 Oriole Avenue:

CHAFFEE WILLIAM	703 MARLBORO RD	248023000000000
MOLA GINO CHARLES	1 SCHULT ST	242008000201000
PATNAUDE MICHAEL S	717 MARLBORO RD	248005000000000
WILLIS DANIEL	31 ORIOLE AVE	219001000019000
SWEENEY EDWARD C III	0 APOLLO AVE	509020000000000

There being no further business, Chair adjourned the meeting at 7:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Krishni Pahl, Minute Taker

Additional edits by,  
Terri M. Hood, Deputy City Clerk