

City of Keene
New Hampshire

FINANCE, ORGANIZATION AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, August 25, 2022

6:00 PM

**Council Chambers,
City Hall**

Members Present:

Thomas F. Powers, Chair
Michael J. Remy, Vice Chair
Bettina A. Chadbourne
Bryan J. Lake
Andrew M. Madison

Staff Present:

Elizabeth A. Dragon, City Manager
Thomas P. Mullins, City Attorney
Merri Howe, Finance Director
Rebecca Landry, IT Director/Asst. City
Manager
Chelsea North, Parking Manager
Med Kopczynski, Economic Development
Director
Jesse Rounds, Community Development
Director
Brett Rusnock, Civil Engineer

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

1) Councilor Randy Filiault – Spectrum Service Issues

Councilor Filiault addressed the Committee and stated per the letter he submitted he is looking for a representative from Spectrum Cable to explain to the Council as to why the cable service seems to be so poor. This is not because of storms or bad weather; it is happening all over Keene no matter what the weather is. The Councilor stated this is a service that people pay for and people expect a service. He added the only thing worse lately than Spectrum Cable Services has been Spectrum customer service. When anybody calls it is always “we don't see a problem in your area” or “unplug your box and plug it back in”.

Councilor Filiault stated since he submitted this letter he has also been contacted by three Spectrum employees who want to remain anonymous, who acknowledge Spectrum Cable is aware there is a problem in Keene and have ignored it. One of the problems, according to Spectrum Employees is their equipment on Beech Hill is not adequately ventilated. It overheats and causes some of the freezes. He indicated he has also heard from another employee, that they have outdated codes in their office, which causes a problem. The Councilor added he is not able to confirm or deny any of this, but the information came from Spectrum employees.

Communications and Marketing Director/Asst. City Manager Rebecca Landry was the next to address the Committee. She indicated the City has a Franchise Agreement with Charter

Communications/Spectrum Cable. She indicated she does not know a lot about these complaints but when she has received complaints, she has been able to work with Charter Communications now known as Spectrum Cable where the complaints are tracked, logged and resolved.

Ms. Landry referred to language from the current Franchise Agreement “...*billing and complaint procedures for reporting and resolving subscriber complaints include address and telephone number of the local franchise authority*”. Once a year under the Charter, Keene is required to send notice to all of its subscribers, identifying Keene as the franchise authority, and also letting customers know that they can complain to the franchise authority with the name and telephone number of the contact. Charter Communication is required to keep a record of all complaints for two years. However, verbal complaints are not required to be kept in that history.

She noted people have asked about credit for any type of service outage; the Franchise Agreement says if there is an outage of 24 consecutive hours or more, subscribers are eligible for a credit, if they request it. Ms. Landry stated she has spoken with the Executive team of Spectrum; there is a V.P. for this region and a team of managers who are ready and willing to hear concerns, and they are hoping to have time to follow up after they learn more about what is going on.

Chair Powers asked for public comment next.

Mr. Bob Trudeau of 671 Park Avenue indicated he has experienced the same issues Councilor Filiault referenced. He indicated he has experienced with certain programs where individual's lips move faster than the show and everything starts to freeze. Mr. Trudeau stated they lost cable the other days for several hours. He stated he tried the “unplug plug back in” method but no resolve, they contacted customer service and they repeated the same fix after half an hour doing the same thing the call disconnected and there was no follow up call. He stated he does not understand why Spectrum cannot call customers back. Mr. Trudeau stated in the past he has seen Time Warner driving around checking distribution boards but that doesn't seem to happen anymore. He stated he hoped there could be a resolution soon.

Mr. Rod Parsons of 104 Hurricane Road stated he would echo some of the previous comments. He stated he has a complete package of spectrum equipment; router, modem etc. He also has the complete internet package and programming. Last night, between the hours of 7:30 pm to 8:00 pm there were four outages where the spectrum logo kept circling (there were no storms last night). Mr. Parson felt spectrum doesn't have enough signal strength to get a signal. He stated he performed a speed test last evening and is receiving 3.7 MB per second download, and 1.9 upload. Today it has improved to 5.7 download and around 4 upload. Hence, the speed varies. He stated without knowing the performance specification for delivery of their product to his house, he can't determine if he is getting what he is supposed to. Mr. Parsons added his monthly bill to Spectrum is \$238 per month and for that money he should receive appropriate service for what he is paying for.

Mr. Bill Arnott of 44 East Surry Road stated he agrees with everything that has been said by the other speakers and has the same experiences on East Surry Road as well. He stated he however, does not have a problem with Internet which leads him to believe after experiencing cable issues

for the last 2 or 3 years Keene has antiquated equipment. Mr. Arnott stated he would like to suggest Keene hire a technology expert on cable and bill Spectrum for that cost because he does not trust the technologist at Spectrum because the answers he receives don't make any sense. He stated for example, he couldn't watch a Bruins game last year during the playoffs because the figures were pixelated on the screen and same with the Celtics. He had the same issue with the Redsox last night. Mr. Arnott relayed an issue his neighbor had experienced as an example of how customers are treated by Spectrum. His neighbor lost one of her cable boxes and called Spectrum and their first response was to have her bring the box into the store, which she refused and after a week of back and forth with Spectrum customer service, they finally arrived on the premises and found a grounded wire that did not exist, and the reason for the cable box malfunction. Mr. Arnott stated he has learned never to speak to any in public relations at Spectrum but rather ask to speak to someone in the technology department. Mr. Arnott felt receiving a credit after 24 hours of outage might help a little. He stressed the need for the City to hire a cable expert to look into this issue.

Mr. Rich Collins of Armory Street stated he has been dealing with the same issues that have been addressed by the prior speakers for over two years. He stated cable issues don't seem to happen during regular TV and hence felt it could be an overload issue with Spectrum. He stated he has had his cable box replaced four times, Spectrum technicians have been at his house on ladders checking wires, checking telephone calls trying to rectify the situation and end up giving him a new box which does not help fix the problem because the issue happens again. Mr. Collins felt Keene is lacking support from Spectrum; it is as if Keene is inconsequential.

Mr. Chuck Berry of 31 Washington Street stated he works from home. His first issue was trying to get the internet working. The instructions online was not accurate and all customer service could say was to unplug and plug back in. He stated he finally requested a technician be sent to his house and it was indicated to him there could be a charge for a technician to come to his home. When they did arrive, it was realized his apartment was never hooked up. Since then there have been several outages. He stated when his internet goes out and he can't work this becomes a cost to him as he ends up having to work later in the day. He stated he needs his internet to work because he depends on reliable internet to make a living. Mr. Berry felt it was a mistake not to have these calls recorded because when there is an outage and he calls customer service he is not going to remember to write a letter. He felt the statistics would be a lot higher in the failure rate if calls were recorded. Mr. Berry stressed for an individual like him there is a cost for Spectrum internet to be out but Spectrum is getting paid their entire bill.

Mr. Tom Spinks of 34 Woodburn Street stated he has been a Keene resident since 2002. He talked about his internet, which was really slow today. When he called customer service he was asked to unplug the router and plugged it back in, after about 12 seconds Spectrum did a reset on the wireless and the speed test soon after was very high but as soon as he started doing a search the speed was down again. Another call was made to Spectrum and they agreed to send a technician over which required to him to rearrange the equipment so the technician could trouble shoot. Mr. Spinks stated this has been extremely frustrating for him – he stated he probably is speaking for everybody here the level of frustration customers have to endure with Spectrum services. Mr. Spinks went on to ask the difference buffering and streaming and whether there was a plan for Spectrum to connect people with fiber optic.

Mr. Jim Hogancamp at 90 Felt Road began by sharing with the Committee a conversation his wife had with Spectrum on August 4 at 5:25 pm: Spectrum indicated they would reboot and they should have cable back in 20 minutes. At that point, he checked the thermometer the weather was at 81 degrees, small breeze, sky was partly cloudy – hence that would indicate there are no weather issues. Same night 6 pm they still had no cable and had now gone beyond the 20 minutes they were originally told. The same screen message, *unable to tune into this channel if you need further help* with an error code was displayed. He continued that at 7:59 pm, 2.5 hours after the 20 minute promised time, there was still no cable. His wife called Spectrum again and was told they were working on the issue as many others in the area were also having the same issue. At 9:06 pm they got the cable back. Mr. Hogancamp stated he does not care about the 24 hour loss of cable as he doesn't watch TV 24 hours a day, but when he wants to watch TV he would like it to be available as this is what he is paying for. With respect to the financial aspect, they had full service starting on March 7, 2019, at a cost of \$109 per month. That cost has gone up 10 times since that time. As of April of this year their bill is at \$196 – an 85% increase.

Mr. Arnott addressed the committee again and stated with respect to the pixelated situation when he turned on the Spectrum app, it did not pixelate. He felt this was an important point and encouraged the City to hire a cable expert to look into this issue.

Mr. Trudeau reiterated the pixilation issue.

Chair Powers stated it is not their expectation that the Committee will have a complete answer tonight. Spectrum has asked that they be able to come back with some other individuals. He asked the representative present this evening to comment on what has been said.

Mr. John Mahr Director of Government Affairs addressed the Committee for Charter Spectrum and stated he has listened to all the issues raised tonight. He stated they take every customer seriously and want all of their customers to be happy. He stated their V.P. is committed to come to the next meeting on September 8th and address what he is planning to do for the City of Keene to make the necessary improvements. He acknowledged people are frustrated with customer service, which is understandable. He asked that they be put back on the agenda for September 8th. He added he has taken copious notes tonight and will be passing that on to his V.P. who could not make it here tonight.

The Chair explained the way the City Council is able to deal with issues such as this; someone brings an item forward and it is assigned to particular committee. When it comes to this committee there are a number of things that might happen – do more research, act upon it, but the FOP Committee does not make a final decision as they are only one third of the City Council. Hence, the issue would likely go back to the City Council for final adjudication. The Chair continued that this evening the item is going to be put it on more time, which means it will be back on FOP's agenda at a future meeting. Two weeks from this evening the item will be back before the Committee at that meeting if the item needs to be sent to City Council it will be forwarded on to that Body.

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

On 5-0 vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends that this item be put on more time until its next regularly scheduled meeting on September 8 at 6 pm.

2) Comprehensive Housing Needs Analysis - Senior Planner

Community Development Director Jesse Rounds was the next speaker. Mr. Rounds stated staff's request is that the City Manager be authorized to negotiate and execute a contract with Camoin Associates to provide consulting services for a housing needs analysis.

City Manager Elizabeth Dragon stated this evening staff is looking for the Council's authorization so that she may be able to move forward and execute a contract on this very important project. The City is looking to do an analysis of its housing; the types of housing, affordability of housing, gaps in housing stock, so that it can make informed strategies from that data. She noted a couple of years ago there was a study done informally in the Community Development Department. However, this is taking it to a different level. This work will be timed well with the work that Southwest Regional Planning Commission will also be doing.

Councilor Remy asked what the City would receive as a product from this study and asked whether there was a \$20,000 version the City could obtain. The Manager explained this is the second time the City has gone out for proposals for this project. The first was with a budget of 30,000, and got no responses. The City reached out to several consultants to find out why they didn't get any proposals, and the reason was that the cost was not high enough. Hence, the budget needed to be increased. The Manager stated the Committee has two choices; staff could significantly reduce the scope of work but if the City is looking to get this level of information, \$45,000 is required. Mr. Rounds added staff is seeking grant funding to support part of this cost.

Councilor Madison made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Remy.

On 5-0 vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to negotiate and execute a professional services contract with Camoin Associates for consulting services for an amount not to exceed \$45,000.00. In the event that negotiations with the preferred vendor are not successful, the City Manager is authorized to do all things necessary to negotiate and execute a professional services contract with Stantec Consulting Services, Inc. for an amount not to exceed \$45,000.00.

3) Cheshire Rail Trail Phase 3, Construction Engineering Change Order #2 - City Engineer

Civil Engineer Brett Rusnock stated that this request is for a change order for the Construction Engineering Consultant. This firm oversees the work the construction contractor is performing on the project. The project has been progressing well and is nearing completion. The projected end date is Friday, September 2. However, due to a contract time extension request from the contractor, which staff believes to be legitimate and valid, the consultant needs to be offered some extra funding to oversee the work properly.

Chair Powers stated he understands the issues the City is facing trying to get contractors and material, but felt this work has gone on a little bit too long. He stated he has had the opportunity to watch the work two or three times a day. The Chair stated the City has three days to get sidewalks ready before school opens and the contractor does a good job leaning against the truck all day. The Chair stated he was a little concerned the City is going to extend this contract to pay someone to watch them do nothing and the City is not going to have sidewalks for next Wednesday morning when kids are going to school. The Chair stated this is not acceptable because this is hard earned money and there are children who are going to have a hard time getting to school on Wednesday.

Mr. Rusnock asked for little more detail as to what was happening at this site. The Chair stated it is down West Street and down Park Avenue where sidewalks are going to be redone at every intersection and they are all dug up and it is actually a safety issue. The Chair stated the contractor has issues hiring flaggers but felt the individual leaning against the truck could help flag. He indicated he is not telling people how to do their job, but as a citizen and as a taxpayer this does not look good. Mr. Rusnock stated he appreciates the Chair's comments and there is no excuse for a contractor wasting time on a job especially if the contractor is requesting more time. He stated this is an issue he will raise with the contractor and their subcontractor immediately. School is starting and sidewalks are an important feature, and hence the reason for starting the sidewalk re-build program this year. He stated he will raise this issue and make them accountable.

Councilor Remy made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Madison.

On 5-0 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 Change Order with Greenman, Pedersen Inc. for an amount not to exceed \$4,000 (Subject to NHDOT approval). Funding is to be provided by Project Cost Center 75J0004A-300-O-541020.

The Manager stated she has witnessed the engineering department holding contractors responsible. There is a project currently happening behind City Hall – the stairs were not built according to specification and they are being rebuilt right now.

4) Municipal Services Agreement - Keene State College - City Manager

The City Manager addressed this item regarding the Municipal Services Agreement the City has with Keene State College. She stated for a number of years the City has continued the same agreement. Initially the same agreement was continued because the college was going through a lot of restructuring related to their budget and were not prepared to negotiate a new agreement. Covid happened soon after and they continue to have changes. However, at the present time the Manager stated she is comfortable renewing the agreement, because she believes there is pressure to reduce the amount of money they are paying the City, although that has not been raised, it is something that would take a long time to negotiate.

In the meantime, the City is hoping to hold things steady, with the same agreement that has been in place for several years. That agreement provides significant payments to the City mostly for fire safety services as negotiated in the agreement (approximately \$497,000 for life safety services) and \$136,000 for a police officer that is funded by the college and that officer has duties that relate to the relationship and on campus activity; acting as liaison between the college and City.

The City also has the Social Host position, which is a part-time position (50/50 funded by the college and the City) at a cost of approximately \$14,500. In addition to that, the college pays \$10,000 towards prosecution. Lastly, there is an escrow account of just over \$7,000 that is held for any disturbances that might arise in the off-campus neighborhoods the City would have to address.

The Manager stated she and President Melinda Treadwell had many conversations about different things and have formed a great partnership. She added when there is substantial change with the next agreement, she expects there will be more innovative partnerships that they will be able to articulate in the agreement.

Councilor Madison asked whether the college falls under a regular ratepayer for water and sewer services. The Manager answered in the affirmative.

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

On 5-0 vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends that the City Council authorize the City Manager to do all things necessary to execute the Fifth Amendment to the Municipal Services Agreement with Keene State College to extend the term of the agreement for one additional year.

5) Relating to Parking Rates Ordinance O-2022-08

Economic Development Director Med Kopczynski and Parking Services Manager Chelsea North were the next two presenters. Mr. Kopczynski stated the proposed Ordinance before the Committee tonight calls for modest increases with no planned increases beyond meter fees and tickets. Mr. Kopczynski stated the suggested changes are consistent with the City Council goal to diversify revenue and improve fiscal stability, as well as the adopted fiscal policy.

Parking Services tends to revisit fees with some review and if needed, adjustment for some part of the system on a bi-annual basis. The last time the City had conversation about fees it was related to the rental fees for parking structures. Mr. Kopczynski added evaluation of fees on a bi-annual basis allows for the adjustment without greater increases. When fees are reviewed every five years they are much higher than if you are looking at it on a on a regular basis. The need to have balance of fees is to ensure that revenue can match expenses and adopted City policy. Fees are used to preserve the operating system, as well as the maintenance of the downtown and parking infrastructure. Mr. Kopczynski noted with the development of the land development code, downtown has actually expanded which adds to the services being provided.

With that, he turned the presentation over to Chelsea North. Ms. North stated the parking budget is projected to be in a negative balance by FY 24 if the rates stay the same. The last negative balance was in 2020, although each year it becomes more difficult to balance because of the various losses in revenue and increase in costs. Major revenue losses include debt service for TIF Districts and the Courthouse tax payments amounting to about \$370,000. If the parking budget did not pay for downtown services that include maintenance, lighting landscaping, snow removal, etc the cost would have to be passed on to Keene taxpayers. This is contrary to City Council goals of minimizing the burden of the Keene taxpayer leading to an increase in property taxes or suspension of the services.

Ms. North indicated regular evaluation of fees is in line with City Council fiscal policy in making rate increases predictable and manageable, limiting sharp jumps in rates. Sharp increases are the result of not regularly evaluating rates on a consistent schedule. She further stated operational and material expenses are increasing due to rapidly rising costs. Expanded downtown core district and downtown growth district, means there is more area to upkeep, which may result in some work not being completed because of limited resources and personnel.

The addition of expenses such as replacement and maintenance of EV Chargers, also influences increased operating costs and raising ticket fees has been part of the strategic plan written in 2021. Fees and rates have not been increased in nearly four years, and even then, the amount was nominal. Ms. North stated City Council historically has asked staff to show what other communities charge for fees. Other New Hampshire cities and towns have long exceeded the amount that Keene charges for parking. As stated in the strategic parking plan, parking services is routinely evaluating the parking system to determine what operational direction and parking demand is needed, and how it is used. Also included in the strategic parking plan is the further expansion of pay stations, which allow for the use of credit cards and coins, as traditional meters are no longer available and irreplaceable. She added pay stations have been quite successful in front of City Hall and at the library, and have been recently expanded to other areas on Main Street and Railroad Square, and the City expects that the success will continue to trend that way. The City is also working on adding another mobile app, which will increase the options to pay for parking. These technologies open up far more possibilities and options for system management than a meter-only system. These upgraded technologies allow for white listing further allowing the possibility to offer a different meter rate to taxpayers which parking services is researching.

Ms. North stated staff's proposal is to increase on street and off street meter rates by .15 cents an hour. Ticket fees are proposed to be raised by \$5. Schedules will also be adjusted to double twice on a 30 day schedule, making the fee schedule consistent and easy to understand. If these proposals are adopted, staff anticipate the rate change would go into effective as of January 1.

Finance Director, Merri Howe was the next speaker. Ms. Howe stated she would like to briefly review the finances of the parking fund. So with future projects coming down the pike with the parking garage and bond funding, it is necessary to have a strong fund balance retained earnings in order to move it forward to get the best rate.

Ms. Howe stated now the fund balance for the start of this fiscal year is approximately \$395,000. Cash funded CIP projects over the next seven years is anticipated to be \$1,050,000, leaving a fund balance shortfall if you break even of \$655,000. In order not to be in the negative, the income needs to be raised each year to nearly \$100,000. The City has been averaging between \$40,000 and \$60,000 a year in profit on good years. These numbers do not account for any increase in debt service or operations.

Ms. Howe stated in order to support moving forward the numbers staff has put forward in their projections of the anticipated increases in the meter fees will help support the funding necessary over the next seven years to meet the City's needs and plans in the CIP.

Chair Powers asked whether the parking fund does not have any debt service right now. Ms. Howe stated there is a small debt service for Norway Avenue and 93rd Street but the City will be issuing another bond in a couple of years for the design - \$555,000 bond for FY23 as well for the repair and maintenance of the decks.

Councilor Remy asked what is the actual dollar impact of this .15 cents increase and the \$5 ticket fees. Ms. North stated she did not have that information tonight but will provide it to the Committee at its next meeting.

Councilor Remy stated he is very hesitant especially on the fee side, because there are areas of town where there are no meters and no stations. As a result, drivers need to know how to use the app and added he has paid nearly six tickets for drivers as they didn't know what to do and how to pay the meters. Also, because the Park Mobile fees are very high and there is still a lot of confusion as to how to use these devices especially in areas with no stations. He stated he appreciates the City using the stations in certain areas, and agreed they work well but wasn't sure how the City was defining success of them rolling out. He stated he wasn't sure about the customer feedback side as he gets mixed feedback from people.

Councilor Chadbourne felt the proposed increases are reasonable but would like to know the number that would bring it close to fixing the deficit. With reference to changing the times; currently it is 8 am to 5 pm and changing that to Monday through Saturday 10 am to 7 pm, she felt that was not a bad idea at all because it is so busy at night, when people are downtown and enjoying dinner out etc., but could see this as being potentially confusing for people. Mr. Kopczynski stated staff recognized the changing landscape of downtown and are in constant communication with downtown businesses and they are receptive to pay stations. He stated they also talk to people and do the best they can to keep everyone well informed. He indicated Keene downtown has changed and the changes being proposed are to keep up with those changes. He added staff is also looking at the confusion that could occur with change to hours. He stated he is also looking at how the parking officers are going to handle being out after dark. Mr. Kopczynski added Main Street hours need to be changed if we want to maintain flow. He stated he doesn't have a clear answer how these changes are going to be handled.

Councilor Lake felt it was important to address the rate issue in front of the Committee and would like to address the pay station issue at a different time. He felt the rates being proposed were reasonable.

The Manager indicated the difference in the meter budget would be \$62,000 per year. That is changing from 85 cents an hour to a dollar an hour. The difference in the lot budget is \$35,000 a year. This would result in \$97,000 of increase in revenue.

Councilor Remy clarified this would pay for the shortfall. The Manager agreed it would but it would not take away from the need to continually adjust rates, because the operational budget will continue. The gap staff is trying to meet right now is to make sure there is a model that will fund capital projects into the future, but the cost of doing business is not going to decrease. Hence, staff felt looking at some incremental changes is a good suggestion, because it would prevent having to make these larger adjustments later.

Councilor Remy stated is supportive of the meter rate increases and the reason he bring up things like how the pay stations are working is that there are people getting tickets right now that just don't realize how it works and get frustrated with it. He referred to the area near Brew Bakers where there is no location to pay and is it only pay by app.

Chair Powers felt there is nothing more emotional than a parking ticket. It is a tough discussion for the Committee. Part of the reason the City is almost in a deficit situation is because it neglected maintenance for too many years for the purpose of saving money and some past Councils were hesitant to raise rates. However, he felt we are in a different world and something needs to be done as the City is going to be facing a lot of expenses due to cost of doing business. He stated the .15 cents doesn't seem like a lot to him and it is a fact the old meters are now gone. He felt .15 cents was not enough.

The Manager stated she agrees with Councilor Remy in that the change in the meter rates and the lot rates are definitely needed to offset the deficit, which the City will be facing in terms of how much we are funding in the capital plan from deferred maintenance. She added parking tickets are really meant to change behavior they are not a revenue generator and felt the parking ticket fee could be looked at separately in the future.

Ms. North stated people who are from bigger cities actually think that \$10 a day for parking and getting a ticket is a great deal which people are taking advantage of. With the \$15 ticket increase the late fee schedule has not been increased it is being kept where it is. Ms. North stated they have had a lot of success with the pay stations as they open up a lot of options for people who do not want to use the apps as they allow credit cards. The location on Emerald Street Councilor Remy was referring to, the City did not have a choice to put meters back as they were stolen. The meters, cannot be replaced and this is the situation the City currently is in right now. She stated staff is aware this area is not suitable for pay by app only, but the City's hands are a little bit tied in that area.

Mr. Kopczyński stated the parking office regularly forgives tickets and provides help to learn the new system and asked Councilor Remy to send individuals to the parking office rather than pay the tickets.

Councilor Chadbourne felt Park Mobile was a more expensive app and asked whether there were any other options. Mr. Kopczynski there are other that have different cost options and are more reasonable which staff is looking into. The new app doesn't collect the fee until someone is ready to pay for the time which is not the same with Park Mobile. It is about the same cost structure. The City is going to continue to add more apps as is being done with other bigger cities.

Councilor Chadbourne felt these increases were reasonable, even the ticket prices. She added the last increase caused a lot of pushback from the public, but she hasn't heard anything this time. She indicated she heard staff say this proposal will help the City reach its current goal but staff had suggested an increase on an annual basis and asked whether staff will come back with those proposals. The Manager stated what staff will be looking at is a change in the fiscal policy that talks about bi-annual adjustments to the rates; something on a more regular basis. However, there is work to be done on that issue – a more automated effort.

The Manager asked Ms. North if someone get a ticket is that the only one they get for the rest of the day. Ms. North stated there is always the expired meter or nonpayment of the meter and also the overtime which could potentially lead to two or more tickets. She added even those, she has heard people say \$20 was just fine as long as they can park exactly where they want to and not have to move.

Councilor Remy felt with that scenario, the City is actually making more than they would off the meters from a budgetary perspective. The Chair felt that scenario ties up space. Mr. Kopczynski stated this is why Portsmouth is experimenting with demand parking; the longer you stay the higher the ticket price goes up.

Chair Powers noted the rest of the Council does not have the same information the Finance Committee was presented with today and asked if the rest of the Council say they wanted meters back it would then have to be a new type of meter. Mr. Kopczynski stated pay stations are technically multi-meters. The way technology is progressing pay stations are likely to disappear but probably not for another 10 to 15 years. He stated it is the intention in the downtown, where it makes sense, because it is not suitable for every place to replace the meters with pay stations. There will be an opportunity to pay on two apps and the possibility to use a pay station - to pay with a credit card, coins, prepaid card etc. There are some areas that will only have meters. When a meter is replaced with pay stations, the City will potentially have meters in stock and those meters can be kept in stock until the technology catches up entirely. This concluded the discussion on this item.

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

On 5-0 vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends the adoption of Ordinance O-2022-08.

6) Relating to Water and Sewer Utility Charges Ordinance O-2022-10

Councilor Madison made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Remy.

On 5-0 vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends putting this item on more time.

There being no further business, Chair Powers adjourned the meeting at 7:28 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Krishni Pahl, Minute Taker

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