



**LACONIA CITY COUNCIL MEETING
MARCH 25, 2013
CITY HALL – CONFERENCE ROOM 200A
7:00 P.M.**

CALL TO ORDER:

Mayor Michael Seymour called the meeting to order at the above date and time.

SALUTE TO THE FLAG:

Councilor Brenda Baer led the Salute to the Flag.

ROLL CALL:

City Clerk Reynolds called the roll with the following Councilors present: Councilor Doyle, Lahey, Baer, Hamel and Bolduc. Also present City Manager Scott Myers and Finance Director Donna Woodaman.

Councilor Lipman was excused.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS:

- Regular Minutes of March 11, 2013

*Councilor Bolduc moved to approve the regular meeting minutes of March 11, 2013. Seconded by Councilor Hamel. **Motion passed unanimously.***

CONSENT AND ACTION CALENDAR:

1. Temporary Traffic Order 2013-03, Community Blood Drive

*Councilor Hamel moved to approve Temporary Traffic Order 2013-03, Community Blood Drive. Seconded by Councilor Bolduc. **Motion passed unanimously.***

CITIZEN COMMENTS FOR MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA: NONE

INTERVIEWS: NONE

COMMUNICATIONS: NONE

PUBLIC HEARING: NONE

PRESENTATIONS:

1. Consultants Report on Fire Department – Municipal Resource, Inc.

City Manager Myers explained that the study that was conducted was to determine if resources being allocated to the Fire Department could be used in a more efficient way when looking at various areas. A copy of the final report has been provided to the Council and is available on the City's website in the "Current Reports" section.

Donald Bliss and Brian Duggan reviewed a prepared presentation with the Council (see Attachment #1).

Councilor Lahey asked for the average sick leave taken per year per firefighter. Mr. Duggan replied that the average is four (4) shifts per year.

Councilor Lahey asked if the need for additional firefighters is related more to the firefighting or ambulance side of operations. Mr. Duggan replied that the majority of calls are medical related but that is typical with the national average being 80% medical calls and 20% fire calls. What was found in the City that was unique was that the fire call volume is excessive and equivalent to cities three times the size of Laconia. This means that the high incident events happen more in the City and results in the need to have a second ambulance in place and having the ability to field two (2) fire suppression units to meet the national standards.

Councilor Hamel commented that he had one question; with the funds that are given to the Fire Department and their staffing level, are they operating the best they can? After reading the report and listening to the presentation Councilor Hamel did not feel this question was answered. When the question was asked if hiring four (4) additional firefighters would decrease overtime the response was that it may but not by much and that would not be beneficial financially. In the report given this evening the indication is that by hiring four(4) additional firefighters overtime costs could be reduced substantially, almost in half, and if that had been explained when the SAFER grant was presented it would have been received more favorably by the Council.

Councilor Hamel also noted that the Council has asked several times about hire floaters and has been told that it was not a feasible solution, but the report is recommending do it. This is confusing to the Council because the questions have been asked to the people working in the Department and they say it cannot be done but the report is conflicting. Additionally, if there are four (4) shifts per firefighter of sick time taken the City is paying four (4) months per year in straight overtime.

Mr. Bliss replied that the department is being efficiently run and the overtime is at an acceptable level based on the observations made.

Regarding the SAFER grant being used to offset overtime, Mr. Bliss explained that the SAFER grant is not intended or permitted to be used with a primary goal of offsetting overtime; the purpose of the grant is to provide additional personnel on the apparatus on the street fighting fires. This explains why there is a discrepancy in the recommendations from the Fire Chief and the consultants because the consultants are aiming at reducing overtime and the Fire Chief is aiming to increase coverage with the SAFER grant.

Councilor Lahey confirmed that if four (4) firefighters are added and the staffing level remains at eight (8) on shift overtime will still be reduced. Mr. Bliss confirmed this is correct.

Mr. Duggan stated that each option presented needs to be looked at in the form of level of services provided. There will be an immediate operational cost but in the long term these plans would increase the service level and there is a benefit to any of the options.

Councilor Hamel stated that he feels the overtime is not going to change and could actually go up. Citing a statement made in the report, Councilor Hamel expressed that in today's economy the Council needs to work with what they have.

Mr. Bliss replied that one of the longer term goals of the community is to reduce the fire risk and this can be done in a number of ways. By continuing to have good code enforcement and inspection procedures, educating property owners to encourage sprinkler and fire suppression systems in their buildings, include the representatives from the Fire Department and Code Enforcement in the planning review process, and an aggressive public education process the City can address the fire risk problems that are existing.

Councilor Bolduc asked if the Fire Department is currently conducting the inspections and code reviews because for many years it has been the impression that they gave up on this aspect and it wasn't being done. Every year someone should be inspecting the buildings and Councilor Bolduc has had conversations with some fire fighters and they can't tell him why they are not conducting the inspections. Mr. Bliss replied that one of the recommendations is to increase the on-duty fire inspection program as well as the Pre-Fire Planning Program; currently there are staff members to do this but they are quite busy. Mayor Seymour asked for confirmation that stating that nothing is happening would be inaccurate. Mr. Bliss confirmed that it was not highlighted in this evening's presentation because there is a good prevention bureau that is doing a very good job and they are efficient.

City Manager Myers requested follow up on the float positions and why hiring four (4) additional fire fighters would be a recommendation.

Mr. Duggan replied that the need for an additional person is needed on all platoon shifts because right now the department is working with person for person replacement. With hiring a float to cover these shifts they will always be needed on another shift and it would not decrease the overtime effectively; by evenly adding to each shift it would decrease the need to additional overtime when someone is off shift because they would operate with the necessary eight (8) person shift and not fill the ninth slot which will allow for the majority of the savings with overtime.

Councilor Lahey asked if the float that would be replacing the off shift fire fighter would be getting paid straight time. Mr. Duggan confirmed.

Mayor Seymour thanked Mr. Bliss and Mr. Duggan for their thorough report and presentation for the Council.

Councilor Hamel asked for clarification of how hiring four (4) additional fire fighters would save the City money. Mr. Duggan explained that by not filling vacancies with fire fighters that would be paid overtime there would be a redistribution of \$87,000 from LRGH funds and a reduction in overtime expenses by approximately \$196,000 which would leave a total annual cost for the additional staff at approximately \$26,000. City Manager Myers explained that there would be nine (9) scheduled staff for every shift and when someone is out they would not fill the position and operate with eight (8) on duty rather than filling it with someone that is being paid overtime. Currently we are only staffed with eight (8) and when someone is out the vacancy is filled with someone being paid at the overtime rate. This would be a policy decision that would need to be implemented.

Councilor Hamel asked if this scenario would be ideal. Mr. Bliss replied that with observations made the department would be operating with eight (8) on shift more often than not and this would affect the current service levels because there would be at least one vacancy and at times when there are nine (9)

fire fighters on duty would be the exception. The benefit would be the savings in overtime. Councilor Hamel replied that he feels they would still replace the missing person and have nine (9) on shift and the policy would not be followed. Mr. Bliss corrected that the policy would be implemented that working with eight (8) on duty would be the minimum and only when two (2) members of the shift were out would someone be called in to staff to eight (8).

Mr. Duggan commented that they have given three (3) options for the City to consider and they have all been designed to reduce the need to overtime expenses and put policies in place. The Council now needs to make the decision to choose an option and implement it and realize a savings in overtime or keep operations as they are. The service level in the community and economic factors will need to be looked at and incrementally look at the needs of the community and department and matching them.

Mayor Seymour advised that a more in depth discussion is needed among the Council but it will be done after there has been enough time for everyone to finish the report and when all Councilors are present to have the discussion.

2. Sand Migration Study – Kevin Dunleavy, Director of Parks & Recreation

Director Dunleavy explained that he is presenting the findings of Phase 1 of the study. Weirs Beach has long been susceptible to erosion and it is at a point now where the erosion is causing a significant depletion of the beach area but is also causing problems in the channel with deposition of sand occurring south of the channel. The City investigated the problem and reached out to NH DES to get information on solutions to the problem. It was encouraging to have Weirs Beach recognized as an important economic resource for the City, State and region and having beach improvements considered as long as background information was done to come to a long lasting solution. The Woods Hole Group was selected as the consultant for Phase 1 because of their expertise. Moving forward it would be anticipated to begin Phase 2, which involves an intensive study into the alternative solutions to the erosion that is occurring.

Director Dunleavy reviewed a prepared presentation with the Council (see Attachment #2).

Councilor Baer asked if the funding of Phase 2 has been incorporated in the proposed budget. Director Dunleavy replied that it is not.

Councilor Hamel asked if during the study they looked at the possibility of the Mt. Washington boat causing current that would move the sand. Director Dunleavy replied that the majority of the movement of sand is caused by the wind force and the effect of the Mt. Washington is an insignificant amount.

Councilor Bolduc asked why sand doesn't pile at the beach if the wind is causing it to migrate. Director Dunleavy replied that there isn't a structure in place to stop the movement of the sand which is causing the problem.

Councilor Hamel asked if sand fencing would require permits from the State. Director Dunleavy replied that if that is an option that is pursued he would need to look into it.

Councilor Hamel asked if the fencing would be along the channel or in it. Director Dunleavy replied that he feels it would need to be along the channel because of the use of the beach.

Councilor Lahey stated that it is interesting when the facts are gathered because many times the City heard the beach was eroding because of the high powered boats and watercraft in the area and the largest impact is wind.

Councilor Hamel asked what manual backpassing is. Director Dunleavy replied that this is taking sand from one part of the beach and relocating it to another.

Mayor Seymour asked what is stopping Phase 2 from happening at this point. Director Dunleavy replied that it is funding.

Councilor Hamel asked if the State is in favor of this project. Director Dunleavy replied that they are in favor of getting the data from Phase 1 and being an integral part of Phase 2 at which time they will assist and provide direction.

Councilor Hamel asked for the cost of Phase 2. Director Dunleavy replied that it would be approximately \$20,000 and would include engineering.

Councilor Doyle commented that the funding from Phase 1 came out of a fund dedicated for these projects that is funded from parking fees at the Endicott Rock Park parking lot. Director Dunleavy confirmed this is correct. Finance Director Woodaman added that the fund has approximately \$48,000 in the account and there will be approximately \$8,000 added for fiscal year 2013.

Director Dunleavy noted that the full report from the Sand Migration Study is available on the City website.

3. City Manager's Proposed Budget – City Manager Myers

City Manager Myers and Ed Emmond, Laconia School District Business Administrator, reviewed prepared presentations with the Council (see Attachment #3).

Department presentations will be scheduled this evening.

MAYOR'S REPORT:

Mayor Seymour mentioned that at the last Council meeting it was discussed postponing the recycling decision until the meeting of April 8. Councilor Hamel will not be available at this meeting and it would be the request that the decision be deferred to the April 22 meeting. Councilor Doyle advised that she will not be in attendance at the April 22 meeting. Mayor Seymour stated that a special meeting will need to be scheduled to discuss this because it is important to have every Councilor in attendance.

Mayor Seymour noted the retirement of Kathleen Yale from the Laconia Police Department after over 20 years of service. Ms. Yale was thanked for her years of service for the City.

The City Wide Chess Tournament was held at Laconia High School on March 15 and it was a great turnout for the participants and their families. Mayor Seymour thanked Ed Emmond and Janet Brough for their assistance with the event.

Lastly, Mayor Seymour acknowledged Laconia Airport Authority member Russ Dumais who has served on the agency for over 20 years and thanked Mr. Dumais for his time of service.

CITIZEN REQUESTS TO COMMENT ON CURRENT AGENDA ITEMS: **NONE**

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

1. FINANCE: (Lipman, Hamel, Baer)

- a) WOW Trail Fund
- b) Special Item Budget Requests Procedural Review
- c) Huot Center

No report on any item in committee

2. PUBLIC SAFETY: (Baer, Doyle, Lahey)

- a) Fair St./Court St. traffic problems and accidents

No report on any item in committee

3. GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ORDINANCES: (Doyle, Bolduc, Lahey)

- a) Energy Committee
- b) Vending and Licensing Fees
- c) Chapt. 119, Building Construction regarding signed architectural plans for residential units

No report on any item in committee

4. PUBLIC WORKS: (Bolduc, Baer, Lahey)

- a) Ordinance Amending Chapter 221, Vehicles and Traffic/Parking on Sublawns
- b) Proposed ordinance regarding vehicles over 18,000 lbs. and engines idling between the hours of midnight and 6:00 a.m.
- c) Proposed ordinance regarding large vehicles parked on City streets and sidewalks
- d) Recycling Proposals

No report on any item in committee

5. LAND & BUILDINGS: (Hamel, Lipman ,Bolduc)

- a) Repair & maintenance of City Buildings
- b) Former Laconia Police Department Building

No report on any item in committee

Request for a motion to remove item b) Former Laconia Police Department Building.

*Councilor Hamel moved to remove item b) Former Laconia Police Department Building from the Land & Buildings Committee. Seconded by Councilor Bolduc. **Motion passed unanimously.***

LIAISON REPORTS:

Councilor Baer reported that she attended the Police Commission meeting this month and two items need to be brought the Council's attention. In the proposed budget there is a request to update the phone system at the Police Department. On the day of the meeting there was a problem with the phone system and there were no incoming calls to the Police Department for a period of time. Councilor Baer encouraged the Council to support the upgrade when reviewing budget requests for this year.

The Laconia High School Chemical-Free Prom After Party is looking to raise funds for the event. This event is held with the support of donations and volunteer hours from the members of the Police Department. There are expenses to transport the participants from each location and to provide the entertainment. Councilor Baer would like to see the City support the event with a monetary donation.

*Councilor Baer moved that the City support the Laconia High School Chemical-Free Prom After Party with a donation of \$1,000. Seconded by Councilor Hamel. **Motion passed unanimously.***

Councilor Baer noted that the Police Department is donating over 100 hours of time for the event.

MANAGER'S REPORT:

City Manager Myers reviewed the Recycling Report (see Attachment #4) and Economic Development Report (see Attachment #5).

City Manager Myers requested to reschedule the Airport Appointive Agency meeting that was not held this evening for April 8, 2013 at 5:45 p.m. before the Budget Hearing.

There have been discussions with leadership with neighboring communities on regionalization efforts that can be made to reduce costs for in some areas. Through these conversations there has been a positive outcome and the first project that will be regionalized is the long line striping with the Town of Gilford. By bidding the task together the communities will save because the contractor will be mobilized to do two communities at once.

City Manager Myers also gave scenarios where specialized equipment that is not used in daily operations can be shared among communities, such as graters and pumpers, to lessen the cost. Mayor Seymour added that his experience at the meetings has shown that there is a very forward moving effort and attitude from the communities and it appears that it will have positive results.

Councilor Bolduc commented that the lines on the road come in handy.

*Councilor Bolduc moved to schedule an Airport Appointive Agency meeting for April 8, 2013 at 5:45 p.m. Seconded by Councilor Hamel. **Motion passed unanimously.***

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Request by Laconia Fire Department to Accept Portable Ventilators and Authorize the City Manager to Sign Agreement

*Councilor Doyle moved the City of Laconia agrees that portable ventilators, provided by the State of New Hampshire, acting through its Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health Services for the benefit of the City in emergency situations, be granted directly to Laconia Fire Department to be stored, maintained and deployed as necessary. Seconded by Councilor Lahey. **Motion passed unanimously.***

*Councilor Doyle moved that the City Manager is hereby authorized on behalf of the City of Laconia to approve said agreement with the State to execute any and all documents, agreements, and other instruments; and any amendments, revisions, or modifications thereto, as he may deem necessary, desirable or appropriate. Seconded by Councilor Lahey. **Motion passed unanimously.***

2. Request to Schedule Budget Hearings

Councilor Hamel moved to schedule Budget Hearings as follows:

April 8, 2013: Assessing, Planning/Code/Conservation Commission

April 22, 2013: Water, School, Library

April 29, 2013: Public Works, Fire, Police

May 13, 2013: Recreation & Facilities

May 28, 2013: Finance (Fiscal, Welfare, MIS, Tax, Benefits, Insurance, Debt), Administration (Legal, Capital, Records)

*Seconded by Councilor Lahey. **Motion passed unanimously.***

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1. Second Reading of a Resolution Relative to Authorizing Bonds and Notes of the City for Capital Projects in the Amount of \$1,000,000

*Councilor Lahey moved a second reading of a Resolution Relative to Authorizing Bonds and Notes of the City for Capital Projects in the Amount of \$1,000,000. Seconded by Councilor Bolduc. **Motion passed with four (4) in favor and Councilor Baer opposed.***

2. Main Street Bridge Update

City Manager Myers reiterated that the bids came in higher than expected and because the State Aid Bridge program (SAB) is fiscally constrained, the State could not commit to the 80/20 cost-share of the increased cost of the project. The bottom-line was that the State's share of the bridge project would be \$2.26 million while our share of the bridge project would be in the \$1.5 million dollar range, well above the \$600K-\$800K we were anticipating.

NH Department of Transportation was looking into the possibility of transitioning the bridge project into a Federal program (MOBRR), also administered by NHDOT. Funds would be available in FY 2014, which for the Federal government is October 1, 2013. We received word this week that this is an option for us and the State is committed to providing funding as outlined below.

I am offering up two scenarios for your consideration:

Scenario 1:

- Accept the low bid and award the contract now for construction to begin this spring. The State is capping their contribution at \$2,262,326. We anticipate our share to be approximately \$1.5 million. Any additional charges to the project will be the sole responsibility of Laconia.
- The project would be constructed under the same 4 phases that have been previously outlined. All work would be wrapped up for the winter prior to Thanksgiving and phase 4 would most likely occur in the spring of 2014.

Scenario 2:

- Accept the State's offer to move the bridge project into the MOBRR program. By moving to MOBRR, the State will be able to increase its participation by \$800,000. Under this scenario of

postponing construction by 1 year, the State has inflated the construction cost by 10% so that estimates are conservative and realistic.

- We would re-bid this project late this year and construction would begin on the same calendar schedule as is currently proposed, but delayed 1 year and would begin in spring 2014.
- The State is capping their contribution at \$3,062,326. We anticipate our share to be \$1.06 million. Any additional charges to the project will be the sole responsibility of Laconia.

If we calculate the cost of our share of the project over a 20 year period, we estimate Scenario 2 to be \$33,000 less on an annual basis, or \$660,000 over the life of the bond.

In our correspondence with the NHDOT, they state “The Department is committed to provide the funding detailed in the letters to the City for SAB and MOBRR”.

City Manager Myers encouraged the Council that a decision needs to be made this evening because if the first scenario is chosen the bid would need to be awarded no later than April 7. It was also noted that the bridge does not have any structural issues that would be unsafe and minimal maintenance could be done to the bridge if the second option is chosen.

Councilor Baer expressed concerns with the State making a commitment for funds that the City has not applied for yet. Also, the State budget is not looking healthy and it would be easy for the State to disburse the committed funds elsewhere. City Manager Myers replied that he feels comfortable with the commitment from the State and that if he has any concern he would recommend moving forward with the money that is had.

Councilor Baer noted that a large amount of money has already been spent to begin the project in a few weeks. City Manager Myers replied that a majority of the work done remains intact and will not need to be done again if the project is delayed.

Councilor Hamel asked if the City would be receiving 80% of the \$800,000. City Manager Myers explained that in the second option the commitment would be \$800,000 more than with the first option.

Councilor Hamel asked if the \$660,000 is realized savings to the City. City Manager Myers replied that this is the savings over the lifetime of the bond.

Councilor Hamel asked to hear again why the engineering estimate was so far off of the actual bids received. City Manager Myers deferred this question to Bob Durfee from Dubois & King, the engineering firm for the project.

Mr. Durfee explained that with the bridge analysis the estimated cost was \$2.3 million but the four lowest bids were \$800,000 higher. The NH DOT cost estimating data was used to estimate the cost of the bridge and there were areas that were not estimated correctly. Painting of the bridge was the largest discrepancy of approximately \$400,000, as well as the bridge railing which is a special fabrication. Additionally, the complexity of the bridge has also increased the cost because it is a unique layout.

Councilor Hamel commented that he thought the steel was sufficient on the bridge. Mr. Durfee replied that the center decking, or Main Street portion, does need to be replaced.

Councilor Hamel asking if a standard railing can be used rather than the ornamental railing that was bid. Mr. Durfee replied that the term ornamental refers to the layout rather than the material. Bump outs

and platforms have been included in the design and there is an increased cost to having a rail that will need to manipulate around corners. Councilor Hamel commented that people have been fishing there for 40 years without the bump outs and we should be able to do without them. Mr. Durfee replied that it could be removed prior to rebidding.

Mayor Seymour asked how much the difference would be realistically. Mr. Durfee replied that there is nothing that can be cut out to make up the \$800,000 and that the bids are accurate.

Councilor Hamel asked if any cement structures need to be removed. Mr. Durfee replied that this is one area that could be removed although it is failing and represents a hazard to the canoeists using the water. Mayor Seymour asked if the State would be looking for this for a safety reason. Mr. Durfee replied that he doesn't feel it would be.

Councilor Hamel stated that this would eliminate the need for a coffer dam and would save on cost. Mr. Durfee replied that he never recommended a coffer dam but used a curtain that would be used in its place; the contractors did not want to use the curtain approach in their bids.

Councilor Hamel asked why the painting cost was so high on the bids. Mr. Durfee replied that all of the existing and new steel would need to be painted in sections as they are completed and the cost is directly related to the access that is needed. The paint subcontractor will need to mobilize and demobilize four (4) times to pain the bridge.

Councilor Hamel asked if the second option is used will it all need to go out to bid. City Manager Myers replied that it would but there has been a learning with the first bids and feedback can be used to revise the bid specifications.

Councilor Hamel asked if the 10% increase being estimated by the State is a realistic increase. City Manager Myers replied that they are looking at the raw materials and federal wage laws and it appears the increase is justified.

*Councilor Hamel moved to accept the State's offer to move the bridge project into the MOBRR program. Seconded by Councilor Lahey. **Motion passed with four (4) in favor and Councilor Baer opposed.***

3. Milfoil Treatment Funding Request
4. WOW Trail
5. Master Plan
6. EPA Update
7. Sewer & Water Master Plan
8. Single Stream Recycling/Concord Co-Op/Solid Waste Disposal Cost Reduction
9. Strategic Planning/Goal Setting

NOMINATIONS, APPOINTMENTS & ELECTIONS: NONE

COUNCIL COMMENTS:

Councilor Doyle thanked the Putnam Fund for the wonderful performance of Ronan Tynan this past week. It was a wonderful show.

Councilor Hamel gave kudos to the Fire Department for the great job they did with last evening's fire on the corner of Gilford Avenue and Morrill Street. Their response resulted in a much better turnout than could have been.

NON - PUBLIC SESSION: NONE

ADJOURNMENT:

*Councilor Bolduc moved to adjourn at 9:25 p.m. Seconded by Councilor Hamel. **Motion passed unanimously.***

Respectfully Submitted:

Mary A. Reynolds
City Clerk