



**LACONIA CITY COUNCIL
BUDGET PRESENTATIONS
APRIL 26, 2010
CITY HALL – CONFERENCE ROOM 200A
6:00 P.M.**

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Michael Seymour called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

Councilors Knytych, Lahey, Baer, Hamel, and Bolduc were in attendance. Also present City Manager Eileen Cabanel and Finance Director Pam Reynolds.

PUBLIC WORKS

Director Paul Moynihan presented the proposed budget in four sections; Operations, Sanitary Sewer Fund, Solid Waste and the Internal Service fund. Each Councilor was given a summary of the key responsibilities of each division of the department.

Referencing page 11 of the 2010/2011 proposed budget, Director Moynihan reviewed the Capital Outlay requests, including street repairs, fence and guardrail replacement, and vehicle replacement. Several miles of road have been repaired in the last several years, and the contract with Busby Construction has been continued into the next fiscal year allowing for a schedule of repairs to be compiled. The fence and guardrail work will primarily be on country roads, with Lakeport being done in the past few years. Vehicle replacements are requested from a list that covers a three year timeframe.

Moving on to page 16, Director Moynihan reviewed the Capital Outlay to be Bonded item, which is the Endicott Water Line at a cost of \$315,000. This is required because of the Gatehouse Condominiums, which abuts the old landfill, has dioxin present in the water source. The State of New Hampshire Department of Transportation will also need to issue a permit due to 750 feet of digging that will be necessary on Route 11B.

City Manager Cabanel noted that nothing has changed with the condition of the wells over the last year, however the State of New Hampshire has changed the acceptable level of dioxin therefore the pipe is necessary.

The proposed Operating Budget was reviewed with no questions from the Council.

Director Moynihan continued by reviewing the proposed Solid Waste Budget. As the Council is aware, the current collection contract with Waste Management, Inc. will terminate and a one year contract, with the option for extension, with Bestway Disposal will begin. The combined Transfer Station, Concord Cooperative, Recycling Contract and Collection contract items make up 80% of the total Solid Waste Budget. There has been the intention of additional savings should a single stream recycling facility be opened by the Concord Cooperative. The plans were in place for this to happen, but the Cooperative was forced to delay the plans due to a decline in the recycling market.

Continuing to the Sanitary Sewer Fund, Director Moynihan explained the Winnepesaukee River Basin costs, which makes up 68% of the proposed Budget. Coming in the next several years, major system upgrades will be necessary with an estimated cost of \$30-40 million shared among the municipalities within the system. The City contributes 49% of the overall costs to maintain the Basin each year.

Director Moynihan reviewed the Sanitary Sewer Fund Capital Outlay, which contains \$55,000 for gravity sewer mains.

The Internal Service Fund contributes the salaries for three mechanics, which is outlined on page 155.

Reviewing Motorcycle Week Budget, Director Moynihan explained the responsibilities of the Public Works Department throughout the week.

Councilor Hamel asked for a status update on the oil tanks stored at the New England yard. Director Moynihan reported that the tanks have been removed.

A brief discussion was held regarding the Weirs Boardwalk, as well as the Anthony Drive project.

Councilor Baer requested a list of the streets projected to be repairs this year. The City Manager has a list and will share it with the Councilors.

Dorothy Duffy, a resident of Whipple Ave, expressed her concerns with the parking on Pleasant Street.

LIBRARY

Bob Selig, Chairman of the Library Board of Trustees, and Randy Brough, Executive Director of the Laconia Public Library, addressed the Council.

Chairman Selig gave the Council some highlights and statistics from the last year.

Chairman Selig presented the Council with a revised budget, which is \$20,000 lower than the original proposed budget, at the request of the City Manager. The Library Board of Trustees has proposed the closure of the Goss Reading Room in Lakeport to accommodate the revised budget. This is being proposed based on the statistics and use of the Goss Reading Room for the first 10 months of the fiscal year, in contrast to the funds needed to sustain the facility each year.

Councilor Bolduc asked what the total cost is to keep the Goss Reading Room open. Chairman Selig response was approximately \$20,000, breaking down the cost as follows:

- Librarian \$8,000
 - Telephone \$300
 - Internet \$779
 - Fuel \$2,740
 - Electricity \$1,090
 - Sewer \$275
 - Maint. \$1,000
 - Cleaning \$1,400
 - Periodical \$989
 - Books \$3,500
- Total = \$20,073**

Councilor Bolduc expressed his displeasure with the proposal of closing the Goss Reading Room. It was given to the City as a gift, and the Library Board of Trustees will need to look elsewhere to come up with the cuts. Chairman Selig countered that the Laconia Public Library is used a significant amount more than the Goss Reading Room; no one is using the Reading Room. Councilor Bolduc and Chairman Selig carried on discussion regarding the use of the Goss Reading Room and some scenarios that may contribute to the lack of use, such as lack of parking.

Mayor Seymour stated that he doesn't see the desire for anyone in the City to close the Goss Reading Room, but the usage of the facility is not justified, and it is not a profitable facility. There could be \$20,000 in adjustments elsewhere in the proposed budget, but it is entrusted in the Library Board of Trustees to make that decision.

Councilor Hamel expressed that the Goss Reading Room cannot be looked at as a business decision; it is used to service the community. Everyone wishes it was used more, but it is viable for the area, specifically for Elm Street School.

Councilor Lahey asked who makes the decision to keep the Goss Reading Room open. Chairman Selig stated that if the Council were to order the Goss Reading Room to stay open, they would fund it. Chairman Selig further stated that if the funds were taken out of the Operating Budget of the Public Library it would be taking away from the people who use the Library at the convenience of a few. The history of how the Goss Reading Room was established was also given by Chairman Selig.

Councilor Baer noted that \$20,000 isn't a large item to remove from the budget. When the EPA was here to discuss the Master Plan, it was identified that the City needed its three districts consisting of the Weirs, Lakeport and Downtown. There are only two buildings in Lakeport that belong to the City, the Lakeport Fire Station and the Goss Reading Room, and it is important to keep this historical building open to the community.

Councilor Hamel asked if the City Manager requested the reduction in the proposed budget was due to projected cuts from the State of New Hampshire. City Manager Cabanel confirmed.

Councilor Knytych expressed that he does not want to see the building closed, acknowledging that the Trustees are more in touch with the budget and have come with this suggestion. He explained to Chairman Selig that his understanding from the other Councilors is that they would like to see the Trustees take another look at the proposed budget and see if they can make the cuts elsewhere to keep the facility open.

City Manager Cabanel questioned the salary of the person who currently works at the Goss Reading Room and if her employment with the City would continue. Chairman Selig confirmed that she would continue to work for the City, at the Laconia Public Library on a limited basis. Director Brough explained the hours to be worked by this particular employee. City Manager Cabanel also encouraged the Library Board of Trustees to take another look at the way the Goss Reading Room is being used, and possibly consider changing the use.

Councilor Bolduc was inclined to make a motion pursuant to this matter, but it was noted to wait until the regular Council Meeting for that process.

City Manager Cabanel explained that she has requested funding cuts from various departments and she would be willing to try and find half of the requested cuts to keep the Goss Reading Room open, with the Board of Trustees finding the remaining half.

Councilor Knytych agreed with the compromise.

Councilor Lahey noted that the Trustees are appointed and entrusted with the responsibility of proposing the budget for the Laconia Public Library and Goss Reading Room, and if we would like to keep it open and it means enough to the public to keep it open, the Council should fund it.

Councilor Hamel expressed that he would like to see the usage of the library increase, and it would be a wise idea to look for ways to advertise the Goss Reading Room as a resource.

Chariman Selig was thanked for his presentation.

Dorothy Duffy made the suggestion to establish a "Friends of the Goss Reading Room" to help encourage the use of the reading room.

A True Record Attest:

Mary A. Cote
City Clerk