

# CITY OF LACONIA - CITY COUNCIL BUDGET MEETING

June 29, 2020

7:00 P.M.

6/29/2020 - Minutes

## 1. CALL TO ORDER

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

As Mayor of the Laconia City Council, due to the COVID-19/Coronavirus crisis and in accordance with Governor Sununu's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, this Board is authorized to meet electronically.

Please note that there is no physical location to observe and listen to the meeting, which was authorized pursuant to the Governor's Emergency Order. However, in accordance with the Emergency Order, this is to confirm that we are:

a) Providing public access to the meeting by telephone, with additional access possibilities by video or other electronic means;

We are utilizing the Zoom platform for this electronic meeting. All Council Members have the ability to communicate during this meeting through the Zoom platform, and the public has access to watch the live YouTube video at <https://www.youtube.com/laconianh>, listen to this meeting through dialing the following phone # 1-646-558-8656 or participate by the Zoom app: Webinar ID: 879 5197 8295 password 790919

b) Providing public notice of the necessary information for accessing the meeting;

We previously gave notice to the public of how to access the meeting using Zoom, and instructions are provided on the City of Laconia's website at: [www.laconianh.gov](http://www.laconianh.gov).

c) Providing a mechanism for the public to alert the public body during the meeting if there are problems with access;

If anybody has a problem, please call 524-3877 x 249 or email at: [cityclerk@laconianh.gov](mailto:cityclerk@laconianh.gov)

d) Adjourning the meeting if the public is unable to access the meeting.

In the event the public is unable to access the meeting, we will adjourn the meeting and have it rescheduled at that time.

Please note that all votes that are taken during this meeting shall be done by Roll Call vote.

Let's start the meeting by taking a Roll Call attendance. When each member states their presence, also please state whether there is anyone in the room with you during this meeting, which is required under the Right-to-Know law.

## 2. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

Mayor Hosmer lead the Salute to the Flag.

## 3. RECORDING SECRETARY

Deputy City Clerk Stacy Anders

## 4. ROLL CALL

Deputy City Clerk Anders took a roll call vote

Councilor Cheney YES, (physically present)

Councilor Lipman YES, Is anyone in the room with you? NO

Councilor Haynes YES, (physically present)

Councilor Hamel YES, Is anyone in the room with you? NO

Councilor Felch YES, Is anyone in the room with you? NO

Mayor Hosmer noted five (5) Councilors are present and a quorum has been established.

Councilor Bownes was absent

## 5. PRESENTATIONS

### 5.A. Department Budget Presentation

Chair of the Library Trustees John Moriarty presented the Library's Fiscal Year 2021 Budget. Library Director Randy Brough was present as well. J. Moriarty noted that not much has changed fiscally, from last year. They are coming up to the end of their first year with the new streaming service and excited to see what the next year will bring.

### 5.B. Department Budget Presentation

Stephan Hamilton, Whitney Consulting Group presented the 2021 Budget for Assessing. He noted it is a small department but there have been numerous changes over the last year and went over the proposed budget. He went over the highlights of the dept and the structure of the budget. There has been a 4.1% increase on the net taxable value from 2018-2019. The department is beginning the process of trying to understand what the market value estimate will be for to 2020. Preliminary indications are some diminishment in transactions in the early wake of the Covid crisis. Overall, that doesn't appear to have a large impact on median values. There is still a housing shortage for unit. There were less abatements in 2019 than previous years by at least half. Councilor B. Cheney asked about the difference in the sale value and assessment value. S. Hamilton noted that values are looked at one year prior and explained the process and noted the April 1 challenge. The department doesn't have the ability to see the exact condition of the property until after it sells and can't be changed until after April 1. Calculations are set up with vertical equity. Councilor H. Lipman asked if S. Hamilton could speak to the DRA's assessment. S. Hamilton explained the department continues to meet all the standards by the NH assessing standards board. He went over the process. The overall value of the city is about 2.3 billion dollars and properties along the big lake are only a small percentage of the tax base. There was a discussion on the rising and falling of values. S. Hamilton gave a history of New Hampshire's April 1 date.

### 5.C. Department Budget Presentation

Director Amy Lovisek presented the 2021 Fiscal Year budget for the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Facilities budget. Tim Ford was available for questions as well. She went over the PowerPoint and explained this year's costs to the upcoming years estimates. Many projects have been finished or near being finished throughout the city. The Covid crisis has put a damper on summer camps and swim lessons for this season. The grounds maintenance was the largest increase and she went over that line by line. Council members would like A. Lovisek to look at outsourcing for maintenance rather than hiring and compare organic to non-organic soil amendments for the parks as to keep them as weed free as possible. Many items are being rolled over for the upcoming budget. City Manager S. Myers explained what funds have been used for recently. Councilor B. Hamel believes the department is underfunded and would like to see more grass than weeds in the parks. There is a lot of work to be done around the city and commended A. Lovisek and her crew on a great job.

### 5.D. Department Budget Presentation

Director Dean Trefethen presented the 2021 Fiscal Year Planning, Code, and Conservation Commission budgets. There are two employees, one from Code and one from Planning, out on furlough leave due to Covid 19. He went over the duties of each employee and the various boards the departments support.

The Conservation Commission recently purchased land on Pickerel Pond and is working on enhancing the property. There was a donation of land off Hilliard Road as well. Councilor H. Lipman asked about the current use money status and Director D. Trefethen said some was used for the

Pickerel Pond property. City Manager S. Myers noted that line item is capped at \$250,000 and currently, there is about \$25,000 left.

Director D. Trefethen noted that one new item, short term lodging, staff is still working with applicants on getting the applications in. There have been over 31 submitted so far and many in the two zones where allowed. Those numbers will continue to go up. The Master Plan chapters will be finalized in the near future. He went over the new zones and briefly discussed how those changes are working.

#### **5.E. Department Budget Presentation**

Director Glenn Smith presented the Finance, IT, and Welfare 2021 Fiscal Year budgets. He explained the department which includes the salary side of IT, as well as Tax Collection, Human Resources and Welfare departments, along with the Finance Department. Director G. Smith went over some future projects. He went over the insurances, as well as claims and various funds of the major departments. Reimbursements are prior to the Covid crisis. He noted there is an increase in IT security and fine tuned welfare guidelines that will save the tax payers some money.

#### **5.F. Department Budget Presentation**

City Manager S. Myers presented the Administration 2021 Fiscal Year budget. He stated the carry-forward funds are being moved and used as to not drain this coming year's budget. He also thanked G. Smith for being on top of reimbursement programs.

City Manager S. Myers went over the employees and duties of the office. He went over the capital budget and explained the general revenues. There was a discussion regarding DPW and construction/repairs and their part in the budget.

City Manager S. Myers went over the Colonial Theater budget and updates.

City Manager S. Myers went over the special items budget and explained the major changes.

City Manager S. Myers went over the general fund revenues and highlighted the business park and the State's two year budget, the highway block grant aka gas tax, motor vehicle permit fees, transfer station, and parking. He discussed the fact that Motorcycle week didn't happen in June and will be on the next year's budget for August.

City Manager S. Myers went over the Pilot for Taylor Home and explained the breakdowns. He explained the new revenue that the City is receiving from the Colonial debt service and went into detail on the bonds.

City Manager S. Myers went over the Clerk's office budget.

With elections coming up, the budget will be broken down by ward after the fact. The outside services for Police may not be needed as the schools will not be in session. Due to the state of emergency he feels the postage line will be more as absentee ballots will be sent out. City Manager S. Myers noted they are actively working on finding poll workers and have reached out to the schools to have students at the polls and get them involved early as the minimum age is 17.

Councilor B. Hamel asked for the status on the Covid reimbursements and G. Smith mentioned that some have come back and some are still in the works.

Motorcycle week was brought up and with the new dates, there is a smaller crowd expected. The current budget is a wash and will have two events in the 2021 fiscal year. Adjustments will be made as things materialize.

City Manager S. Myers highlighted the TIF funds and bond payments. He brought up the possibility

of refinancing some of the City's recent debt. He asked Councilor H. Lipman to have a Finance Committee meeting after the regular meeting on July 13 to review terms of loans and Councilor H. Lipman agreed. He also asked that an item for general budget discussion be added to the July 13 meeting as well. He is hoping to adopt the budget at that meeting. Councilor Lipman asked for a breakdown on carry forward items, reserve accounts and a total for non capital reserve accounts.

## **6. Any other business that may come before the Council**

### **6.A. Request to schedule three (3) public hearings on July 13, 2020 during the regular City Council meeting**

Community Development Block Grant funds are available to municipalities through the NH Community Development Finance Authority. Up to \$500,000 annually is available for economic development projects, up to \$500,000 for public facility and housing projects, and up to \$500,000 for emergency activities. Up to \$12,000 is available per planning study grant. All projects must directly benefit a majority of low and moderate income persons.

1. Motion to schedule a Public Hearing on July 13, 2020 during the regular City Council meeting regarding a proposed application to the Community Development Finance Authority for up to \$500,000 in Community Development Block Grant Housing funds. The CDBG funds will be used for improvements to the Laconia Housing Authority's properties. The project includes 70 - 98 energy efficient and handicap accessible door replacement units with windows, and other housing improvements at Sunrise Towers. Also, a wall renovation between the upper and lower parking lots between Sunrise Towers, 25 Union Ave, and Sunrise House, 423 South Main St., to enhance accessibility for all tenants, especially those with mobility issues, to allow them to access service amenities at both properties. The clients at the properties are of low and moderate income and with disabilities, made by Councilor B. Hamel, Councilor M. Haynes seconded. All voted in favor.

2. Motion to schedule a Public Hearing on July 13, 2020 during the regular City Council meeting regarding the Residential Anti-displacement and Relocation Assistance Plan for this project. If temporary relocation is required, tenants may be moved to a unit on site or to a local hotel. LHA will pay relocation costs. The project will follow the Uniform Relocation Act, made by Councilor A. Felch, Councilor M. Haynes seconded. All voted in favor.

3. Motion to schedule a Public Hearing on July 13, 2020 during the regular City Council meeting regarding the progress on Lakes Region Community Developers renovations at 85-87 Elm St, a four-unit property. A unit needs a complete rehabilitation, and the project includes roofing, siding repairs, and replacement of a fire escape (the project is 70% complete), made by Councilor A. Felch, Councilor M. Haynes seconded. All voted in favor.

## **7. ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to come before the Council and hearing no objection, Mayor Hosmer adjourned the meeting at 9:36 PM.

Respectfully submitted

Stacy Anders, Deputy City Clerk

MINUTES OF THIS MEETING WERE APPROVED BY COUNCIL ON JULY 13, 2020