

MINUTES OF CITY COUNCIL MEETING
FEBRUARY 7, 2011

The meeting was called to order by His Honor, the Mayor, and upon roll call, the following members were found present: Pepin, Watman, Spainhower, McCallion, Messier, Tapscott, Witham, Jarvis and Sprague.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING.

Councilor Tapscott moved to approve the minutes of the Joint City Council/School Board Workshop held on 1/18/11 as recorded. The motion was seconded by Councilor Witham and passed by a vote of 7 yeas, 2 abstentions, Councilors Pepin and Watman abstaining.

Councilor Tapscott moved to approve the minutes of the City Council Meeting held on 1/18/11 as recorded. The motion was seconded by Councilor Witham and passed by a vote of 7 yeas, 2 abstentions, Councilors Pepin and Watman abstaining.

COMMENTS BY VISITORS.

Jeff Francoeur, 26 Rouleau Drive, thanked the Mayor and City Council for the opportunity to address them. He said that recently President Obama made the statement that we will cut all the red tape to allow businesses to get to the work at hand so this country can flourish once again.

Mr. Francoeur said it seems that some of our leaders in Somersworth have taken it upon themselves to create duplication, bureaucracy, and add costs to our landlords and to the City. We have created an invasion of privacy for the tenants, and discrimination against them.

Mr. Francoeur said he can see the City ending up in law suits with civil liberties, Tenant's Protection Act, landlord association, and adult protective services. He advised the City to think long and hard before they pass the proposed housing ordinance.

COMMUNICATIONS.

LETTER FROM SENATOR KELLY AYOTTE.

United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

January 28, 2011

City Councilors
1 Government Way
Somersworth, NH 03878

Dear Councilors:

As I begin my work representing New Hampshire in the United States Senate, I write to open a line of communication with you.

Here in the Granite State, we have a proud tradition of local, state and federal leaders working together to make our communities stronger. That's a practice I want to continue as your Senator.

It's the honor of a lifetime to serve as your voice in Washington. With that privilege I accept the responsibility to deliver quality, efficient, and responsive services.

I know that the best ideas and input come from New Hampshire – not Washington. That's why my door is always open to you. And regardless of the issue you're facing, if you believe I may be able to help in my capacity as a Senator, I want to hear from you.

I have started the process of establishing regional offices in the state. Until those offices open and I am assigned permanent office space on Capitol Hill, I will be serving the people of New Hampshire from the following office locations:

U.S. Senator Kelly A. Ayotte
41 Hooksett Road, Unit 2
Manchester, NH 03104
(603) 622-7979

Hours: Monday and Tuesday, 8:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.; Wednesday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; Saturday by appointment.

U.S. Senator Kelly A. Ayotte
188 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510
(202) 224-3324

Hours: Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Don't hesitate to reach out to me or a member of my staff on matters of importance to your community or our state. I view my service in the Senate as an opportunity to work hard on behalf of the people of New Hampshire – and I'm ready to roll up my sleeves to deliver results.

Thank you for all you do to make New Hampshire a better place in which to live, work, and raise a family. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Kelly A. Ayotte
U.S. Senator

PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS AND DISPOSAL THEREOF BY REFERENCE OR OTHERWISE.

PETITION FROM NORMA AND THOMAS WILLARD, KIMBERLY FAUSTINO, NANCY AND GEORGE COTE.

7 Lakeview Drive
Dover, NH 03820
January 18, 2011

Mr. Robert Belmore, City Manager
City of Somersworth, NH
1 Government Way
Somersworth, NH 03878

Dear Bob,

Attached is a letter we sent in 2003 to the City of Somersworth stating the below request. The signed copies are probably in your files. We followed up on this matter with Mr. Elliott several times and got nowhere. The City of Dover was also involved in that and we successfully had that part of the land transferred to us. Do you have any suggestions on getting the City of Somersworth to act on this?

We, the immediate abutters, would like to petition the City to release and discharge all public servitude to the property at the end of Lake Street in accordance with RSA 231:51 and 231:52.

This approximate 40' of property is shown on the enclosed map between Dover lots 39-56 (owned by the Cotes) and 39-45 (owned by the Willards and Faustino) and Somersworth lots 6 (Cotes) and 5 (previously owned by Lewis and now owned by Willards and Faustino).

Please inform us of the procedure to get this land deeded over to us. Norma Willard can be reached by phone at 742-4878 or 438-4878 and by email: normawillard@comcast.net.

We appreciate your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

Norma B. Willard
Thomas M. Willard
Kimberly Faustino
Nancy L. Cote
George W. Cote

The City Manager indicated this is a petition for the discharge of some land in regards to Lake Street in Somersworth. The front portion of the parcel was owned by Dover. The residents petitioned the City Council of the City of Dover, who voted to discharge the property to the abutters for them to own and maintain. We received a similar petition. The City Attorney did submit a recommendation that the Council act on this and schedule a public hearing. We will need to give 30 days notice in order to notify the abutters.

The City Manager said he could coordinate with the Mayor at the next meeting for direction on holding a public hearing, perhaps in April.

MAYOR'S REPORT.

Mayor Soldati said there is currently a vacancy for the Ward 1 seat on the School Board. If anyone is interested in filling that vacancy they should submit a letter of interest to the City Clerk. The current deadline for letters of interest is 2/10/11.

Mayor Soldati said it is important to have a full complement of board members because it provides for greater representation of the City for the members of our community.

The Mayor indicated there are other committees in which there are vacancies or potential vacancies due to term expirations. If the members who are currently in those positions are interested in continuing to serve, he asked that they send him a letter indicating so. If there are members of the public who would be interested in serving, he would welcome letters of interest from them.

The Mayor said the Citizens for a Sustainable Somersworth, which is a group of citizens who have been dealing with and are addressing and concerned about sustainability issues for the City, had reached a point at their last meeting where they felt it was important that some of what the Committee does become more formalized and requested that he prepare a resolution so that the Committee could be recognized by the City. He has no particular stake in the authorship, meaning that he welcomes any revisions, additions, subtractions, etc. to either of the resolutions.

Mayor Soldati welcomed Councilor Pepin back, and is glad he is doing well. He also congratulated Councilor Spainhower on his recent marriage.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES.

FINANCE COMMITTEE.

Councilor Jarvis reported this Committee met on 1/25/11. The following items were discussed:

- Review of proposals received for the sale of city land. Councilor Sprague excused himself from the discussion. The City Manager distributed the three proposals received. Re/Max Legacy's proposal contained higher fees, potential rezoning that would require staff time and more cost to the City. Shanley

Auctioneers' proposal was to go directly to auction with a minimum bid. Dale Sprague of Keller Williams proposal had lower commissions. Would market the properties Feb-May and then, if necessary, go to auction. The Committee voted 2-0 (Jarvis & Watman) to accept the proposal from Dale Sprague of Keller Williams.

- Review of proposals received on City Hall roof repairs. Three bids were received. Work would need to be done in the spring. Previous roof work done by Hall Brothers. The Committee unanimously voted to accept the bid from Hall Brothers.
- Implementation of monthly water/sewer billing. Finance Director Smith discussed the idea of changing from quarterly to monthly billing. It would increase cost of postage and staff time slightly, but would be easier on residents to receive smaller monthly bills, provide a more even cash flow, and be able to detect leaks earlier. After full discussion, the Committee members felt that it should go to Council for vote at their next meeting.

PUBLIC WORKS AND THE ENVIRONMENT.

Councilor Spainhower reported this Committee met on 1/25/11. The following items were discussed:

- Consideration on the cemetery ordinance of closing during the winter. After lengthy discussion with staff, we decided they can do what their board of trustees wants them to do, per Chapter 17.
- Discussion on participating with the City of Rochester on a Household Hazardous Waste Day. This is a grant process, and the grant has to be written 1-1/2 years beforehand. After some discussion, they decided that if they voted in favor of this they would be tying the hands of the Council as far as spending money.
- Discussion of the monthly water and sewer billing, which they were all in favor of.
- Discussion on contract mowing. They decided to let the City Manager go with the second year options on the contracts.
- Discussion of the Highway Department snow removal budget.
- Discussion of the stand pipe, which will be in the CIP.

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE.

Councilor Watman reported this Committee met on 1/27/11. They discussed the following items:

- Members reviewed the City's contract with AMR and discussed topics of discussion and questions to submit in writing to the AMR representative in preparation for a future meeting. The Chair was tasked with preparing a final draft, submitting it to Mr. Robidas and arranging for a meeting with the committee when appropriate.

- Endorsement of the continued efforts of the Somersworth Police Department to equip each cruiser with an automated external defibrillator and to insure that each officer has proper training in its use. Members agreed with the City Manager's suggestion that area health care providers might be a source for securing further equipment and training.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE.

Councilor Sprague reported this Committee met on 1/20/11. The following items were discussed:

- Amendments to Ordinance No. 5-11, Chapter 24, Housing Code. Development Services Director Wheeler distributed an amended version with corrections and possible language changes. The document was reviewed page by page. Mr. Wheeler briefed the Committee on staff's meeting with Section 8/HUD housing inspector. The City Manager said staff could not shadow the inspector due to client (SHA) confidentiality requirements.

Regarding the appeal process, the Committee agreed to change the appeal from a subcommittee format to the City's Zoning Board of Adjustment. The City Manager suggested adding language changes to mirror State law as far as re-hearing to ZBA and appeals to Superior Court.

Councilor Jarvis suggested meeting again within the next two weeks to discuss further amendments as well as the public nuisance criteria and a waiver criteria section still be considered.

Councilor Witham suggested considering a "voluntary program" as a compliance pilot project. This possibility was discussed and consensus was to discuss it again at the next meeting.

REPORTS OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES.

COAST BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

Councilor Watman reported this Committee met on 1/26/11. The following items were discussed:

- Ridership continues to be up.
- The audit report was received from the auditor and there were no deficiencies cited. The auditor complimented the staff at COAST for their excellent work.
- The Town of Farmington Selectmen have written to the Board of Directors asking what the implications would be of cutting their subsidy to COAST by a certain amount. The Board of Directors does have a policy for that, but it is not yet decided what will happen.

JOINT BUILDING COMMITTEE.

Councilor Tapscott reported this Committee met on 1/27/11. They also have a meeting coming up on 2/10/11 at 5:00 p.m. at the Vocational Center.

On site current and complete items:

- Mechanical, electrical and sprinkler rough in continues at A and B wings as well as C wings;
- Masonry veneer is ongoing as well as the brickwork on the exterior side;

In the next week or so, shingle roofing continues, weather permitting and gypsum sheathing is ongoing at A and B wings. Within the next two to three weeks they will start painting the interior.

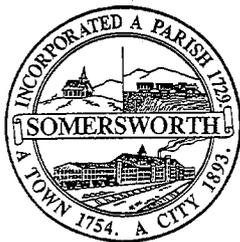
VISION 2020 COMMITTEE.

Councilor McCallion reported this Committee met on 1/10/11 in Council Chambers.

- New officers were elected as follows: Jon McCallion, Chair; Rene Philpott, ViceChair; Craig Wheeler, Secretary
- Reviewed last year's committee work. The highlight was the Goal and Objective Matrix and the chapter in the Master Plan update for the downtown.
- Discussed the original resolution and what things we will try to accomplish this year. The first thing is for the Vision 2020 Committee to work with the School Department to come up with a logo that would be easily identified and to explore some opportunities to have third graders work in conjunction to come up with a vision of how the City will look in the year 2020 since that is the year they will graduate.

Councilor McCallion said their next meeting will be open to the public, and will be held on 2/26/11 at 5:30 p.m.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT.



CITY OF SOMERSWORTH
Office of the City Manager

TO: Mayor Lincoln Soldati and City Council Members

FROM: Robert M. Belmore, City Manager

DATE: February 4th, 2011

SUBJECT: City Manager's Report for Monday, February 7th, 2011
City Council Agenda

6:00 PM WORKSHOP

Discussion of an annual cycled inspection program for all city real estate properties. City Assessing Agents Janis Carruth and Wil Corcoran will be in attendance. Attached is a proposal from Corcoran Associates.

Presentation of Petitions and Disposal Thereof by Reference or Otherwise (under Section 6 of the Agenda):

- A. **Petition from Norma and Thomas Willard, Kimberly Faustino, Nancy and George Cote.** Attached is a map of the area as well as City Attorney's recommendation to schedule a Public Hearing.

Lay on Table (under Section 11 of the Agenda):

- A. **Ordinance No. 5-11 Amend Chapter 24 by the Addition of Chapter 24A Entitled Somersworth Housing Code for Rental Multi-Unit Properties.**

Old Business (under Section 12 of the Agenda):

Resolutions:

- A. **Resolution No. 13-11 To Notify the City Tax Collector that the City Council shall not Accept a Tax Deed on Certain Properties Subject to an Unredeemed Tax Lien.** As previously noted, if the City executes these deeds, the City will be responsible for lot rental fees, providing property insurance on the units and the consideration of commencing with eviction proceedings. Please note that the tax liens will remain in effect on all these properties so that the City retains the option of accepting these deeds at a future date.

- B. **Resolution No. 14-11 To Notify the City Tax Collector that the City Council shall not Accept a Tax Deed on Certain Property Subject to an unredeemed Tax Lien.** Again, this is the former Breton Cleaners contaminated site that is under a NH DES clean up mandate. I do want to let you know that I recently met with NH DES officials to re-look the possibility of applying for State and EPA Brownfields funding to raze the building and clean up the site.

New Business (under Section 13 of the Agenda):

Resolutions:

- A. **Resolution No. 16-11 City of Somersworth Sustainability Initiative.**

- B. **Resolution No. 17-11 City of Somersworth Sustainability Committee.**

Other:

- A. **Discussion of Proposed Amended Area School Agreement.** Last meeting, I provided City Attorney's comments on his review of the proposed amendments.

City Manager's Items (under Section 9 of the Agenda):

A. Informational Items:

1. **State of City Address.** The new City Charter requires annually, on or before the 15th day of MARCH, the City Manager, in concert with the Superintendent of Schools, Mayor and School Board Chairman, shall prepare a State of the City Address to a joint meeting of the City Council and School Board. The State of the City Address shall, but not be limited to, review of performance of the existing fiscal year budget, capital expenditures and plans, an analysis of conformance with the City Master Plan, and plans for the forthcoming fiscal year to enhance or maintain the City of Somersworth and the services that the City provides. Similar to last year, this could be done prior to a regular Council Meeting – Monday, March 7th, 5:30 p.m. or so. Otherwise, a special meeting will need to be scheduled.

2. **Hilltop Elementary School Re-Use.** The City only received one proposal in response to the RFP solicitation. Director Wheeler's cover memorandum outlines the proposal's major components that include the purchase of the land and building for \$325,000; redevelopment cost estimated at \$10 million; and 50 age restricted rental units developed.

B. Attachments:

1. City Attorney Certifications (2).
2. Letter from The Honorable Kelly A. Ayotte dated January 28, 2011.
3. February 2011 E-Newsletter.
4. February 2011 Solid Waste Recycling Newsletter.
5. Hilltop Re-Use Proposal received.

Councilor Witham said there are a lot of questions to be answered regarding the Hilltop School building and he would like to add an agenda item tonight under new business, Hilltop Reuse Next Steps.

Mayor Soldati suggested that this subject be on the agenda for the next meeting for discussion. This gives everyone notice. Members of the public may be interested.

Councilor Witham agreed with this.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS.

RESOLUTION NO. 13-11 TO NOTIFY THE CITY TAX COLLECTOR THAT THE CITY COUNCIL SHALL NOT ACCEPT A TAX DEED ON CERTAIN PROPERTIES SUBJECT TO AN UNREDEEMED TAX LIEN.

Councilor Spainhower asked if we know if this is the first time these properties have been brought up, or if it is more. It irks him that people do not pay their taxes and we really don't do anything about it except put a lien on their house.

Councilor Watman moved to suspend the rules in order to hear from Finance Director Smith. The motion was seconded by Councilor Tapscott and passed unanimously.

Finance Director Smith said all these properties have been through this process before.

Councilor Spainhower feels there is something we should be able to do about this at some level. We should be able to get our money somehow.

Councilor Watman said he believes that if we seize any of these properties we would then be responsible for the land rental. The only way to do that would be to try to sell the manufactured housing to somebody else and try to recoup the money that way.

Councilor Messier asked if the owner of the park pays the taxes on the land. The City Manager answered in the affirmative.

Councilor Messier said, in essence, we would be taking ownership of an older version of manufactured home, and we would prefer not to do that.

Councilor Pepin asked if these homes are occupied.

The City Manager replied it is his understanding they are all occupied.

Councilor McCallion said there is a bill right now in the legislature that actually talks to this type of thing and puts the onus on the owner of the park. Perhaps we could send a letter collectively urging our representatives to vote in favor of that bill.

Resolution No. 13-11 passed by roll call vote of 8 yeas, 1 nay, Councilor Spainhower voting in the negative.

RESOLUTION NO. 14-11 TO NOTIFY THE CITY TAX COLLECTOR THAT THE CITY COUNCIL SHALL NOT ACCEPT A TAX DEED ON CERTAIN PROPERTY SUBJECT TO AN UNREDEEMED TAX LIEN.

Councilor Witham said the City Manager indicated that if we were to pursue a grant opportunity that we could revisit this issue at any time we feel it is appropriate.

The City Manager said that is correct.

Resolution No. 14-11 passed by roll call vote of 8 yeas, 1 nay, Councilor Spainhower voting in the negative.

NEW BUSINESS.

RESOLUTION NO. 16-11 CITY OF SOMERSWORTH SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVE.

Somersworth, NH
February 7, 2011

WHEREAS, the City Council recognizes the importance of encouraging sustainable practices by and throughout the entire community; and

WHEREAS, the City's Master Plan recommends the City take a leadership role in building a sustainable community for current and future generations; and

WHEREAS, the City's Vision 2020 Initiative is committed to facilitate a sustainable Somersworth; and

WHEREAS, the City Council recognizes the basic principles that a sustainable society is one that eliminates our contribution to:

- 1) The progressive buildup of substances extracted from the Earth's crust;
- 2) The progressive buildup of chemicals and compounds produced by society;
- 3) The progressive physical degradation and destruction of nature and natural processes; and
- 4) Conditions that undermine people's capacity to meet their basic human needs.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SOMERSWORTH that the City Council establish a Special Committee of the City known as the Sustainability Committee.

Introduced by

Mayor Lincoln Soldati

Approved:
City Attorney

Following the first reading of Resolution No. 16-11 it was referred to the next meeting.

RESOLUTION NO. 17-11 CITY OF SOMERSWORTH SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE.

Somersworth, NH
February 7, 2011

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SOMERSWORTH that the "Sustainability Committee" **shall be formed no later than March 1, 2011.**

Be it further resolved that the Committee shall be comprised of the following members:

- The Mayor or his designee.
- One member of the City Council appointed by the Mayor.
- The City Manager or his designee.
- The Director of Development Services or his designee.
- Two members of the community at large appointed by the Mayor.
- One member of the Somersworth business community appointed by the Greater Somersworth Chamber of Commerce.
- One Somersworth High School student recommended by the Somersworth High School principal and approved by the Mayor.
- One member of the Conservation Commission appointed by the Chair of the Conservation Commission.
- One member of the Planning Board appointed by the Chair of the Planning Board.

Members of the Committee must be residents or employees of the City and shall be appointed for a two-year term.

Be it further resolved that the Committee shall:

- Serve as a resource and clearinghouse for the City Council and City Departments concerning issues of sustainability.
- Develop recommendations for the implementation of the goals in the Master Plan related to sustainability.
- Identify existing sustainable practices and identify areas needing improvement.
- Assist in coordinating efforts of various departments in implementing sustainability projects.
- Adopt an open meeting concept to encourage involvement of the community at large in the activities of the Committee.
- Promote public awareness of sustainability issues.
- Report regularly to the City Council on the meetings and activities of the Committee.

Introduced by

Mayor Lincoln Soldati

Approved:
City Attorney

Following the first reading of Resolution No. 17-11 it was referred to the next meeting.

DISCUSSION OF PROPOSED AMENDED AREA SCHOOL AGREEMENT.

Councilor Watman moved that the legal opinion be made public by being a written part of this record and a copy be sent to the School Board Chair.

The motion was seconded by Councilor Witham and passed unanimously.

Councilor Messier said the legal opinion stated there was a line in there about a representative from Rollinsford. He wondered if this then goes back to the Committee so they can take this out. The voters accepted this at their Town Meeting. He is just wondering where this goes now.

The Mayor indicated it is his opinion that the amended proposal, since we could not and did not accept the agreement as written, will have to go back before both boards, to Rollinsford and then this Council for consideration.

Councilor Watman said he recalls Chairperson Knowles, after inquiring whether our City Charter might be changed, indicating that it would have to go back to the Rollinsford Town Meeting. Since it was initiated by them, it would have to pass their School District Meeting or Town Meeting.

Councilor Witham said that is the only provision that caused him any angst. That needs to be made very clear to them that this is the only hang-up that we have with the amended Area Agreement. If there are other issues in the agreement, they should be talked about.

Councilor Spainhower said he agrees. He is wondering how we deal with this now. They need to know this information.

Mayor Soldati said that since the amended proposal was rejected it goes back to Rollinsford. If they approve it, it comes back to Somersworth for approval by the School Board then the City Council.

The Mayor said his suggestion would be that we send it to Rollinsford with the legal opinion for their action with the removal of the provision that violated our Charter, then whatever action they take gets submitted back to us.

Councilor Witham moved that the Council does not act on the amended area agreement based on a provision that is in conflict with the Somersworth City Charter and that that communication be made by the Mayor to the Rollinsford School Board Chair.

The motion was seconded by Councilor Messier and passed unanimously.

Mayor Soldati said he will prepare that communication.

COUNCIL VOTE ON MONTHLY UTILITY BILLING.

City Manager Belmore indicated both the Finance Committee and Public Works Committee did talk about this. What we are trying to do is tee this up so we can implement it 7/1/11. They would like to start some educational process to the community. Instead of quarterly billing, this would be monthly billing on water and sewer. We often have abatement requests, concerns about leaky toilets or leaks in our system. We would perhaps be able to ferret those out on a much quicker basis helping out not only users of the system, but the City also.

Councilor Watman moved that the City institute monthly billing for water and sewer use effective 7/1/11. The motion was seconded by Councilor Spainhower.

Councilor Tapscott said he is concerned about the added cost of this proposal. He wondered if we will have to hire a new person to help out with this.

The City Manager said there will be additional costs and they are incorporating that into the next fiscal year budget. They feel the benefits far outweigh the costs. It will not add any additional staff. They have migrated onto radio reads on their meters so they are comfortable that it can be done.

Councilor Tapscott said he will not vote for this until he knows what the final added costs would be.

Finance Director Smith said we spend about \$10,000 in postage and paper each year. That amount would triple. There is no additional staff required. In the current budget, Council appropriated money for a third hand-held meter collector. We are virtually at the end of our meter replacement program specifically to go to this monthly billing. We are at the last step.

Councilor Witham said he understands the benefits, but he doesn't understand the cash flow benefits.

Mr. Smith said generally speaking we should see an improvement in our cash flow because people tend to respond better to monthly billing as opposed to quarterly billing. People usually find it easier to pay \$30 per month opposed to \$90 per quarter. It also gives us an opportunity to control and review what our billing is compared to the water we actually make. It will give us better management statistical tools.

Councilor Witham asked if customers can currently pay with a credit card. He also asked if Mr. Smith thinks we will achieve the savings equal to or greater than the additional incurred costs.

Mr. Smith replied in the affirmative to the first question. To the second question, he replied he doesn't know that there would be any savings in terms of collections that would do that. He feels you have to view it as an increased cost to some extent as a convenience to the customers.

The City Manager said it would be user friendly to our users, both commercial and residential. He feels it is the right thing to do.

Councilor Spainhower wondered how long it would take to figure out how much water is missing if the City does have a leak not detected by groundwater coming up through the ground.

Mr. Smith said it would depend on the size of the leak and where it is. There are systems at the Water Treatment Plant that would alert them if there is a problem. You will always have some unaccounted for water.

Councilor McCallion said he is in favor of monthly billing. It is tough when you have to triple costs, and he is wondering if there is a way to incorporate the process to email for people who want to sign up to do it that way.

Mr. Smith replied we are not quite ready to do that yet.

Councilor McCallion said a couple of years ago we were at a deficit and we had to raise rates. He thinks we are getting better.

Mr. Smith replied we are getting better, although both funds are still in deficit. Last year we had a positive cash flow in the sewer fund and it appears that the water fund will turn around this year.

Councilor Watman asked when the Council is due to look at the rates again.

Mr. Smith replied they are due to look at the water rates this year. There will be one additional 10% sewer rate increase implemented 7/1/11.

Councilor Watman said he prefers monthly billing.

Councilor Messier said he supports this also. There will probably be some "hiccups" at the beginning but this is the way to go.

Councilor Pepin said he is concerned with the manpower situation. We have three people working on the water system. They also deal with taking care of the hydrant systems, the backflow preventive systems and everything else. Now they will be going out monthly to read meters instead of quarterly.

The City Manager said there are always issues with manpower due to vacations, training, etc. The backup is that we have three people at the water plant and we can utilize those people to read meters. We can utilize the plant people and still keep the plant operating. They are comfortable that we do have some redundancy in the personnel aspect of it.

Councilor Witham said he will be supporting this, his only hesitation being the fact that there are a lot of pieces to this change. In the future, we need to have some level of information brought to us on this type of issue.

The motion to go to monthly utility billing effective July 1, 2011 passed by roll call vote of 7 yeas, 2 nays, Councilors Pepin and Tapscott voting in the negative.

CLOSING COMMENTS BY COUNCIL MEMBERS.

Councilor Witham said the Council has received, and residents will soon receive, a recycling and solid waste newsletter and calendar produced by Public Works. It is very informative and provides a fair amount of information for residents in regards to all of those matters. One of the items listed is household hazardous waste disposal and it makes a list of certain items that can be collected at the Public Works facility. He has been asked by some residents whether or not the Public Works Department could serve as a collection point for fluorescent bulbs. This might be something we need to look at.

Councilor Witham said on the topic of household hazardous waste he was a little disappointed that we cannot go into an agreement with the City of Rochester. It has been some years since we have had a household hazardous waste collection here. It is a matter of having the funds to do that. As they have talked about regionalization of services over the past few years, he feels this would be the perfect service to be regionalized. He encouraged City staff to continue to look for opportunities to address household hazardous waste collection. This would be a good discussion item for our goal setting workshop.

Councilor Watman thanked the Mayor for noting that the Council should be attentive to sustainability issues.

Regarding the recycling issue, Councilor Watman said he hopes citizens will note that the recycling process has been simplified and that the number of items that can be recycled has been increased. People may be able to buy fewer blue bags because of this.

Relative to the streaming of meetings over the internet, Councilor Watman said he commends the City for that effort and it is well worth the expense. A number of people are detaching themselves from our cable monopoly, and now they are not only able to receive live meetings, but archived meetings also. The picture quality and the audio quality are superior to cable. It is a good feature and he recommends that people use it.

Regarding the Hilltop School and the long process of getting to where we are now, Councilor Watman said he hopes people realize the reason it all took so long is the desire to please as many people as possible and to lessen the impact on as many people as possible when you in fact had solidified positions and no one willing to move in their opinions. We are already starting to see diverging opinions about what should be done with the building. He hopes the Council realizes the worst decision you can make is no decision. You cannot know the future with certainty so it is impossible to lay out a series of documents that show that a certain choice is "the correct choice". We just have to do the best we can to consider what is best for the City. That is what it's all about. He hopes people realize there is now serious time pressure. He feels that if we do not make a determination that we will act as we think best after due consideration that we will have failed the City by leaving them with an eyesore.

Councilor Pepin said it would be appreciated if people would shovel the snow away from the fire hydrants near their homes. It is for your own protection and helps the firefighters a great deal. They have all been out shoveling hydrants, even the Fire Chief.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS.

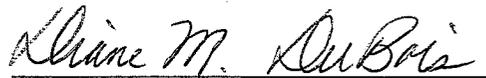
Mayor Soldati noted one of the topics at the next meeting will be discussion of Hilltop reuse.

ADJOURNMENT.

Councilor Tapscott moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Councilor Spainhower and passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Diane M. DuBois, City Clerk

