

CITY OF SOMERSWORTH

CITY COUNCIL MEETING

AGENDA

JANUARY 3, 2012 – 7:00 P.M.

1. Roll Call of Members
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting
 - A. Minutes of 12/12/2011 City Council Meeting.
4. Comments by Visitors
5. Communications
6. Presentation of Petitions and Disposal Thereof by Reference or Otherwise
7. Mayor's Report
8. Reports of Standing Committees
9. Reports of Special Committees, City Officers and City Manager
10. Nominations, Appointments and Elections
 - A. Mayoral Appointment of Acting Mayor.
 - B. Mayoral Appointments – Council Committees.
 - C. Appointment of Nancie Cameron as Moderator, Ward 2.
 - D. Appointment of a Representative to the Lamprey Regional Cooperative Board of Directors.

11. Lay on Table
 - A. Discussion of Monthly Water and Sewer Billing.
 - B. Resolution No. 17-12 Authorizing a Public-Private Collaboration between the City of Somersworth and the Friends of Somersworth to Pursue the Preservation of the Hilltop School as a Community Resource.
12. Unfinished Business
 - Resolutions:
 - A. Resolution No. 18-12 Accept Hawthorne Circle.
13. New Business
 - Resolutions:
 - A. Resolution No. 19-12 To Authorize the City Manager to Coordinate with Yankee Thermal Imaging of Dover, NH to Conduct Energy Audits on City of Somersworth Buildings and Facilities, at no Cost to the City.
14. Comments by Visitors
15. Closing Comments by Council Members
16. Future Agenda Items
17. Nonpublic Session (as necessary, pending roll call vote by Council)
18. Adjournment

MINUTES OF CITY COUNCIL MEETING DECEMBER 12, 2011

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

MINUTES OF THE 11/14/2011 CITY COUNCIL MEETING.

Councilor Witham moved to amend the minutes of the 11/14/2011 meeting as follows: Page 9, second paragraph, which reads "Councilor Witham has to differ a little bit because . . .", change Councilor Witham to Councilor Watman. The motion was seconded by Councilor Tapscott and passed unanimously.

Councilor Witham moved to pass the minutes of the 11/14/11 meeting as amended. The motion was seconded by Councilor Tapscott and passed unanimously.

COMMENTS BY VISITORS.

Jim Wiggin, 11 Linden Street, welcomed the new Mayor and wished him good luck. He thanked the departing Council members for their service, and said he doesn't know what we are going to do for a parliamentarian without Councilor Watman.

Mr. Wiggin said he is here tonight as a minority against the public-private collaboration between the City of Somersworth and the Friends of Somersworth to pursue the preservation of the Hilltop School as a community resource. The past several Councils did not do anything with the Hilltop School because any work to the school would not have alleviated the original problem they were dealing with, called space needs. The bottom line is that we could have put billions of dollars into the school but it still wouldn't have sufficed.

Mr. Wiggin said his concern with Resolution No. 17-12, the public/private collaboration between the City of Somersworth and the Friends of Somersworth to pursue the preservation of the Hilltop School as a community resource, is with grants the City may be asked to get. Everybody knows that whenever you get a grant there are many strings attached. The majority of the code requirements are still going to have to be addressed if this remains a public building.

Mr. Wiggin said his property taxes have doubled since the year 2000.

Mr. Wiggin said it is his opinion that the City of Somersworth is not a good steward of its properties. We tend to be reactive rather than pro-active.

Mr. Wiggin is asking that this proposed arrangement be changed. Maybe the Friends of Somersworth need an education. You could sell them the building for \$1.00 with the stipulation that if they cannot make a go of it it comes back to the City.

Mr. Wiggin said that he, for one, cannot afford to be paying for another public building. If this building is going to have anything public in it, there will be a whole lot of things that will need to be done before that building can be used properly.

Mr. Wiggin is asking the Council to be really cautious with what they do with this. He doesn't think they need another public building on the City's rolls.

Mr. Wiggin asked that each and every Councilor pay attention to what they are doing, think why they are there and who put them there, and do what is right for the community.

Real Roseberry, 405 Route 108, said if the City wants to save the taxpayer money they should get rid of the monthly water/sewer billing. The City should bill twice a year for water/sewer, then they would be saving some money.

John Joyal, 1 Molly Lane, said he differs with Mr. Wiggin's opinion. The City did not put any money into the Hilltop School for many years, that is why we are standing here now in the situation we are in. People from the community have stepped up to do the right thing for their community.

Mr. Joyal said he does agree with his statement that the City does not take good care of its properties. That is all the more reason to have the public get involved with the City to help take care of some of the properties. The people who live up on the hill are concerned about their properties, and are also concerned about each others properties and their neighborhood and they want to do the right thing for their community which in turn is going to help the City take care of its property.

COMMUNICATIONS.

LETTER FROM MICHAEL MICUCCI.

Mayor and City Council

The time has come to make a decision. Nancie Cameron has asked and not received an answer on a revote in Ward 2 due to a mistake. Attornies have said it is a City decision.

I ask that you discuss this in New Business tonight. I would like to have honest discussion on this item. If this happened to you how would you want the decision to go?

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Micucci
Ward 3

MEMORANDUM FROM JENNIFER SOLDATI.

December 8, 2011

Memorandum

To: Diane DuBois
From: Jennifer Soldati

Please consider this notice as my official resignation as the Supervisor of the Checklist for Ward 2 in Somersworth, effective immediately.

MAYOR'S REPORT.

Mayor Spencer thanked everyone who got out and voted during the election. He is very humbled. He wants everyone to know they can contact him via phone and e-mail. He hopes people will tell him their opinions. He asked that if you bring an opinion to him you also suggest a solution to the problem as well.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES.

FINANCE COMMITTEE.

Councilor Jarvis reported this Committee met on 12/6/11 primarily to review the monthly water/sewer billing. Finance Director Smith and City Manager Belmore gave an overview of the process which started by installing upgraded water meters in 2003 with the intent of migrating to monthly billing in the future. The installation was completed in 2011. Cash flow, abatement requests, and staff workload during the implementation of monthly billing was also reviewed.

Councilor Jarvis said the members of the committee voted unanimously to continue with the monthly billing and reevaluate after it has been in place for one year.

PUBLIC WORKS & THE ENVIRONMENT.

Councilor Spainhower reported this Committee met on 12/6/11. One of the items discussed was accepting Hawthorne Circle, which the committee members support.

Councilor Spainhower said they also heard an update from City staff regarding Gator Rock Road.

REPORTS OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES.

COAST BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

Councilor Watman reported the COAST Board of Directors met on 11/16/11. There were two items of note:

1. The institution of an express service to service the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard has come along. The intention is for it to begin early next year. He hopes that does come to fruition. This would make a difference for many people in our community.
2. FY 2013 municipal funding formula and the effect it will have on the request made to every city and town in the COAST alliance. He believes the City Manager received a seven page letter outlining the rationale of the update for the funding formula. He will leave it to the future Council to look at that when they examine funding requests. There is a considerable increase asked of each community.

Ridership is still up. It has increased dramatically.

Councilor Witham indicated the Executive Director of COAST, in his communication, talks about two additional funding mechanisms that we may want to consider here beyond the direct formula that we pay for out of the tax rate. One is a municipal transportation improvement fund using local vehicle registration fees, and the other is to allow advertising on COAST bus shelters, which our ordinances currently prohibit.

Councilor Witham asked Councilor Watman if he thinks that is something the City Council should take into consideration.

Councilor Watman replied in the affirmative.

Councilor Witham suggested looking at the Transportation Enhancement Fund and also signage.

SCHOOL BOARD.

Councilor Pepin reported he attended the School Board budget workshop held on 12/6/11. It is budget time and they are starting to crunch numbers. The Superintendent gave a presentation on the elementary schools. She also went through what the SAU is offering for proposals to the School Board. What is being proposed is \$900,000 over what was proposed last year. The proposal is quite lengthy, so he did not copy it for everybody. Any Council member is welcome to look at it, although it is not the final proposal.

Councilor Pepin indicated they will have three budget workshops in January, 2012. There will be a budget presentation on 2/7/12, and a public hearing on the budget on 2/14/12.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT.



CITY OF SOMERSWORTH
Office of the City Manager

TO: Mayor Matthew Spencer and City Council Members
FROM: Robert M. Belmore, City Manager
DATE: Friday, December 9, 2011
SUBJECT: City Manager's Report for Monday, December 12, 2011
City Council Agenda

Council Non-Meeting
City Attorney– 6:00 p.m.

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

- A. Discussion of Monthly Water and Sewer Billing.** Attached is information presented to the Finance Committee at their December 6th meeting.

Unfinished Business (under Section 12 of the Agenda):

Resolutions:

- A. Resolution No. 16-12 Authorizing the City Manager to Enter Into a Grant Agreement with the New Hampshire Department of Transportation for a Transportation Enhancement (TE) Grant for a Downtown Sidewalk and Streetscape Improvement Project.** As a reminder, further City Council action will be required to award contracts and expend funds when we get to the bricks and mortar construction stages of the project.
- B. Resolution No. 17-12 Authorizing a Public-Private Collaboration between the City of Somersworth and the Friends of Somersworth to Pursue the Preservation of the Hilltop School as a Community Resource.** As a reminder, this Resolution was a work product stemming from the Economic Development Committee's meeting of November 1, 2011.

New Business (under Section 13 of the Agenda):

Ordinances:

- A. Ordinance No. 8-12 City Council Meeting Schedule for 2012.** City Council will need to consider suspending rules to set the calendar.

Resolutions:

- A. Resolution No. 18-12 Accept Hawthorne Circle.** Attached is a draft deed approved by City Attorney as well as a recommendation from the City Engineer.

Other:

- A. Somersworth-Berwick Bridge Design Request Letter- Councilor Witham.**
- B. City Council Certification of Results of Recount for Ward 4 City Council Seat held on 11/16/2011.**
- C. Set Hours for January 1-, 2012 Presidential Primary – 8:00 A.M. to 7:00 P.M.**

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

A. Informational Items:

1. **CIP FY 2013-2018.** In accordance with the City Charter, I hereby submit a proposed Capital Improvement Program for City Council consideration. I look forward to Council direction for future review and discussion opportunities.
2. **Budget Preparation FY 2013.** Attached is a copy of my Budget directive to department heads as we begin next year's budget process. I welcome any Council direction as I move forward in this budget development process.
3. **Cable Franchise Renewal with Comcast.** The Cable Committee met with the City's Special Legal Counsel on November 15th to discuss final negotiation strategy. Attached is a letter from Attorney Ciandella outlining a proposed strategy. I would appreciate a non-public (or public) session to discuss the letter and negotiation process to date.
4. **Yankee Thermal Imaging.** Company representatives provided the City Council an overview of their Program benefits last month. Attached is a follow-up letter from the company. I would appreciate direction from Council as to what action you would like to take on this matter (Council Resolution, Committee review or other).
5. **Economic Development.** I am pleased to report the State of New Hampshire Division of Economic Development's approval of a new City

Economic Revitalization Zone. As mentioned in the approved letter, it is our hope that this designation will allow for increased business development and job creation in Somersworth. This is the City's third such designated zone.

B. Attachments:

1. City Attorney Certification (2).
2. Department Head Monthly Reports.
3. CIP FY 2013-2018.
4. City Engineering Consultant letter to EPA on Superfund Site's former Recreation Area dated December 5, 2011.
5. City Planner Memo & SRPC 12/06/2011 letter re: GACIT and Draft NH DOT ten year plan.
6. New Elected Officials – December 9, 2011 City Manager Orientation agenda and material.

The City Manager indicated there were two recent Firefighter appointments, John Dann and Matt Wilder, and also the recent promotion of Sean Houle to Fire Lieutenant. He asked them to come up along with the Fire Chief.

Interim Chief Bliss indicated they had a swearing-in ceremony at the Fire Station earlier in the evening for these individuals. The selection of Firefighters is very competitive. They go through the State Fire Academy Exam process which has a grueling physical agility test and also oral boards. The three gentlemen here this evening come with some very impressive credentials. Lt. Houle has been with the Department for twelve years now, and also went through a very competitive process.

Interim Chief Bliss said he has worked with the individuals at the Somersworth Fire Department since September, and he continues to be impressed with their level of performance, their expertise and skills, and their dedication to the City.

NOMINATIONS, APPOINTMENTS AND ELECTIONS.

SUPERVISOR OF THE CHECKLIST, WARD 2.

Mayor Spencer nominated Donald Carr, term to expire 12/2016.

The Mayor asked the Council members to solidify these nominations tonight so we have people in place for the upcoming election.

Councilor Witham moved to suspend the rules in order to act on this nomination this evening. The motion was seconded by Councilor Beaudet and carried unanimously.

Councilor Witham moved that the nomination of Donald Carr to the position of Supervisor of the Checklist, Ward 2 be approved. The motion was seconded by Councilor Sprague and passed unanimously.

WARD CLERK, WARD 2.

Mayor Spencer nomination Jeanette Gagne, term to expire on 1/8/2014.

Councilor Witham moved to suspend the rules in order to act on this nomination this evening. The motion was seconded by Councilor Tapscott and passed unanimously.

Councilor Witham moved that the nomination of Jeanette Gagne to the position of Ward Clerk, Ward 2 be approved. The motion was seconded by Councilor Tapscott and passed unanimously.

LAY ON TABLE.

DISCUSSION OF MONTHLY WATER AND SEWER BILLING.

Councilor Tapscott moved to remove this item from the table for discussion purposes. The motion was seconded by Councilor Witham and passed unanimously.

Councilor Tapscott said he has not heard any welcoming comments from anybody about going from quarterly to monthly billing. It costs us upward of \$30,000 more per year to do this also. He was one of the two who voted against this and he doesn't agree with it. He sees from the Finance Committee report they recommended waiting one year from when it started. He doesn't care for the idea.

Councilor Pepin said he is the second one who voted against it. He has gotten many phone calls from people who are against this. He is against monthly billing.

Councilor Beaudet wished to provide additional information to the Finance Director's memo of December 5th. His memo addresses three main points:

1. Cash flow
2. Abatement requests
3. Staff workload

Regarding cash flow, Councilor Beaudet said on 7/1/11 the City imposed a rate increase for water and sewer. This rate increase will generate an additional \$700,000 this fiscal year and negates any and all credibility to use cash flow as an attribute to justify monthly billing.

Regarding abatement requests, as he previously stated, they are an integral part of the process no matter which billing cycle is used.

Councilor Beaudet indicated the memo states, "increasing staff workload is a valid concern". He disagrees with this, stating it is not a valid concern, it is a problem. The memo proposes two solutions to address staff workload:

1. Implementing a lock box collection service which he believes is a good idea, however there are costs associated with this.
2. Instituting an easy pay solution for customers does not alleviate staff workload and has not garnered public support, although staff has made that assumption.

Additional costs will continue to escalate with monthly billing. He wholeheartedly believes that monthly billing has been rejected by the vast majority of our community. They do not understand why we revamped a very successful program to a controversial venue that is much more expensive. We need to return to quarterly billing.

Councilor Witham said the statement that our water collection was successful is incorrect. The water collection here for many years was sub-par, and up until recently it was running in the red. That ship has been righted successfully, despite the construction of a new water treatment plant.

Councilor Witham said there is nothing in the Finance Director's memo that compels him to change the monthly billing. He feels that change is what has folks most concerned. People are not paying more. Any change is difficult, but he is willing to give it a go for another year based upon the recommendations of City staff and the Finance Committee.

Councilor Watman said what got his attention was that the percentage of collections has gone way up. Not enough time has gone by for us to know if that is the trend or not. He feels it is a good idea to let this sit for one year and see how it works.

Councilor Pepin said most of the people he has been hearing from are the elderly. They have to pay for their checks, they have to pay for postage. If they come to City Hall, they are concerned about the ice in the winter time.

Councilor Jarvis said she feels we need more time to analyze this.

Councilor Sprague moved to lay this back on the table. The motion was seconded by Councilor Spainhower. The motion passed by roll call vote of 5 yeas, 4 nays, Councilors Pepin, Beaudet, Tapscott and Witham voting in the negative.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS.

RESOLUTION NO. 16-12 AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO A GRANT AGREEMENT WITH THE NEW HAMPSHIRE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FOR A TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENT (TE) GRANT FOR A DOWNTOWN SIDEWALK AND STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT.

Councilor Witham said this project has been underway for a number of years. He thanked the City Planner, Dave Sharples, and other appropriate City staff, for their time and diligence both in applying for the grant and also for following through to the point where it is in front of us this evening.

Councilor Witham said the City has been working hard at the improvement of the downtown corridor. This is a piece of the whole plan. This will improve sidewalks, provide for better pedestrian travel ways, bike lanes, greenscapes, and other signage, etc. This is an important step in the overall process.

Resolution No. 16-12 passed by roll call vote of 9 yeas, 0 nays.

RESOLUTION NO. 17-12 AUTHORIZING A PUBLIC-PRIVATE COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE CITY OF SOMERSWORTH AND THE FRIENDS OF SOMERSWORTH TO PURSUE THE PRESERVATION OF THE HILLTOP SCHOOL AS A COMMUNITY RESOURCE.

Councilor Watman moved to postpone action on Resolution No. 17-12 until the first regular City Council Meeting in February, 2012. The motion was seconded by Councilor Jarvis.

Councilor Watman feels there could be issues because of the zoning here. If the City rezones this spot, it will be going against its Master Plan. Also, it could set a precedent for other things. There is also a legal question about whether or not the City could seek out and apply for and accept grants which would pre-suppose that the use of the building would be in-part commercial, when it is not zoned that way. He feels that additional legal advice from the City Attorney is needed.

Councilor Watman said he wouldn't have any problem voting on this resolution this evening, but he thinks it serves to make a smoother and legal process in a fairer way if it's postponed for a while.

Councilor McCallion said that as one of the sponsors of this resolution, nothing is ever accomplished without some kind of risk or reward. People take chances, and here is a chance at an opportunity for citizens to do something. As a body, we have a legal due diligence to the citizens' money. That is why it was emphasized in this resolution that this will be "at no cost to the City". The Friends of Somersworth united and put a business plan together. They live in that neighborhood and wanted to see something happen. We can stifle what is good or make something happen and give it a try.

Councilor Witham said he was at the Economic Development Committee meeting where some of the basic thoughts of this resolution were generated. He is a sponsor of this resolution as well. A couple of things that were woven into the resolution were to protect the City's interests.

Councilor Witham said a delay is probably appropriate here, because one of the things he didn't consider was the zoning issue. He feels it would be wise to get more input from the City's legal counsel and also from the Planning Department as to the impact of this resolution, seeking grants without having the zoning issue fully addressed.

Councilor Witham said there are a couple of ways to accomplish the zoning issue. One would be to rezone that section of the City, and we would have to be careful about how we approach that so as to avoid a spot-zoning issue. The other way would be to seek zoning relief from the Zoning Board of Adjustment. In his gut, he supports the partnership but feels we need to move with caution so as to manage the risk. He supports the motion to postpone voting on the resolution.

Councilor Sprague said he appreciates the delay also. He does want to proceed with caution. His concern with the zoning is that the Friends of Somersworth may have a hard time establishing grants without the correct zoning. His biggest fear is that if we do end up rezoning and this were to fail we have now rezoned the area and a different entity could come in and try something "commercial". He does not think that is what the neighborhood wants.

Councilor Sprague said he still would like some more answers from the attorney. You cannot just run into things like this. You have to be careful for what might come down the road if a plan fails.

Councilor Sprague said you can put in the resolution that it will not impact the City financially but when you have City staff working on grants, etc., it does affect the City financially. We have to get the zoning under control and figure out what the use is going to be.

Councilor Pepin said this was a project when he started on the Council four years ago. The only thing he sees this resolution trying to accomplish is for a group of people to have some guidance in trying to establish this. There is nothing binding on the City. As it stands right now, they cannot get funding. This resolution addresses options such as working with City staff if there are zoning issues. Right now they have no options unless this Board gives them the opportunity of working with staff. This is what has to come from this Council.

Councilor Pepin said he will support the delay, but he wouldn't be surprised if we are still talking about this two years from now. He does not want to see that. With every day that goes by that building becomes more and more of a hazard and more damage is done to the building due to lack of heat, etc. The City has a liability on the building.

Councilor Beudet said he appreciates all the comments on this from the Council. Going from a different perspective, he would ask them to consider, when they vote on this, to add a friendly amendment that imposes a two-year moratorium if it passes. This would allow staff and Council ample time to evaluate the pros and cons or the strengths and weaknesses of the program. In two years, if it is working you can pass it, or if it is not working you would have other options.

The motion to postpone Resolution No. 17-12 until the first City Council meeting in February, 2012 passed by roll call vote of 7 yeas, 2 nays, Councilors McCallion and Beudet voting in the negative.

NEW BUSINESS.

ORDINANCE NO. 8-12 CITY COUNCIL MEETING SCHEDULE FOR 2012.

Somersworth, NH
December 12, 2011

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SOMERSWORTH THAT, in accordance with Chapter 3.7 of the City Charter which provides that the City Council's "regular meetings shall be held on the first and third Monday of the month at 7:00 p.m. unless otherwise designated by ordinance..." and Chapter 6, City Officials, Section 6.8.2 of the City Ordinances which also provides that the "City Council shall meet in regular session on the first and third Mondays of each month at 7:00 p.m., unless otherwise agreed on by a majority of the members of the Council" that the City Council Meeting schedule for 2012 shall be as follows:

- January - 01/03/2012 (Tuesday) and 01/17/12 (Tuesday)
- February - 02/06/12 and 02/21/12 (Tuesday)
- March - 03/05/12 and 03/19/12
- April - 04/02/12 and 04/16/12
- May - 05/07/12 and 05/21/12
- June - 06/04/12 and 06/18/12
- July - 07/16/12
- August - 08/13/12
- September - 09/04/12 (Tuesday) and 09/17/12
- October - 10/01/12 and 10/15/12
- November - 11/13/12 (Tuesday)
- December - 12/10/12

This ordinance shall take effect upon its passage.

Introduced by

Mayor Matthew Spencer

Approved:
City Attorney

Councilor Tapscott moved to suspend the rules in order to act on this tonight. The motion was seconded by Councilor Witham and passed unanimously.

Following the second reading of Ordinance No. 8-12 by title, it was passed by roll call vote of 6 yeas, 2 abstentions, Councilors Watman and Beaudet abstaining.

RESOLUTION NO. 18-12 ACCEPT HAWTHORNE CIRCLE.

Somersworth, NH
December 12, 2011

WHEREAS, the City of Somersworth Planning Board approved a certain subdivision known as Gerrish Commons prepared for Maplecroft Building & Development, LLC, Tax Map 48, Lots 12 & 24, West High Street, Somersworth, Strafford Co., NH, Dated June 6, 2005, Prepared by Tritech Engineering Corporation, recorded as Plan #94-23 and #94-24 at the Strafford County Registry of Deeds and the roadway was to be accepted by the City of Somersworth; and

WHEREAS, the City Council named Hawthorne Circle by Resolution No. 33-08 on February 4, 2008; and

WHEREAS, the road known as Hawthorne Circle has been constructed to the satisfaction of the City,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SOMERSWORTH THAT the City Manager is authorized to accept and record a deed to Hawthorne Circle and said way is hereby accepted as a public way.

Introduced by Councilors

Dale Spainhower
Dale Sprague

Approved:
City Attorney

Following the first reading of Resolution No. 18-12, it was referred to the next meeting.

OTHER.

SOMERSWORTH-BERWICK BRIDGE DESIGN REQUEST LETTER –
COUNCILOR WITHAM.

December 7, 2011

< >
< >
< >

Re: NHDOT Project No. 12228 Somersworth-Berwick (Route 9) Bridge - Design Considerations

Dear <>,

The City Council of the City of Somersworth, NH wants to again state our strong position for the incorporation of design enhancements into the above referenced bridge rehabilitation project which is now undergoing initial engineering work. The City has worked extensively with our Congressional delegation in recent years to secure additional funding towards aesthetic enhancements during the bridge rehabilitation process. Some examples of the design enhancements we envision are black railings, prominent bridge abutments and period street lighting atop the abutments to name a few.

The Somersworth-Berwick (Route 9) Bridge is an extremely prominent and important project for the City of Somersworth, NH and for its downtown. This project represents the gateway into the City and into the State of New Hampshire from neighboring Berwick, Maine and is a definite image maker for the City and State. More than 11,600 cars cross the bridge and travel through downtown daily. Furthermore, from the adjacent neighborhoods' viewpoint, this project represents an opportunity for enhancement as the bridge is a prominent feature at the entry into the City's Historic District, the largest contiguous historic district in the State of New Hampshire. For these reasons it is critical that this project be attractive and sensitive to its surroundings.

It is well documented that urban bridges must be high-quality in appearance and not resemble more rural or highway styles. Such bridges should respond to their surrounding neighborhood character, identity, and scale. The design of bridges and related gateways are opportunities for enhancements and should be closely considered particularly when the design phase of planned improvements is initiated as is the case with this project.

While we recognize that the project is vital for safety and vehicle ride-ability we also know that it is critical that this project be attractive and sensitive to its surroundings and this is an ideal time to incorporate such design enhancements.

City staffs, including City Manager Robert Belmore and City Planner David Sharples, are well familiar with the community's vision and this request and we would invite further dialog with them towards a desirable outcome.

Thank you in advance for being considerate of our request.

Sincerely,

Mayor Mathew Spencer and Members of the Somersworth City Council

Councilor Witham said he drafted this letter in support of aesthetic enhancements to the bridge design for the Somersworth-Berwick Bridge. The bridge is destined for reconstruction activity and it is just now entering the engineering phase. He feels this is the proper time, perhaps the only time, to engage the designers in what he calls aesthetic enhancements. Although the underlying reason for the bridge reconstruction is ridability

and safety, this is an opportunity for us as a community to have some aesthetic improvements woven into the design.

Councilor Witham said he thinks it is appropriate for projects that are outside our control for elected bodies to share our opinions. He noted that City staff, the City Manager, City Planner, and the Public Works Director have been diligent in trying to pursue aesthetic enhancements during the initial design phase. He feels it is helpful for them if the elected body stands behind them.

Councilor Witham said if there is no objection he would like to move that this letter be sent to both the New Hampshire and Maine Departments of Transportation with copies sent to the Town of Berwick, Maine to outline our pleasure with regard to the bridge enhancements.

The motion was seconded by Councilor Watman and passed unanimously.

CITY COUNCIL CERTIFICATION OF RESULTS OF RECOUNT FOR WARD 4
CITY COUNCIL SEAT HELD ON 11/16/2011.

FINAL TALLY SHEET
RECOUNT RESULTS FOR WARD 4 CITY COUNCIL SEAT
NOVEMBER 16, 2011

Jon McCallion	<u>118</u>
Dana Hilliard	<u>114</u>

Councilor Watman moved for Council certification of results of recount for Ward 4 City Council Seat held on 11/16/2011. The motion was seconded by Councilor Tapscott and passed by a vote of 8 yeas, 1 abstention, Councilor McCallion abstaining.

SET HOURS FOR JANUARY 10, 2012 PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY – 8:00 A.M. TO
7:00 P.M.

Councilor Tapscott moved to accept the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. for the Presidential Primary Election to be held on January 10, 2012. The motion was seconded by Councilor Witham and passed by a vote of 7 yeas, 2 nays, Councilors Spainhower and Sprague voting in the negative.

COMMENTS BY VISITORS.

John Joyal, 1 Molly Lane, said he agrees with the letter sent by Mike Micucci. He feels that in the past there have been questions about our elections. Ms. Cameron should have known which ward she was running in, but she is not the one who makes up the ballots. As a citizen and taxpayer, and most definitely as a voter, he encourages the City Council to contact the Attorney General and the Secretary of State's Office to obtain training for election officials in this City. When he found out what happened that day he was very

embarrassed as a resident of this City to know this happened. He feels that Ms. Cameron was dealt an injustice. We need to help our people that conduct elections.

Jennifer Soldati, 35 Pleasant Street, said she is Councilor-elect for Ward 2. She was the Supervisor of the Checklist for Ward 2 for several years. She is here to speak in defense of the City. One side of the street where Ms. Cameron lives is Ward 3, and the other side is Ward 2. It would be very easy to make this type of mistake. She apportions the blame 50/50.

Ms. Soldati attested that Ms. Cameron changed her voter registration from Ward 1 to Ward 2 in October of 2010.

Ms. Soldati said someone questioned her as to why she was sitting in the polls working on election day when she was on the ballot. She insisted that the City Clerk call the Secretary of State's Office before the election to make sure she could legally do that, and was told that she could.

Diane Griffith, 52 Grove Street, a representative of Friends of Somersworth, said that government does run slowly, sometimes for good reasons and other times maybe not. She encouraged the citizens of Somersworth to go to their website, friendsofsomersworth.com and take a look at the business plan. Give us a call and have some communication with us so we can talk more about this. A lot of people put a lot of time and effort into this, and she feels they have a wonderful business plan.

Ms. Griffith said she understands the questions about zoning and said they will work with that. She asked the Council to continue to work with them.

CLOSING COMMENTS BY COUNCIL MEMBERS.

Councilor Sprague said he has run in a lot of elections. When he files at the City Clerk's Office, right next to where you stand is a Ward Map. You just need to find the street you live on and it will tell you the ward you are in.

Councilor Sprague said a few things he would like to see next year are:

- A change in the way we hear comments from the public. He would like to be able to interact and possibly ask questions. It would be good to be able to have some dialogue.
- Draft a resolution for Yankee Thermal Imaging to at least start doing the audits for our buildings, which is at no cost to the City.
- Find a way to get wi-fi through the downtown area for free.
- He still will be making a push for the one-way traffic pattern, especially now right before we have the TE grant kick into effect.
- Adjacent to us is the parking lot that we use to pile snow, pile pumpkins, and park abandoned cars there. We are getting into this private/public relationship. He would like to see us actually see about soliciting someone that would put up some

buildings there. We could tie in an area where the COAST bus could pick up and drop people off.

- Urged everyone to shop local.

Councilor Sprague said they hear so many comments about the bad roads and how deplorable our downtown looks. He said people should ask themselves what they have done for downtown. Is it pretty roads, aesthetics, or lights that make a pretty downtown? It's actually the people. We need to take care of the people who run businesses downtown.

Councilor Sprague wished everyone a Merry Christmas and he thanked Councilors Watman and Spainhower for serving. He will miss them both.

Councilor Jarvis thanked the Councilors that are leaving. She thanked Councilor Watman for his knowledge and his help on the Finance Committee.

Councilor Witham indicated what he would like to see from the School Board when their budget is ready for submission would be something similar to what they did last year with perhaps a bit more detail. He would like to see them provide explanations for where the increases are occurring. Those are the pieces that are most useful from his perspective.

Councilor Witham indicated the City Manager provided them with a copy of materials that he presented to the Greater Somersworth Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors with regard to development activities that have occurred in the City over the last year or so. He found it refreshing to see that we haven't been stagnant in this economy. He pointed out the expansion of several businesses. Something else he made note of was the development process from start to finish. Compared to neighboring communities it is a relatively quick process here in Somersworth. He applauded the City Manager for sharing that with them.

Councilor Witham said we heard a resident speak about the candidate that ran for the wrong ward seat and we also had a communication from Mr. Micucci. Based on the information that he has been able to gather, what we have learned was that it was an error and it is too bad it occurred. He said he has all the faith in the world in the City Clerk. He was in the office on the day of the election and there was no one that felt worse about this than she did. He appreciates that mistakes are made, we are all human. He appreciates everything the City Clerk does for the City.

Councilor Witham took a moment to talk about the Toys for Tots Program, which happens behind the scenes at the Somersworth Fire Department. It is spearheaded largely by Firefighter Jim Drakopoulos, but all the men and women of the Somersworth Fire Department participate in it. The need this year continues to increase over prior years which is unfortunate. They do a lot of good work, which culminates this Friday evening at 6:00 p.m. with a "wrapping party" at the Somersworth Fire Department. He has participated for many years along with his son, and it is very rewarding.

Councilor Witham said he will miss both Councilors who are leaving. They do not always agree on things, but after the meetings they are cordial and polite. He is most appreciative of that. Councilor Spainhower at times has grown his hair and shaved it off in support of community activities. Dale is always giving back to the community and his role on the Council is just another example of that. He is a model for many citizens to look up to and he will miss his presence on the Council.

Councilor Witham said Councilor Watman is the most prepared Councilor that we have here. Well-prepared, well-read on all matters, and whether you agree or disagree with him you can appreciate the time he puts into preparing for the meetings. He has learned a lot from him and considers him a role model. He will miss his guidance and wisdom and wished him all the best.

Councilor Tapscott asked if anyone knows if there will be a temporary bridge built when they are working on the Somersworth-Berwick Bridge. If so, that is a concern of his because we have over 11,000 vehicles going over that bridge every day.

Councilor Tapscott thanked Councilors Watman and Spainhower and said he appreciates everything they have done for the City.

Councilor Tapscott wished everybody a Merry Christmas.

Councilor Pepin said he would also like to thank Councilor Beaudet. During the short time he has served he has enjoyed the conversations they have had. He wishes he was going to be here longer so he could get to know him better.

Councilor Pepin said he will miss Councilors Spainhower and Watman very much. He hopes they can remain friends. He also misses Councilor Messier and thanked him for all his years of service. You always knew where you stood with him.

Councilor McCallion thanked both departing Councilors for serving and said they will be missed.

Councilor Beaudet told Jennifer Soldati he shares her concern. He lives on Green Street and is in Ward 5, but the people who live across the street on Green Street are in Ward 4. It is easy to understand how that mistake can happen. He is sympathetic to Nancie's cause.

Councilor Beaudet wished everyone happy holidays.

Councilor Spainhower said he voted no to the hours for voting on 1/10/12 because he thinks 8:00 a.m. is a little too late. He didn't want to push it because he knows the people who work at the polls like it.

Councilor Spainhower said he would like to thank his family because they are the ones that really sacrifice all the times he runs from the Fire Station, changes clothes, runs to City Hall for a meeting, changes clothes, etc. That is who really needs to be thanked.

Councilor Spainhower said one of the reasons he ran for Council was because of his grandfather, and he thanked him for that. He hopes to be back in the future. His time commitment is pretty full right now.

Councilor Spainhower thanked everybody.

Councilor Watman said God has blessed him in so many ways he can't even believe it. He was born in this country of parents who sacrificed so that he could get an education, blessed to find a job here in Somersworth in 1968 teaching in the high school and staying there until he retired, and blessed with a wife who put up with the time demands of the various public offices he has served in. He is honored to have been elected to those offices to serve with the people who are his colleagues. He has been humbled by elected officials, City employees, and people who labor so hard in charitable, social, civic, athletic and patriotic organizations in this City who make it what it is. That is really what makes Somersworth what it is. We are lucky to have these people. All he has tried to do is act as an elected representative should. He appreciates the confidence the voters have shown in him and the confidence his colleagues have shown in him.

NON PUBLIC SESSION.

Councilor Witham moved to go into non public session. The motion was seconded by Councilor Tapscott and carried by roll call vote of 9 yeas, 0 nays.

ADJOURNMENT.

Motion by Councilor Witham to adjourn the regular meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilor Watman and carried unanimously. The regular meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Diane M. DuBois, City Clerk

LAY ON

TABLE

RESOLUTION NO. 17-12 AUTHORIZING A PUBLIC-PRIVATE COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE CITY OF SOMERSWORTH AND THE FRIENDS OF SOMERSWORTH TO PURSUE THE PRESERVATION OF THE HILLTOP SCHOOL AS A COMMUNITY RESOURCE.

Somersworth, NH
November 14, 2011

WHEREAS the City of Somersworth has assumed care and control of the former Hilltop Elementary School Building and associated property designated as Assessor's Map 11 Lot 49; and

WHEREAS the City of Somersworth recognizes that preservation of the former Hilltop School building and property is a reasonable goal given its iconic value and its presence in an established historic neighborhood; and

WHEREAS the re-use of the property will help to keep the building and property from becoming a hazardous or blighted condition through prolonged abandonment; and

WHEREAS such a public-private partnership will provide City guidance and assistance in seeking out and applying for grants open to the City as well as grants open to the Friends of Somersworth that will support the necessary steps to ensure the legal, safe and effective re-use of the building and property; and

WHEREAS the Friends of Somersworth do not wish for the adaptive re-use of the property to be a financial burden on City taxpayers and such a partnership does not obligate the City of Somersworth to any funding; and

WHEREAS the establishment of a partnership does not prohibit other action by the City Council of the City of Somersworth relative to other public or private re-use alternatives,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SOMERSWORTH THAT a public-private collaborative partnership between the City of Somersworth and a duly incorporated non-profit community based group known as the Friends of Somersworth be established and that the City Manager is authorized to execute any documents and agreements necessary for any grant application on the City's behalf, and to take any other action deemed to be in the best interest of the City to facilitate the vision and goals of the City Council and the Friends of Somersworth in furtherance of the adaptive re-use of the former Hilltop Elementary School Building and associated property into a community building to promote arts, cultural growth and community engagement.

Introduced by Councilors

Jonathan McCallion

Robin Jarvis

Dale Sprague

Martin Pepin

David Witham

Approved:

City Attorney

UNFINISHED

BUSINESS

RESOLUTION NO. 18-12 ACCEPT HAWTHORNE CIRCLE.

Somersworth, NH
December 12, 2011

WHEREAS, the City of Somersworth Planning Board approved a certain subdivision known as Gerrish Commons prepared for Maplecroft Building & Development, LLC, Tax Map 48, Lots 12 & 24, West High Street, Somersworth, Strafford Co., NH, Dated June 6, 2005, Prepared by Tritech Engineering Corporation, recorded as Plan #94-23 and #94-24 at the Strafford County Registry of Deeds and the roadway was to be accepted by the City of Somersworth; and

WHEREAS, the City Council named Hawthorne Circle by Resolution No. 33-08 on February 4, 2008; and

WHEREAS, the road known as Hawthorne Circle has been constructed to the satisfaction of the City,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SOMERSWORTH THAT the City Manager is authorized to accept and record a deed to Hawthorne Circle and said way is hereby accepted as a public way.

Introduced by Councilors

Dale Spainhower
Dale Sprague

Approved:

City Attorney

NEW

BUSINESS

RESOLUTION NO. 19-12 TO AUTHORIZE THE CITY MANAGER TO COORDINATE WITH YANKEE THERMAL IMAGING OF DOVER, NH TO CONDUCT ENERGY AUDITS ON CITY OF SOMERSWORTH BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES, AT NO COST TO THE CITY.

Somersworth, NH
January 3, 2012

WHEREAS, the Somersworth City Council held a workshop on November 14, 2011 for the purpose of a presentation by Yankee Thermal Imaging regarding specific energy reduction and management programs for City buildings, and

WHEREAS, Yankee Thermal Imaging will conduct energy audits on City owned buildings and facilities and make recommendations to implement improvements that will lead to energy efficiencies and energy use reductions, and

WHEREAS, the Somersworth City Council supports the concept of reducing the energy demands of the City and by way of this Resolution encourages the Somersworth School Board to partner with the City in this program,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SOMERSWORTH THAT the City Manager is authorized to coordinate with Yankee Thermal Imaging of Dover, NH to conduct energy audits on City of Somersworth Buildings and Facilities, at no cost to the City.

Introduced by Councilor

Dale R. Sprague

Approved

City Attorney



CITY OF SOMERSWORTH
Office of the City Manager

TO: Mayor Matthew Spencer and City Council Members
FROM: Robert M. Belmore, City Manager
DATE: Thursday, December 29, 2011
SUBJECT: City Manager's Report for Tuesday, January 3, 2012
City Council Agenda

Inauguration
6:30 p.m.

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

A. Discussion of Monthly Water and Sewer Billing.

B. Resolution No. 17-12 Authorizing a Public-Private Collaboration between the City of Somersworth and the Friends of Somersworth to Pursue the Preservation of the Hilltop School as a Community Resource.

Unfinished Business (under Section 12 of the Agenda):

Resolutions:

A. Resolution No. 18-12 Accept Hawthorne Circle. Please review attached memorandum and information (consider striking in the second line of Resolution "prepared for").

New Business (under Section 13 of the Agenda):

Resolution:

A. Resolution No. 19-12 To Authorize the City Manager to Coordinate with Yankee Thermal Imaging of Dover, NH to Conduct Energy Audits on City of Somersworth Buildings and Facilities, at no Cost to the City. I have forwarded a copy of the Resolution to the School Superintendent.

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

A. Informational Items:

1. **Superfund Landfill Site Monitoring Costs.** As has been the practice, I will be signing (without objection) the attached contract for proposed monitoring work to be done by GeoSyntec Consultants as being required by the EPA for next year of 2012. (This will be bifurcated into two contracts: one covering January 1, 2012 – June 30, 2012 and one covering July 1, 2012 – June 30, 2013.) These groundwater sampling and other Remedial Action Services are our compliance obligations in accordance with the existing EPA Consent Decree and Record of Decision (ROD).
2. **Sustainability Committee/Clean Air Cool Planet Grant.** Attached is a draft copy of a grant that I have authorized the Sustainability Committee to submit on behalf of the City. I have discussed this grant with Committee Chair Liz Wilson. This would be a program to encourage increased Community recycling and recycling awareness in general

Welcome 2012!

Wishing you a wonderful New Year filled with
abundance, joy and treasured moments.