

MINUTES OF CITY COUNCIL MEETING

OCTOBER 1, 2012

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

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING.

MINUTES OF PUBLIC HEARINGS HELD ON SEPTEMBER 4, 2012.

Councilor Pepin moved to accept the minutes of the public hearings as recorded. The motion was seconded by Councilor Soldati and passed by a vote of 7 yeas, 1 abstention, Councilor Sprague abstaining.

MINUTES OF CITY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON SEPTEMBER 4, 2012.

Mayor Spencer indicated that on page 17, under Resolution No. 7-13, there is a "w" missing on the second line.

Councilor Witham moved to approve these minutes with the minor change. The motion was seconded by Councilor McCallion and passed unanimously.

COMMENTS BY VISITORS.

Real Roseberry, Ward 1, said he came here tonight to tell the City Councilors that he has checked on some tax rates in other parts of the State. Berlin is \$31.70/thousand; Durham is \$28.11/thousand; Somersworth is \$27.83/thousand. He did his homework. He feels we really need the tax cap. Our increase was \$2.02 last year.

George Poulin, 12 Grove Street, resident of Ward 1 and President of the Historical Society, said he is here to let the Council know that the Summersworth Historical Museum is celebrating their tenth anniversary on October 14, 2012 from 12 noon to 4:00 p.m. They would love to see everybody down there. They will have raffles, give-aways, prizes, and many other things going on throughout the afternoon. He is inviting the Council and hopes to see them all there. Mr. Poulin thanked the City for their continued support.

Emmett Soldati, Ward 1, thanked City Councilors and members of City staff that came to the Friends of Somersworth event Saturday evening. It was a huge success, and he thinks a lot of people got some pretty unusual art objects and antiques. He thanked people for supporting them and following along with what they are doing with the former Hilltop Elementary School. They will have more updates as things move along, and the fundraiser certainly helped them to move forward.

Mr. Soldati referred to Resolution No. 11-13, asking the City Council to seriously consider whether we want to defer re-deeding 1 Winter Street, or make the tough decision of actually addressing the problems because we don't know if any private individual can deal with the clean-up there.

Mr. Soldati said he supports Ordinance No. 4-13. He thinks it is very appropriate that some of the funds that aren't taxpayer dollars are going to help the former elementary school become a utilized building for the community.

MAYOR'S REPORT.

Mayor Spencer reported the following activities:

- 9/18/12 – Attended the LGC Budget Workshop in Manchester.
- 9/21/12 – Attended the LGC Legislative Workshop in Concord.
- 9/22/12 – Attended the Friends of Somersworth Silent Auction fundraiser for the former Hilltop Elementary School.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES.

FINANCE COMMITTEE.

Councilor Jarvis reported this Committee met on 9/28/12. The following items were discussed:

- Reviewed RSA 261:153, which is the motor vehicle registration fee for transportation related improvements capital reserve fund. It was brought to their attention by the City Manager that there are several other communities doing this. If this were approved by the City Council, it would take effect 60 days after adoption.
- Reviewed the City investment policy, which is before you this evening for a vote. This has to be adopted each year. There have been no changes to this.
- Reviewed the Verizon Water Tower Lease Agreement and voted to support it.
- Discussion regarding the concern of the Public Works roof leaking. After evaluation and looking at the bids, getting the roof fixed was approved unanimously.
- Discussion regarding the unions and health insurance. This is extremely important not only to the employees but also to the Council and the City in regards to increase in taxes. They are trying to find better ways to benefit the City as well as the employees.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE.

Councilor McCallion reported this Committee met on 9/28/12. The purpose of the meeting was to talk with Christine Davis, the new Economic Development Manager, and discuss where she is at with the goals that were set forth between City staff and the City Manager. He was very happy with a lot of the goals that she put forth. It showed that she

did her homework before she got hired. There were a lot of things that she outlined that were on his list also.

PUBLIC WORKS & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE.

Councilor Sprague reported this Committee met on 9/26/12. They discussed the following items:

- Talked to the owners of Baxter Mill Apartments who were requesting an easement through two portions of City property off Buffumsville Road. He thinks they came up with a pretty good agreement.
- They talked about the Rocky Hill Road culvert project being put off until spring. They put the project out to bid and they only received one bid. With the hot top season coming to an end, they feel it should be postponed until next spring after school is out.
- They talked about the Water Treatment Plant lagoon cleaning bid. Only one bid was received. They had allowed \$30,000 for this project, and the bid came back at \$47,000. They decided to re-bid and see if they can come up with an hourly rate for a company to come in and do \$30,000 worth of work.
- They talked about the motor vehicle registration fee, which is something that has been talked about in the past in goal-setting sessions. The State put this in place about four years ago. Communities can put a surcharge of anywhere up to \$5 on motor vehicle registrations. The money has to go towards transportation items. This will go directly towards helping out our community. Council would need two resolutions, one to set up a capital reserve fund and one to set the amount of the fee. The amount could change from year to year, but could not exceed \$5.
- They talked about Interstate Drive paving and drainage project. They are going to put that off until spring also.
- They were informed by the City Manager that the Somersworth-Berwick Bridge project that we will be partaking in with the State of Maine has gone up another \$62,000 over budget.

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE.

Councilor Witham indicated this Committee will be meeting on Friday, 10/5/12 for a variety of updates from both the Fire Chief and the Police Chief.

RECREATION COMMITTEE

Councilor Pepin indicated this Committee will be meeting on Friday, 10/5/12 also. They will be discussing the Noble Pines, update on summer programs and the Pine Street Park project.

Councilor Jarvis added that the Finance Committee had some discussion regarding the unions and health insurance. That is extremely important not only to the employees but

also to the Council and the City in regards to increase in taxes. They are trying to find better ways to benefit the City as well as the employees.

REPORTS OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES.

SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE.

Councilor Soldati reported this Committee met on 9/20/12. They discussed the following items:

- The community gardens were a success. There were some crops produced.
- A new item the Committee has taken up is the idea of “edible adopt-a-spots”, which is a trend that has been going on nationally. Apparently there has been difficulty keeping people involved. That would involve growing edible food that anybody could pick. They will be exploring this idea and they would like to hear from residents regarding if they think this is a good idea or not. She encouraged people to contact Public Works for next year if they would like to sponsor an adopt-a-spot.

BUILDING TRADES TRUST COMMITTEE.

Councilor Pepin reported this Committee met on 9/25/12. He had last reported the students had a building constructed that was supposed to be going to Haiti, however they couldn't get it through customs. It ended up being sold for the amount that was tied up in materials.

Councilor Pepin said hopefully this week one of the houses that was constructed will be placed on River Street. The students will be going to the site to finish the inside of the building.

Councilor Pepin said their next project will be the food pantry. They will be putting up a building behind the church on West High Street. That should take about nine weeks.

SCHOOL BOARD.

Councilor Pepin said he attended a public hearing with residents of Rollinsford on 9/25/12 prior to the School Board meeting. The public hearing was relative to Rollinsford possibly dropping from the Somersworth School District.

At the School Board meeting, Mark Jobin of Jobin Construction did a presentation going over what he felt was needed for windows at the high school and what type of windows would be installed. Following the presentation, the School Board offered feedback.

There were also a lot of Rollinsford residents talking about the Withdrawal Committee process. A lot of residents and students couldn't believe it had gone this far and they were in favor of staying with Somersworth. Rollinsford residents wanted to be able to phase students out of Somersworth rather than taking them all out at one time.

The School Department is looking at losing \$1M+ if Rollinsford does go out. They did rephrase the wording a little bit, stating they would consider phasing students out. Rollinsford residents were happy with that.

COAST.

Councilor Pepin said he attended a COAST bus meeting on 9/26/12. They elected officers and also went over the budget process. They are looking at a 27% increase. They have a growth rate of 35%. The ridership was over 1 million people this year which is an 11% increase over last year.

Councilor McCallion asked Councilor Pepin if the School Board has adopted Roberts Rules of Order.

Councilor Pepin answered in the affirmative.

STRAFFORD REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION.

Councilor Tapscott reported he attended a meeting of this Commission on 9/27/12 in Rochester, NH.

They approved keeping the dues the same as last year.

PLANNING BOARD.

Councilor Witham reported at the last Planning Board meeting they took up the matter of rezoning a number of recreationally zoned parcels in the City, the largest of which is the Sunningdale tract. The Planning Board recognized these parcels probably aren't best served with a recreational designation.

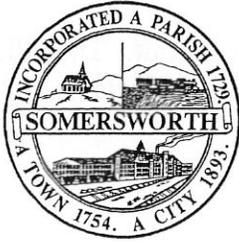
Councilor Witham said a public hearing was held on rezoning the parcels to R1 and the Planning Board moved that on to the City Council. There will be more to come on that.

VISION 2020.

Councilor McCallion reported this Committee met on 9/24/12. It was probably the best attended meeting to date. One of their goals for the coming year is to help the Somersworth Festival Association run a recruitment campaign.

Councilor McCallion reported they are in need of a representative from the Zoning Board, and also a School Board member.

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, September 28, 2012

SUBJECT: City Manager's Report for Monday, October 1, 2012
City Council Agenda

6:00 p.m. – Council Workshop for Review of Goals

Attached is a copy of the Council's Goal Setting Workshop minutes.
City Department Heads will be present for the workshop.

Old Business (under Section 12 of the Agenda):

Resolutions:

- A. **Resolution 10-13 To Notify the City Tax Collector that the City Council shall not Accept a Tax Deed on Certain Manufactured Housing Units Subject to an Unredeemed Tax Lien.** As a reminder, 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. 11-13 To Notify the City Tax Collector that the City Council shall not Accept a Tax Deed on Certain Property Located at 1 Winter Street Subject to an Unredeemed Tax Lien.** As a reminder, this is the former Breton Cleaners contaminated site that is under a NH DES clean up mandate. The City does retain the option to accept this deed at any time.

New Business (under Section 13 of the Agenda):

Ordinances:

- A. **Ordinance No. 4-13 Supplemental Appropriation of Accrued Investment Earnings from the New Elementary School Construction Bond.** The Finance Committee is sponsoring this action request. I recommend the City Council

schedule the required Public Hearing prior to the next regular meeting on Monday, October 15th at 6:45 p.m.

B. Ordinance No. 5-13 Amend Chapter 13, Police Offenses, Section 3.2A, Stop.

Resolutions:

A. Resolution No. 12-13 To Establish a Capital Reserve Fund for the Purpose of Reconstruction or Rehabilitation of the Hilltop School Property. The Finance Committee is sponsoring this action request. I recommend a Public Hearing on October 15th at 6:50 p.m.

B. Resolution No. 13-13 To Authorize the City Manager to Contract with Hoyle Tanner and Associates, Inc. of Portsmouth, NH to Provide Professional Engineering Services Associated with the Downtown Improvement Project. Both the Finance Committee and the Public Works and Environment Committee support the rationale for contracting with Hoyle Tanner and Associates, the engineering firm that completed the preliminary assessment of the water, sewer and drainage systems in the project area. Attached is a copy of their draft proposed contract. Please consider waiving Council Rules to pass this Resolution this evening.

C. Resolution No. 14-13 To Accept a Portion of Willand Drive. Attached is a map of this small section of the road. This is a housekeeping action item.

D. Resolution No. 15-13 Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Gas Line Easement over City Properties with Great Baxter Mills, L.L.C. of Somersworth, NH. The Public Works & Environment Committee met with Attorney Wyskiel and his clients to review this proposal. The Committee recommends full City Council approval. Attached is a letter from Attorney Wyskiel and a map of the proposed easement.

Other:

A. Vote to Re-Adopt the City Investment Policy. A copy of the present Policy is attached. City Administration has no recommendation for amendment and recommends re-adoption. This is an annual review and adoption practice required by the Policy. The Finance Committee also recommends re-adoption.

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

B. Informational Items:

- 1. 2012 Certified Local Government Grant.** The City has been awarded \$25,220 to conduct Phase V of the update to the City's historical survey forms. This project has been ongoing for several years and four other phases have been completed. This fifth phase is simply an extenuation of

the first four phases and the scope remains the same. This phase of the project will survey the remaining parcels in the District, thus completing the survey update.

C. Attachments:

1. City Attorney Certifications (3).
2. City Manager Memo on NH DOT Bridge Rehabilitation updated budget estimate.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS.

Nominations:

Ward Clerk, Ward 2 – Robert Fullerton, term to expire 1/2014.

Councilor Pepin moved to accept this nomination. The motion was seconded by Councilor Tapscott and passed unanimously.

Resolutions:

RESOLUTION NO. 10-13 TO NOTIFY THE CITY TAX COLLECTOR THAT THE CITY COUNCIL SHALL NOT ACCEPT A TAX DEED ON CERTAIN MANUFACTURED HOUSING UNITS SUBJECT TO AN UNREDEEMED TAX LIEN.

Councilor Witham indicated the difficulty with these manufactured housing units is that if we were to take them through a tax lien we would then be obligated to pay park rent and other costs associated with keeping those units there. It is not in our best financial interest to acquire these units, so that is why we choose not to.

Councilor McCallion asked if the park owners are still able to get lot rent under current state law from the people even though we aren't getting tax payments.

Councilor McCallion moved to suspend the rules to allow Finance Director Smith to speak on this. The motion was seconded by Councilor Tapscott and passed unanimously.

Finance Director Smith said the unredeemed tax liens are on the homes themselves, not the land they are on. The park owners would still charge their lot rent.

Councilor McCallion said these people are able to stay in their homes because they are paying their park rent, yet they are not paying their property taxes. He feels we need to look at this and see if there is something we can do about this.

Finance Director Smith said this is something that many communities struggle with presently. It is a difficult problem.

Councilor Sprague indicated that when the property is sold the taxes would be recaptured.

The City Manager added the City would also have to insure it. There are liability issues, legal issues, and displacement.

Resolution No. 10-13 passed by roll call vote of 7 yeas, 1 nay, Councilor McCallion voting in the negative.

RESOLUTION NO. 11-13 TO NOTIFY THE CITY TAX COLLECTOR THAT THE CITY COUNCIL SHALL NOT ACCEPT A TAX DEED ON CERTAIN PROPERTY LOCATED AT 1 WINTER STREET SUBJECT TO AN UNREDEEMED TAX LIEN.

Councilor Jarvis said the Finance Committee did review this. There would be a cost to clean this area up and the potential cost of \$6,000 to \$12,000 per year to continue to test and maintain it.

Councilor Witham said this is similar to the resolution that was just passed inasmuch as we would be acquiring a liability.

Councilor Witham said he knows that City staff has been exploring the idea of a Brownfields Grant which could help us with cleanup costs and potentially monitoring costs. If that were to come to light in the future, we could revisit this. This would be worth pursuing, due to the location of the property.

Resolution No. 11-13 passed by roll call vote of 8 yeas, 0 nays.

NEW BUSINESS.

ORDINANCE NO. 4-13 SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION OF ACCRUED INVESTMENT EARNINGS FROM THE NEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION BOND.

Somersworth, NH

October 1, 2012

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SOMERSWORTH THAT pursuant to Section 7.7(a) of the City Charter the annual budget for the City of Somersworth for Fiscal Year 2012-2013 is amended as follows:

<u>Original Budget</u>	<u>Amendment</u>	<u>Revised Budget</u>
<u>Other Expenses</u>		
\$1,300,801	\$38,000	\$1,338,801

This Ordinance shall take effect upon its passage.

Introduced by Councilors

Jennifer Soldati
Robin Jarvis

Approved as to funding:

Recorded by:

Scott A. Smith
Director of Finance and Administration

Diane M. DuBois
City Clerk

Background:

This ordinance appropriates a portion of the investment earnings from the new elementary school construction bond for the purpose of providing funding to a Capital Reserve Fund for the reconstruction and/or rehabilitation of the former Hilltop Elementary School property.

This Ordinance requires a public hearing and requires a 2/3 majority vote of the City Council after the public hearing (Section 7.7.(A) City Charter).

Approved:
City Attorney

Following the first reading of Ordinance No. 4-13, it was referred to the next meeting.

ORDINANCE NO. 5-13 AMEND CHAPTER 13, POLICE OFFENSES, SECTION 3.2.A. STOP.

Somersworth, NH
October 1, 2012

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SOMERSWORTH THAT the Ordinances of the City of Somersworth, as amended, be further amended as follows:

Amend Chapter 13, Police Offenses, Section 3.2.A. Intersection Controls, Stop, by adding the following:

- Pearl Street for southbound traffic on Hanson Street.

This Ordinance shall take effect upon its passage.

Introduced by Councilor

Brian Tapscott

Approved:
City Attorney

Following the first reading of Ordinance No. 5-13, it was referred to the next meeting.

RESOLUTION NO. 12-13 TO ESTABLISH A CAPITAL RESERVE FUND FOR THE PURPOSE OF RECONSTRUCTION OR REHABILITATION OF THE HILLTOP SCHOOL PROPERTY.

Somersworth, NH

October 1, 2012

WHEREAS, the City of Somersworth desires to make improvements to the former Hilltop Elementary School Property through the use of a public and private partnership, and

WHEREAS, the City Council would like to encourage the application for and use of grant funding in addition to local funding sources, and

WHEREAS RSA 34:1 permits the establishment of a capital reserve fund for the construction, reconstruction, or acquisition of capital improvements,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SOMERSWORTH THAT the Hilltop School Property Rehabilitation Capital Reserve Fund is established for the purpose of reconstruction or rehabilitation of Hilltop School property, including the cost of engineering and other ancillary costs directly related to the reconstruction or rehabilitation of Hilltop School property, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the City Council is hereby designated as agents to expend these funds.

Introduced by Councilors

Jennifer Soldati

Robin Jarvis

Approved:

City Attorney

Following the first reading of Resolution No. 12-13, it was referred to the next meeting.

RESOLUTION NO. 13-13 TO AUTHORIZE THE CITY MANAGER TO CONTRACT WITH HOYLE, TANNER AND ASSOCIATES, INC. OF PORTSMOUTH, NH TO PROVIDE PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERING SERVICES ASSOCIATED WITH THE DOWNTOWN IMPROVEMENT PROJECT.

Somersworth, NH

October 1, 2012

WHEREAS, the Somersworth City Council adopted Resolution 8-13 to fund certain capital improvements including a downtown improvement project which includes upgrades to the City's drainage, water, and sewer systems and reconstruction of the road and sidewalks on a portion of High Street and Market Street; and

WHEREAS, the City requires the service of a qualified engineering firm to provide design, bidding, construction oversight, and other professional services related to the downtown improvement project, and

WHEREAS, Hoyle, Tanner and Associates, Inc. provided the underground utility condition analysis on this project area and has provided the City a proposal to provide the professional engineering services required for this project in an amount not to exceed \$238,200 (Two Hundred Thirty Eight Thousand Two Hundred dollars)

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SOMERSWORTH THAT the City Manager is authorized to contract with Hoyle, Tanner and Associates, Inc. of Portsmouth, NH to provide professional engineering services associated with the downtown improvement project for an amount not to exceed \$238,200 (Two Hundred Thirty Eight Thousand Two Hundred dollars).

Introduced by Councilors

Dale Sprague
Brian Tapscott
Marcel Hebert
Robin Jarvis
Jennifer Soldati

Approved
City Attorney

Councilor Tapscott moved to suspend the rules to have a second reading of Resolution No. 13-13 this evening. The motion was seconded by Councilor Sprague and passed unanimously.

Following the second reading of Resolution No. 13-13 by title, Councilor Sprague said the Council would like to get the ball rolling on this. They have a very aggressive schedule to get the downtown done by next fall. The two weeks we would be buying here by passing this tonight will go a long way in moving this project along.

Councilor Witham agreed with this. He also said Hoyle & Tanner has been involved with this so they already have a leg up because of their knowledge regarding this project. It makes sense to get the ball rolling on this project, and also makes sense to use this firm because of their knowledge of the project.

Resolution No. 13-13 passed by roll call vote of 8 yeas, 0 nays.

RESOLUTION NO. 14-13 TO ACCEPT A PORTION OF WILLAND DRIVE.

Somersworth, NH
October 1, 2012

WHEREAS, the City of Somersworth Planning Board approved a certain subdivision known as “Subdivision Plan, Robert E. Stackpole, Willand Drive, Somersworth, New Hampshire”, Dated July 31, 2002, prepared by Trittech Engineering Corporation on August 21, 2002, and is recorded in the Strafford County Registry of Deeds as Plan 67-73; and

WHEREAS, the City Council named Willand Drive by Resolution 22-08 on December 10, 2007; and

WHEREAS, a plan entitled Right of Way Plan, Robert E. Stackpole, Commercial Drive, Somersworth, New Hampshire, dated November 17, 2008, prepared by Trittech Engineering Corporation, and recorded on December 15, 2008 in the Strafford County Registry of Deeds as Plan 98-40, shows the limits of the Willand Drive to immediately past the limits of the Commercial Drive Right of Way; and

WHEREAS, the section of the road known as Willand Drive depicted on said plan 98-40 to a point at the eastern limits of the right of way with the intersection of Commercial Drive 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 deeds to the portion of Willand Drive described above, and said way is hereby accepted as a public way.

Introduced by Councilors

Dale Sprague
Brian Tapscott
Marcel Hebert

Approved:
City Attorney

Following the first reading of Resolution No. 14-13, it was referred to the next meeting.

RESOLUTION NO. 15-13 AUTHORIZE THE CITY MANAGER TO EXECUTE A GAS LINE EASEMENT OVER CITY PROPERTIES WITH GREAT BAXTER MILLS, L.L.C. OF SOMERSWORTH, NH.

Somersworth, NH
October 1, 2012

WHEREAS, Great Baxter Mills L.L.C., the current owner of the Baxter Mills Apartments, would like to extend gas service to the Baxter Mills Apartment, and

WHEREAS, Great Baxter Mills, L.L.C. has identified the gas line existing at the Somersworth Wastewater Treatment Plant on Buffumsville Road as the most convenient location to make a connection for the gas line extension, and

WHEREAS, an easement to use the City's existing gas line now servicing the Wastewater Treatment Plant and to extend said line over an easement on City owned land beneath and adjacent to Buffumsville Road is required to complete the gas line extension, and

WHEREAS, Great Baxter Mills L.L.C. has agreed to the following conditions as part of their request that the City of Somersworth grant an easement over City properties:

- Pay for all engineering and attorneys' fees to prepare all required legal documents and supporting title research for the easement grant from the City to Great Baxter Mills L.L.C., and from Great Baxter Mills L.L.C. to Unutil.
- Pay all attorneys' fees incurred by the City to review the legal documents prepared by Great Baxter Mills L.L.C. in the first instance.
- Pay all costs incurred by the City to monitor actual construction of the gas line.
- Contribute \$7,000 to the City toward the purchase of a B.O.D. incubator to be used at the Wastewater Treatment Facility.
- Reimburse the City for any other incurred expenses associated with this project.
- Seek and gain approval of any Federal, State, or local agencies that have jurisdiction over such matters, and comply with any Federal, State, or local regulations as required.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SOMERSWORTH THAT the City Manager is authorized to execute a gas line easement over City properties with Great Baxter Mills, L.L.C. and to take any associated action deemed to be in the best interest of the City to complete this action.

Introduced by Councilors

Dale Sprague
Brian Tapscott
Marcel Hebert

Approved:
City Attorney

Following the first reading of Resolution No. 15-13, it was referred to the next meeting.

Other:

Mayor Spencer indicated the need to schedule a public hearing date for Ordinance No. 4-13 and Resolution No. 12-13. He recommended scheduling them prior to the 10/15/12 Council Meeting at 6:30 p.m. for Ordinance No. 4-13, and 6:45 p.m. for Resolution No. 12-13.

The City Council agreed with this.

VOTE TO RE-ADOPT THE CITY INVESTMENT POLICY.

Councilor Witham moved to adopt the City Investment Policy as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilor Pepin. The motion passed unanimously.

COMMENTS BY VISITORS.

Coty Donohue, Ward 5, said he is running for City Council. He invited the Council and everyone in the community to Teatottallers Teahouse on Saturday, 10/6/12 from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. for a campaign kickoff to give the community an opportunity for a “meet and greet” and to lend them his ear. He would like to talk to people and get their involvement and their input on various issues.

CLOSING COMMENTS BY COUNCIL MEMBERS.

Councilor Jarvis wanted to make sure the community is aware that there will be a 50's Dance and Silent Auction on Saturday from 6:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. at the Somersworth VFW. This is to support the Somersworth Holiday Parade.

Councilor Jarvis also wanted to make everyone aware that the SAU 56 is doing a fundraiser. They have tickets to a hockey game on Saturday, 1/12/13, which will be UNH against Boston College. Tickets are \$16.00. The fundraiser will be for the benefit of “68 Hours of Hunger”. This organization provides a backpack filled with food items for students to sustain them on weekends. This would help families that are struggling and need the assistance. Currently 57 students are being served in Somersworth with this program. They are also trying to start a program in Rollinsford as well. Tickets can be purchased at the SAU 56 office.

Councilor Witham asked Councilor Tapscott if the Government Operations Committee could, at its next meeting, examine Council rules with regards to the need to continue to suspend rules to allow department heads to speak. This seems to be a bit of a cumbersome issue. He is not sure there is a need to change this, but feels it should be looked at.

Councilor Witham said there was discussion about the motor vehicle surcharge. At face value, he likes the idea of exploring that. This would be one way to offset the projected 27% increase from COAST.

Councilor Witham referred to the public meeting Councilor Pepin talked about regarding the Rollinsford residents and the School Board regarding the notion of Rollinsford withdrawing from the Somersworth School District and going to another District.

Councilor Witham said the issue is one that has to be decided by the Town of Rollinsford, but the public meeting was over a piece of the Withdrawal Committee's request for proposals. It was over whether or not to allow for a gradual transition of students out of the district. The Somersworth School Board had said it would not allow for a gradual transition. The School Board wrangled with this decision because they were in a position of emotion, financial security, and business decision-making. It was very difficult for them. They did offer to Rollinsford the idea of reconsideration.

Councilor Witham said he feels the School Board handled themselves professionally and had thoughtful conversation and came to some meaningful middle-ground. He applauds their efforts on this very difficult issue.

Councilor Witham referred to the tax cap question, stating you cannot just look at a tax rate, you must also look at property values. He compared looking at just the tax rate to reading only one chapter of a 20 chapter book. He advised people to look at all the details before they cast their votes in November.

Councilor Witham said the notion of an edible adopt-a-spot is intriguing. He hopes it is not corn, because that would obstruct visibility.

Councilor Sprague wished to talk about the tax cap, saying Councilor Witham hit it right on the head. He advised people not to worry about the tax rate, worry about your tax bill. When assessed values go down, the tax rate goes up, and vice versa.

Councilor Sprague said we are sandwiched in between Dover and Rochester. We have \$880M of assessed value to draw from. The other two communities have \$1.2B and \$2.4B. He is set against the tax cap and feels the tax cap is the City Council.

Councilor Sprague said he attended the Friends of Somersworth Hidden Treasures Silent Auction Saturday night and it was great. It was well attended and they had a lot of donations. He bought several things.

Councilor Sprague said he is happy we are enforcing sidewalks/crosswalks. If there is something on the books we should enforce it.

Councilor Sprague said we have talked about regionalization of services, for example wastewater treatment plants. That has been done in the Lakes Region and they have found it is very difficult. The infrastructure is immense, which leads to another problem. If a community is big in commercial development, it can cause a high use to the plant which would cause an expansion to unfold. The cost of the expansion would be

distributed to the users. Some communities might not be able to come up with the money at that time. That is one of the issues he can see could be associated with regionalization.

Councilor Sprague said the idea of edible adopt-a-spots is a great idea.

Councilor Sprague said he was recently interviewed by Foster's along with other realtors about 2012 real estate. It is picking up which is good for everybody.

Councilor Soldati said the edible adopt-a-spot came up in committee, and her reaction was the same as theirs. Apparently this is a new trend. They are going to explore it, probably doing a couple to see what happens.

Councilor Soldati re-emphasized the 50's Dance and Silent Auction coming up on Saturday. She has been a resident now for seven years. She was never here when they had their Christmas parades, but she has been hearing about it ever since she moved here. This event is really important if you would like to see the return of the Christmas parade. Also, if you belong to a group or own/work for a business, you might want to put a float together to be part of the parade. If so, please contact Mayor Spencer. This is a real test of our community. We can work together on this and really make it fun. You have to start working now, because the parade is 12/8/12.

Councilor Soldati said the Pumpkin Festival will be held on 10/13/12. Also, the tenth anniversary of our Historical Museum, one of the finest museums in the State, will be held Sunday, 10/14/12, beginning at noon.

Councilor Soldati asked the Government Operations Committee to look at another item. We allow the public opening comments and closing comments, and she is wondering if there is a rule prohibiting the Council from having opening remarks as well as closing remarks. Council members might have something the people watching at home might want to hear and perhaps will not watch the meeting until the end.

Councilor McCallion said when he moved here from Dover a few years ago, it was because he grew up here and he wanted his children to graduate from Somersworth High School. He is very happy with the schools. We do not want to see Rollinsford go, but it is their decision. Anyone who attended school in Somersworth always knew the Rollinsford kids also, because they attended Somersworth High School. He wanted to convey to the people of Rollinsford that they should give Somersworth a chance. We are making investments right now in the school system and in the community. It has been a long time coming. He advised anyone who owns a business in Somersworth that would be impacted to try to get a schedule of work on the project so they are aware of it. They can get that information from Christine Davis in the Economic Development Department or from the Chamber of Commerce.

Councilor McCallion said there are a lot of events going on in Somersworth right now. One that will take place on 10/4/12 is the Senior Picnic, and it will be at the Fire Station.

Councilor McCallion indicated the Somersworth Festival Association is looking for volunteers. This is a great asset to the community and more people need to get involved.

Councilor McCallion said he went to the 7th/8th grade game Saturday. During the game, a car was broken into outside, and that is the first time he ever remembers that happening. The good thing was there were a lot of people there attending the game. He encourages everybody to attend the local sporting events. It helps the community and the organizations.

Councilor Pepin wished to make it perfectly clear, especially to the people of Rollinsford, that the School Board does not want to lose Rollinsford students. It is very hard to see a lot of students from Rollinsford crying because they don't want to leave the Somersworth school. He has heard from Rollinsford people that they want to have more of a voice in the schools. They are here for budget meetings, public hearings, etc. and have the opportunity to have their say. No one would ever deprive them from that.

Councilor Pepin said there is no one on the Council or the School Board who wants to see Rollinsford leave. They are a part of us and he believes the students feel the same way.

Councilor Sprague said he would actually like to see Rollinsford get a representative on the School Board, maybe not a vote, but a voice. He feels they should have a voice on the Board at budget time and also be able to ask questions.

Councilor Pepin said that was one of their main issues. It was brought up at a previous time, but it would require a charter change.

Councilor Witham said that is correct. They did get a legal opinion on that when they were considering the area agreement some time ago.

ADJOURNMENT.

Councilor Tapscott moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Councilor Soldati, and passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Diane M. DuBois, City Clerk