

MINUTES OF CITY COUNCIL MEETING

MARCH 17, 2014

Mayor Hilliard called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m. and upon roll call, the following members were found present: Pepin, Soldati, Hebert, Messier, Tapscott, Witham, Collins and Sprague. Absent: McCallion

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS.

- Minutes of Public Hearing held on 3/03/14 on Ordinance No. 11-14, Supplemental Appropriation for Additional Improvements as Part of the Downtown Improvements Project. Motion by Councilor Witham to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilor Messier and passed by a vote of 8 yeas, 0 nays.
- Minutes of City Council Meeting held on 3/03/14. Motion by Councilor Witham to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilor Hebert and passed by a vote of 8 yeas, 0 nays.
- Minutes of Goal Setting Session held on 3/06/14. Motion by Councilor Witham to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilor Hebert and passed by a vote of 8 yeas, 0 nays.

COMMENTS BY VISITORS.

Maddie DeSantis, 31 Prospect Street, Ward 1, said that Emmett Soldati, Chair of Friends of Somersworth (FOS), asked her to say a few words on his behalf. This past weekend their board had the opportunity to revisit their vision and values during a retreat at Idlehurst Elementary School. They have come a long way over the past two years since forming a public/private partnership formalizing their organization, connecting with arts and cultural groups, planning events, and working hand in hand with all of you and city staff to get Hilltop and our community where we want to be. They have recruited new talent to their board, and many of the founding members of FOS are still involved. They discussed where they came from, what their status is, and what they hope for the future. Central to their mission of arts and cultural growth is the idea that vibrancy needs to return to the city. Their challenges and solutions for the Hilltop School building are nearly identical to yours regarding the downtown improvement project. You've embarked on a brave and noble mission to re-invigorate our downtown and to bring back a sense of vibrancy it once had, yet you must answer questions to taxpayers who do not live in the downtown area as to why you are investing money into the downtown area and not theirs. The purpose of the downtown revitalization program is not only to serve the businesses and residents of the downtown area, but mostly to serve those residents who do not live in the downtown area. Your beautifying the downtown is to give a reason for those people living on the periphery a reason to come back to the downtown area, to get involved in their city. The same can be said for Hilltop. We aren't invigorating the Hilltop School building with studios and cultural events

just for the sake of the residents who border the school's grounds, but also to draw our citizens in who otherwise wouldn't walk the grounds or come inside the building. Hilltop is a piece of the puzzle to bring vibrancy back to our city. Just as all projects must begin somewhere, they are delighted that it began at the epicenter of the state's largest historic district. Please remember that the members of FOS are committed to the vision of the Master Plan and the vision you all have set forth to restore and re-invigorate our community with a sense of engagement, enjoyment and citizenship. Our partnership with the city has brought us this far and they are ready and excited to take the next step.

Sarah Duclos, Main Street, Ward 5, said she is also on the board of FOS and would like to comment on the presentation on the Hilltop School building this evening. She is a dance educator and she can speak to the beauty and necessity of the arts all day long. She knows that the City Council is concerned about numbers. She indicated there was a recent study published in Concord about the economic impact of non-profit arts and cultural organizations and their audiences in the State of New Hampshire. The total expenditures the industry made in this state have totaled \$115,082,228 (getting theaters off the ground.) That is money that is being spent in local hardware stores and other businesses. The total economic impact from audience members is \$2,560,069. When people go to see a show, they are patronizing local restaurants and local businesses. The study also indicated that 3,492 jobs were created. That is nothing to sniff at in a time of economic struggle. They need support for a place like Hilltop.

MAYOR'S REPORT.

Mayor Hilliard reported on 3/15/14 he along with Emmett Soldati from Friends of Somersworth, Christien Dubois and William Travascio from his office, met with Bud Fitch from US Senator Kelly Ayotte's Office for the purpose of seeking guidance and support from members of the NH Congressional Delegation and to insure the reopening and reuse of the Hilltop School building. Bud Fitch and Senator Ayotte were excited about the prospects and have offered their support and guidance in navigating the options available by the federal government. He will be meeting with members of US Senator Shaheen's staff in the next two weeks and is hopeful to meet with members of Carol Shea Porter's Office in the immediate future to try to secure a joint effort of support on the Hilltop project.

Mayor Hilliard said he received the following statement from Senator Ayotte's Office this afternoon: "I was pleased to hear about the efforts in Somersworth to repair the historical Somersworth Hilltop School for a community facility for cultural education and civic purposes. I look forward to working with Mayor Dana Hilliard, city officials, and Friends of Somersworth to identify any federal grant opportunities which might help with this project."

As announced during the 1/21/14 Mayor's report, in accordance with Council Rule 15, he is this evening naming the members of the Rail Advisory Committee. The committee will have a sunset date of 3/17/16 at which time the Mayor's Office may choose to re-establish and re-

appoint committee members, or disband the committee's function. While the committee may gain members in the future, tonight he is announcing the following committee members who have expressed an interest:

- Councilor Dale Sprague, Chairman
- Councilor Martin Pepin
- School Board Member Joanne Pepin
- Lara Willard
- Travis Heon
- Jackie Hanlon
- Paul Robidas
- Director of Planning and Development Dave Sharples
- Brian Caple

On 3/13/14, he was honored to deliver the State of the City Address as required by our City charter. The theme of the address was focusing in on three words which he believes represent the State of our City: **Hope, Team and Progress**. Within that address he went on to state the nature of team which has evolved within this body between members, the Mayor and City Manager's Office, Department Heads and employees and the citizens. To quote directly from the speech, **"A team which does not hinder from voicing their opinions, or sharing their ideas, but does so under the preface of civility and respect. While there will be times when all of us have major differences, and on occasion individual passions might lead to heated discussions and misinterpretations of motives, let us never forget how each one of us is truly committed to the banner: "We Believe in Somersworth."**

Mayor Hilliard said before you for a second reading this evening is Ordinance No. 13-14 Amending Chapter 19 Zoning Ordinance to Permit Chickens in all Residential Districts Provided that Certain Criteria have been Met. Through discussions with citizens, councilors and input given at the public hearing, he believes that legislation holds merit and would not hinder the progress of our community in any manner. However, he also believes that several legitimate questions have been raised which need further study and exploration before this body conducts a second reading and vote. In compliance with Roberts Rules of Order, legislation having not been read a second time can be assigned by the chair to committee. He is, therefore, assigning Ordinance No. 13-14 to the Committee on Public Works and the Environment. While it is apparent to him that most members of the Council are prepared to vote on this legislation this evening, he believes that further diligence is within order before a vote occurs.

Mayor Hilliard said he mentioned at the last Council meeting that he was moving forward with Saturday forums in a joint manner between the Mayor's Office and the City Council in an effort for a team approach. Unfortunately, due to RSA 91:A and some guidance from our City Attorney, this would be in direct violation of that RSA. Anytime a majority of Councilors are

convened within an area it is considered a public meeting and therefore needs to be posted and minutes need to be taken accordingly. He will readjust the scheduled forums. The first one will take place in April, which he will announce at the next Council meeting and will respectfully move through each ward once a month, and then move through with the at large members. He will invite the ward member from the School Board as well so that during those forums the public may come in and address their concerns with the Mayor, the individual Councilor represented during that forum, and the individual School Board member.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES.

Finance Committee:

Councilor Witham reported this Committee met on 3/10/14. All members were present as well as a number of City staff. They discussed the following items:

- The School Superintendent spoke to the matter of \$120,000 remaining from a bond for HVAC units (remaining after the work was done). The Superintendent indicated they could address additional units with this money. If that would happen, over half the units would have been replaced. Committee approved 4-0.
- The Fire Chief spoke about a SAFER Grant through the federal government to increase our call firefighting force to 20 members. Committee approved 4-0.
- The City Manager and Finance Director updated the committee on tax deeded property at 213 West High St. The city received no bids, and they discussed using a realtor. Committee approved 3-0, Councilor Sprague abstaining. The Committee also approved doing the same with property at 116-118 Green St. the vote being 3-0, Councilor Sprague abstaining.
- Met with Will Cochran and Mary Beth Walker of the City's assessing firm, Cochran Associates. They informed us of the City's need for a revaluation. The Committee discussed the process in detail. The City Manager noted there would be a budget figure for the revaluation in the FY15 budget.
- Finance Director Smith gave an update on the FY14 budget. Except for snow removal, we will end the year in the black. Reviewed monies available through the undesignated fund balance.
- Councilor Sprague asked for a comparison between the consultant DPW position currently held by Carol Murray through MRI and hiring a DPW Director employed by the City. Staff reported the cost for the consultant is approximately \$90.85/hr. (\$118,000+ annually) and the cost of a full-time director was \$60.36/hr. (\$125,429 annually) the difference being the consultant director is a part-time position and our director would be a full-time position.

Public Safety Committee:

Councilor Pepin reported this committee met on 3/04/14 and discussed the following items:

- SAFER Grant – This grant would give us the chance to put on 10 new call firefighters.
- Chief Crombie reported they hired some new employees at the Police Dept. Discussed the new cruiser that is being ordered that is a CIP item.
- Citizens Academy was discussed – The turnout from the public is very low. Anyone who is interested in getting involved should contact the Police Dept. It is a very good program.
- Discussed the parking situation at Next Level Church on Route 108.
- Paul Robidas of American Ambulance gave a report. They are sending out a brochure to 10% of the people they have served to find out how their response is. They are working with the School Dept., Police Dept. and Fire Dept. to conduct a mock drill. They talked about the dedicated ambulance in Somersworth. The response time has been about 4 minutes which is very good. Talked about training with the Fire and Police Departments. American Ambulance will be available for the Bluegrass Festival in September.

Public Works & the Environment:

Councilor Sprague said they have not met but will be meeting soon to discuss the backyard chicken ordinance. They will probably be meeting in Council Chambers so they are not all “cooped up.”

REPORTS OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES.

School Board:

Councilor Pepin reported he attended a School Board meeting on 3/11/14. The Building & Grounds Committee had a proposal on CIP items. To date 16 CIP items have been completed, and one more will be completed with the asbestos removal this summer. They still have approximately 20 more items which come up to approximately \$5M. Some of the items are HVAC, some are bathroom renovations.

The High School Principal announced she has taken a survey of the graduating students because they came to her asking if they could have their graduation at the Whittemore Center in Durham. The School Board gave their blessings to it. The reason for this is there is a cost saving, and also because the weather won't affect anything, and anyone could go. There would be no limitation on how many people could attend.

Career Technical Renovation Committee:

Councilor Pepin reported this committee met on 3/12/14.

- They took an aerial view of the high school area. Renovation is supposed to be done in 2017 and they are re-evaluating all the classrooms and their activities. For an example, in looking at the culinary department, they will need more parking if they will be expanding the area so it can be open to the public. This will allow for better efficiency.
- Our Economic Development person brought in a list of all the local businesses. We are working with them to see what they will be needing for a work force in the next 20 years and what classes would fit with that.
- They are working on a schedule to visit several schools that have been remodeled to get an idea of what the new techniques are. They have also worked on a questionnaire to use when they visit the facilities.

Sustainability Committee:

Councilor Soldati reported they have not met since the last Council meeting, but they will be meeting on 3/20/14 at 6:00 p.m. Any member of the public is invited. Members who have a plot at the community gardens are being invited to this meeting.

Vision 2020 Committee:

Councilor Witham reported this committee met on 3/05/14 and discussed the following items:

- They had a discussion about branding. The “We Believe in Somersworth” slogan resonates with the Committee, however for many years we have had the slogan of “Proud Past, Bright Future.” They are working on deciding what it will be.
- Councilor McCallion is not here tonight, but he wanted to report that we are continuing to work on the sixth grade commercial project. They are the class of 2020 and we are interested in their input of what they think Somersworth will be like in 2020. We are hoping to get this done before June.
- In the month of May, he will work with the Mayor and City Manager on preparing a presentation to the Council on this group’s activities since its inception.
- They created a task list on responsible parties and time lines assigned.

Historic District Commission:

Councilor Hebert reported this committee met on 3/11/14.

- They discussed the use of composite materials as opposed to using wood. The committee approved cellular PVC because it can be as good as wood and it lasts much longer.
- They discussed signage for the Historic District. Concord said they cannot do street signs. They would have to be done by Broadway in Dover, who has done our signs in the past.

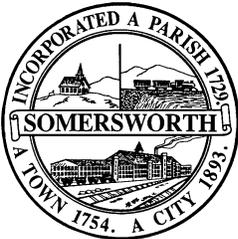
Planning Board:

Councilor Witham said this board will be meeting on 3/19/14 and will continue to review a major sub-division at Sunningdale which would consist of 177 homes. There are a lot of details around this project. There will also be a site plan development at the former Star Lumber Company, a sizable Goodwill store and a modest linear strip mall on that property.

Councilor Witham indicated there are also a number of new pieces coming before the Planning Board:

- A modest addition to Tri City Subaru on Route 108.
- A fairly sizable parking lot expansion for the Next Level Church on Route 108.
- A lot line adjustment on property located on Route 108.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT.



CITY OF SOMERSWORTH

Office of the City Manager

TO: Mayor Dana Hilliard and City Council Members

FROM: Robert M. Belmore, City Manager

DATE: Friday, March 14, 2014

SUBJECT: City Manager's Report for Monday, March 17, 2014

City Council Agenda

5:30 p.m. - City Council Workshop

Re: Presentation from Architect on Hilltop School Building Renovations

6:45 p.m. – Public Hearing

Re: Ordinance No. 12-14 Amending Chapter 13, Police Offenses, Section 3.4.B, Speeds.

Ordinance No. 13-14 Amending Chapter 19, Zoning Ordinance, Tables 4.A.3.9, 4.A.3.10 and 4.A.3 to Permit Chickens in All Residential Districts Provided that Certain Minimum Criteria have been Met

Unfinished Business (under Section 13 of Agenda)

Ordinances:

- A. **Ordinance No. 12-14 Amending Chapter 13, Police Offenses, Section 3.4.B, Speeds.**
- B. **Ordinance No. 13-14 Amending Chapter 19, Zoning Ordinance, Tables 4.A.3.9, 4.A.3.10 and 4.A.3 to Permit Chickens in All Residential Districts Provided that Certain Minimum Criteria have been Met.**

Resolutions:

- A. **Resolution No. 29-14 To Demolish the Former Police Station and Establish a City Park.** The Public Works & Environment Committee has asked for more information to consider at their next meeting, yet to be scheduled.
- B. **Resolution No. 35-14 Amending Resolution No. 17-11 Establishing the Sustainability Committee.**

New Business (under Section 14 of Agenda)

Resolutions:

- A. **Resolution No. 36 - 14 Authorizing the City Manager to Sell Tax Deeded Property at 116-118 Green Street.** The Finance Committee is recommending passage. If approved, I will be seeking proposals to market this property with the assistance of a Realtor. Attached is a copy of the property record card, map, and taxed owed.
- B. **Resolution No. 37 -14 Authorizing the City Manager to Enter into a Grant Agreement with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to Increase the Size of the City's Call Firefighting Force in the Fire Department to Twenty Members Over the Next Two (2) Years.** The Public Safety and Finance Committees' meetings discussed this Grant with City staff. Attached is a memorandum from Chief Hoyle that provides the Grant funding details and Grant parameters.
- C. **Resolution No. 38 -14 To Amend Resolution No. 8-13 To Increase the Number of HVAC Units that can be Replaced in Somersworth Schools.** This action item was discussed at the recent Goal Session and referred to the Finance Committee. Bond Counsel made the determination that a new City Council vote was needed. Bond Counsel has approved the Resolution's language. The Finance Committee

voted to support this appropriation. A Public Hearing is required, therefore I recommend 6:45 p.m. on April 7th prior to the next regular Council meeting.

City Manager's Items (under section 10 of Agenda)

A. Information Items:

1. **City Manager's Proposed Fiscal Year 2014-2015 Budget.** The City Manager's Proposed FY 14/15 Budget and School Department Budget has been submitted in accordance with the City Charter. The Public Hearing is scheduled for Monday, March 31 starting at 5:30 p.m. (Hearing at 6:00 p.m.) The Budget Workshop is scheduled for Saturday, April 5th starting at 8:30 a.m.
2. **Spirit up Somersworth Event.** The Somersworth Youth Connection and High School Rotary Interact Club are organizing their yearly Community Clean-up day in celebration of Earth Day on Saturday, May 3rd, 8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. I have authorized the Highway Department to assist with staff and equipment. Attached is a copy of the announcement letter.
3. **City Assessing Office.** I recommend the City Council schedule a workshop with our contracted Assessor/Assessing Firm, Corcoran Consulting Associates, Inc., to discuss the recommended real estate property revaluation and continuing cycled inspection program. Please consider a 6:00 p.m. Workshop prior to the April 21st meeting.

B. Attachments:

1. City Attorney Certificates Five (5).
2. City Manager letter dated March 5th to FairPoint regarding Downtown Infrastructure Project.
3. Department Head Monthly Reports.

NOMINATIONS, APPOINTMENTS AND ELECTIONS.

- Library Board of Trustees – Pius Murray, term to expire 04/2017.
- Planning Board – Reappointment of Ronald LeHoullier as a regular member, term to expire 04/2017.
Thomas McCallion, Alternate, term to expire, 04/2017.

Mayor Hilliard indicated these nominations will remain open until the scheduled 4/07/14 Council meeting.

- Vision 2020 Committee – David Holt, term to expire 04/2016.

Mayor Hilliard indicated this nomination does not require confirmation by the City Council.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS.

Nominations, Appointments and Elections:

- Planning Board – Harold Guptill as an Alternate Member, term to expire 04/2017.

Councilor Witham moved to approve this nomination. The motion was seconded by Councilor Soldati and passed by a vote of 8 yeas, 0 nays.

Ordinances:

ORDINANCE NO. 12-14 AMENDING CHAPTER 13, POLICE OFFENSES, SECTION 3.4.B, SPEEDS.

Councilor Soldati moved to adopt this ordinance. The motion was seconded by Councilor Hebert.

Councilor Soldati commented that this ordinance would reduce the speed limit within the City proper on Main Street and High Street to 25 mph. She has heard several complaints from residents about how fast some people go through the city.

Councilor Witham said the speed reduction ultimately makes sense, but his opinion about when to do this has changed. We would need to erect signs posting a new speed limit and they cost \$100/each. These signs may be damaged during our construction project. He is in favor of tabling this ordinance for now.

Following further discussion on this subject, Councilor Sprague moved to amend the ordinance by changing the effective date to 11/15/14. The motion was seconded by Councilor Witham and passed 8-0.

Councilor Messier said he cannot support this. He doesn't feel that dropping the speed limit from 30 mph to 25 mph will accomplish anything other than generate revenue.

Councilor Pepin said he is in support of this. He thought it was 25 mph now.

Following further discussion, Ordinance No. 12-14, as amended, passed by roll call vote of 6 yeas, 2 nays, Councilors Messier and Collins voting in the negative.

Resolutions:

RESOLUTION NO. 35-14 AMENDING RESOLUTION NO. 17-11 ESTABLISHING THE SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE.

Motion was made by Councilor Soldati to adopt Resolution No. 35-14. The motion was seconded by Councilor Tapscott.

Mayor Hilliard explained this would add another member at large to the Sustainability Committee, who would be confirmed by the City Council.

Resolution No. 35-14 passed by roll call vote of 7 yeas, 1 nay, Councilor Witham voting in the negative.

NEW BUSINESS.

RESOLUTION NO. 36 – 14 AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO SELL CITY TAX DEEDED PROPERTY AT 116-118 GREEN STREET.

Somersworth, NH

March 17, 2014

WHEREAS, the City of Somersworth has acquired the following parcel of property through tax deed,

- 116-118 Green Street – Map 9 Block 123

WHEREAS, after a review of the aforementioned there has been no determined municipal need for the property and it may be considered surplus,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SOMERSWORTH THAT the City Manager is authorized to sell this surplus city property by any means determined to be in the best interest of the City.

Introduced by Councilors

David Witham
Dale R. Sprague
Jennifer G. Soldati
Martin Pepin

Approved:

City Attorney

Mayor Hilliard indicated Resolution No. 36-14 will remain in first reading until the 4/07/14 City Council Meeting.

RESOLUTION NO. 37-14 AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO A GRANT AGREEMENT WITH THE FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY (FEMA) TO INCREASE THE SIZE OF THE CITY'S CALL FIREFIGHTING FORCE IN THE FIRE DEPARTMENT TO 20 MEMBERS OVER TWO (2) YEARS.

Somersworth, NH
March 17, 2014

WHEREAS, the City of Somersworth has applied for a Fiscal Year 2014 federal SAFER Act grant through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA); and

WHEREAS, the City of Somersworth has received notification of a Grant Award in the amount of \$99,068; and

EXPLANATION OF TOTAL PROJECT GRANT BREAKDOWN:

<u>SAFER Act Grant Award</u>	=	<u>\$99,068</u>
Total Project Award	=	\$99,068

WHEREAS, the Grant will allow the City of Somersworth to add ten (10) new call firefighters over a two (2) year period and it will provide all medical exams; training; protective gear; and incentives such as EMT certification and college fire safety curriculum training for call firefighters; and assist with recruiting future call firefighters with no matching revenue from the City;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SOMERSWORTH THAT the City Manager is authorized to execute any documents and agreements necessary for the grant's execution, and take any and all other such actions on relative to this grant determined to be in the best interest of the City.

Introduced by Councilors

Martin Pepin
David Witham
Marcel N. Hebert
Jennifer G. Soldati
Denis Messier
Dale R. Sprague

Approved:

City Attorney

Councilor Pepin moved to suspend Council rules in order to have a second reading of Resolution No. 37-14 tonight. The motion was seconded by Councilor Witham and passed unanimously.

Following the second reading of Resolution No. 37-14 by title, motion was made by Councilor Witham on passage of the Resolution. The motion was seconded by Councilor Pepin and passed by roll call vote of 8 yeas, 0 nays.

RESOLUTION NO. 38-14 TO AMEND RESOLUTION 8-13 TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF HVAC UNITS THAT CAN BE REPLACED IN SOMERSWORTH SCHOOLS.

Somersworth, NH
March 17, 2014

WHEREAS, on September 17, 2012, the City Council of the City of Somersworth adopted Resolution 8-13 to appropriate and bond funding for infrastructure improvements in the downtown area and the replacement of 5 HVAC (Heating-Ventilation-Air Conditioning) Units throughout various school buildings, and

WHEREAS, the Somersworth School Department completed the replacement of the 5 HVAC units and there remains a balance of \$120,000 (One Hundred Twenty Thousand dollars) authorized yet unissued from the original bond appropriation, and

WHEREAS, the School Department has identified the need to replace additional HVAC units throughout various school buildings as a priority, and

WHEREAS, the City Council desires to replace additional HVAC units and would like to increase the number of HVAC units authorized for replacement in Resolution 8-13,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SOMERSWORTH THAT Resolution 8-13 as previously adopted is hereby amended to increase the number of HVAC units to be replaced throughout various school buildings, thereby utilizing the \$120,000 (One Hundred Twenty Thousand dollars) authorized yet unissued from the original Resolution 8-13 appropriation of \$4,770,000 for the purpose of replacing such additional HVAC units.

Introduced by Councilors

David Witham
Dale R. Sprague
Jennifer G. Soldati
Martin Pepin

Approved:

City Attorney

This Resolution requires a public hearing and requires a 2/3 majority vote of the City Council after the public hearing (Sections 7.13 and 7.14 City Charter).

Mayor Hilliard indicated Resolution No. 38-14 will remain in first reading until the scheduled public hearing and the 4/07/14 City Council Meeting.

COMMENTS BY VISITORS.

Real Roseberry, 405 Route 108, Ward 1, said we should use common sense regarding the speed limit in town. He would put it at 20 mph then if they go 25 it is OK, if they go 30, give them a ticket. Regarding Route 108, there was an accident and traffic was backed up beyond the Rochester line and over to the lights in Dover. There were a lot of mad people. They use Route 108 so they won't have to use the turnpike. He feels the City should have directed the traffic to Route 16B and traffic would have been cut in half. You should detour the people to Route 16B when there is an accident.

Harold Guptill, 21 Tate's Brook Road, Ward 2, thanked the City Council for his appointment to the Planning Board. He hopes to be able to serve the City well.

CLOSING COMMENTS BY COUNCIL MEMBERS.

Councilor Messier said when he was running for election and standing in front of the Ward 5 Polling Place, a couple of people asked him about the cable franchise fund. He wanted to let them know there is about \$67,000 in the fund and it is being used to purchase some equipment and also to pay for camera operators.

Councilor Messier said he is happy to hear that the Historic District Commission is starting to look at some flexibility in some of the criteria they are using for windows, wood, etc. Maybe in the future he might not be so critical of the historical district.

Councilor Messier asked what happened to the fan shroud that used to be in the corner where he sits. He said it gets very noise over there. He asked if this could be looked into.

Councilor Witham said he was aware of the accident on Route 108. He applauds the Police Dept. for the positioning of their cruiser to try to keep the businesses on Route 108 open. He went down Whitehouse Road to get onto on overwhelmed Route 16B. You can rest assured that people were going that way too.

Councilor Witham apologized to the Mayor and City Council because he will not be able to attend the budget workshop and public hearing on 3/31/14. He feels badly about this.

Councilor Witham said he wished to applaud the idea of growing the City's call firefighter force. He served for about 24 years as a call firefighter and it was a very rewarding experience. It is a big commitment, but a very rewarding experience and a positive way to give back to your community.

Councilor Sprague said apparently people have been unable to purchase trash bags anywhere in the City over the last week or two. He received a phone call from an individual over the weekend, and it was not a

very pleasant phone call. He has served in a lot of capacities over the years, but just because he is an elected official, as well as other people are, does not give anyone the right to call any of us and be insulting. When you start to personally attack people, he takes exception to that. The person in question called him twice, and from what he has heard that person will be running for City Council. If someone wants to be heard they should come before the Council and talk about it. They should not hide behind social media.

Councilor Sprague said he doesn't do this job for the money, he does it because he loves public service and it's how he gives back to the community.

ADJOURNMENT.

Councilor Witham moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Councilor Collins and passed by a vote of 8 yeas, 0 nays.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane M. DuBois