

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE
EXECUTIVE CONFERENCE ROOM
November 19, 2018 3:00pm

Committee Members present: Councilor David A. Witham, Chairman
Councilor Dale R. Sprague
Councilor Martin Pepin
Councilor Martin P. Dumont, Sr.

Administration/Staff present: Bob Belmore, City Manager
Scott Smith, Finance Director
Shanna Saunders, Director of Planning and Dev Serv.
Robert Gadomski, Superintendent of Schools
Gary Lemay, City Planner
Michael Bobinsky, Director of Public Works
City Clerk, Trish Harris

Other: Councilor Richard Michaud

The meeting called to order by Chairman Witham at 3:00 PM.

APPROVE PAST MEETING MINUTES

Councilor Pepin, seconded by Councilor Dumont, made motion to approve the minutes of the October 10, 2018 meeting. Motion passed, 4-0.

TAX DEEDED PROPERTY

Finance Director Smith gave review of the spreadsheet of properties that are behind on taxes. He explained that there are a number of mobile homes on the list with multiple years of tax arrearage.

Councilor Witham stated that the City should move forward with deeding the two mobile homes that are behind into 2013; 102 Sherwood Glen and 223 Sherwood Glen.

The Committee reviewed the files for 102 and 223 Sherwood Glen.

As for the non-mobile home properties on the list, Director Smith stated that 302 Main Street and 158 Blackwater Road are both in some stage of bankruptcy.

Numbers 5 and 7 Wexford Lane have ground contamination with buried appliances and debris. 30 Blackwater Road, near Wexford Lane, is a mobile home only, with no land.

Councilor Witham stated that the City should move forward with deeding all non-mobile home properties with the exception of 5 and 7 Wexford Lane and 30 Blackwater Road.

Councilor Pepin, seconded by Councilor Dumont, made a motion to endorse a Resolution to move forward to NOT take by tax deed all the MHU except , 102 Sherwood Glen, 223 Sherwood Glen, as well as the 5 & 7 Wexford Lane and 30 Blackwater Road properties. The motion passed, 4-0.

CEMETERY GATE REPAIRS – SOLE SOURCE PROPOSAL

City Manager Belmore explained that the City received a Moose plate funded grant, in the amount of \$10,000 for repairs to the Gate at Forest Glade Cemetery. The City sent out an RFP, with no response. The City is now looking to sole source this project to one vendor through the state.

Councilor Pepin, seconded by Councilor Dumont, made a motion to move forward with sole sourcing to the State approved Vendor for the gate repairs at Forest Glade Cemetery. The motion passed, 4-0.

VETERANS PARK CONSULTANT FUNDING

City Manager Belmore explained that Mr. Jeff Hyland of Ironwood Design Group recently attended a site walk of the proposed location for the Veterans Park. He has submitted a fee schedule and staff allocation proposal. The Veterans Park Commission would like to seek funding for task 1 and 2, which takes the project through conceptual design.

There was lengthy discussion about funding options, including funding from Companies, the use of General Fund or the use of the Cable Fund.

Councilor Witham said he is fine with moving this along. Getting the concept plan is helpful to solicit donations from businesses. Councilor Sprague questioned the likelihood of soliciting large donations from companies.

Councilor Pepin, seconded by Councilor Dumont made a motion to endorse a Resolution to move forward with the project through step 2; Preliminary Conceptual Design, as outlined by Ironwood Design Group, with funding from the Cable Fund, in an amount not to exceed \$7,500. Motion passed, 3-1, with Councilor Sprague opposed.

INTERMUNICIPAL WATER AGREEMENT UPDATE

City Manager Belmore reported that he had received an email from Dover CM, Michael Joyal regarding the Emergency Water Intermunicipal Agreement.

Dover has suggested that the capital costs of future repairs be split 50/50. Somersworth Committees think it should be based on the number of utility users.

Dover has also suggested amortizing future capital costs with semi-annual payments to Dover. Paying this amount doesn't change sharing ratio, city would still pay 50%, as an alternative for the cost sharing of the capital improvements.

City staff suggested, in the future, as repairs are needed, the governing bodies at that time could negotiate repairs. Capital costs would be agreed upon at the time of need by both governing bodies.

The Committee agreed to move forward with the concept of allowing the future governing bodies to negotiate the cost sharing for future capital repairs or improvements as they arise.

PERMIT FEES – ELECTRICAL

City Manager Belmore explained that the City would like to increase fees to be more in line with other communities in the area.

Director Saunders stated that one update was required because of the new solar exemption was not on the fee schedule. Currently, electrical fees are based on number of fixtures used for residential and commercial. They tried to simplify that, by changing fees to per fixture for residential and per cost (of electrical) for commercial. This is consistent with what Rochester does.

City Staff took a look at other fees as well. They are recommending a \$25 fee across the board for plumbing, mechanical and electrical, and the demo fee to be increased to \$35. There was discussion about the other fee changes and the fees of other communities.

Councilor Witham asked if there is a penalty if work starts without a permit. Director Saunders stated that, yes, the fees are doubled. And it is the responsibility of property owner to obtain a permit.

Councilor Pepin, seconded by Councilor Dumont made a motion to support an Ordinance change to accept the recommendations and permit fee changes as presented. The motion passed, 4-0.

The Ordinance will be on the January City Council agenda.

REPORTING

Director Smith gave a brief report. It is still early in the year, but one area to focus on and bring to attention, solid waste collection; with increased costs with what is happening with the recycling, the City could see a large over expenditure. Early estimates could be \$70,000 over budget in Public Works.

City Manager Belmore said he saw recent news, and all communities are struggling.

MISCELLANEOUS

City Manager Belmore stated, in regards to withdrawing from the SAU, the Committee needs to vote to add a member of the Finance Committee to the SAU Withdrawal Committee.

Superintendent Gadomski gave an update on the school project grants and school building funding available for the Maplewood school project and expanding the bond project to other schools.

ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Dumont, seconded by Councilor Pepin made a motion to adjourn at 4:14 PM Motion passed, 3-1.

Respectfully submitted,

Trish Harris, City Clerk