



MINUTES OF CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
Somersworth, NH  
April 6, 2020  
7:00 P.M.

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**ANNOUNCEMENT BY MAYOR HILLIARD**

As Chair of the Somersworth City Council, I, Dana S. Hilliard, Mayor find that due to the State of Emergency declared by the Governor as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and in accordance with the Governor's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, this public body is authorized to meet electronically.

We are utilizing Zoom for this electronic meeting. All members of the Council have the ability to communicate contemporaneously during this meeting through this platform, and the public has access to contemporaneously watch by way of our local public access Comcast channel 22 or via live streaming available at our City website Somersworth.com.

Please note that **all votes** that are taken during this meeting shall be done by **roll call vote**.

**ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm by His Honor, the Mayor, Dana S. Hilliard, and upon roll call the following Council members were present: Councilors Pepin, Vincent, Dumont, Austin, Michaud, Witham, Gerding, Cameron and Paradis, who were all by themselves.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Councilor Michaud led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS**

**Ordinance No. 17-20** – Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Budget

No comments

**COMMENTS BY VISITORS**

None

**CONSENT CALENDAR**

Approve Minutes of the City Council Meeting held on March 16, 2020

Approve Minutes of the Emergency City Council Meeting held on March 24, 2020

***Councilor Witham, seconded by Councilor Austin made a motion to approve all items on the Consent Calendar. The motion passed 9-0, by roll call vote.***

## **COMMENTS BY CITY COUNCILORS**

Councilor Witham gave a shout out to Public Works staff, who has worked at controlling the Japanese knotweed at the back fence at the Noble Pines. They have done tremendous work up there and the workmanship has been stellar. He is hopeful that this will be helpful to control that invasive species.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

None

## **PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS AND DISPOSAL THEREOF BY REFERENCE OR OTHERWISE**

None

## **MAYOR'S REPORT**

### **Mayors Report for City Council Meeting April 6, 2020**

As united Hilltoppers our spirit and values continue to irradiate during these trying times. It is during crisis when the soul of a community is tested and when the pillars of what makes us strong, stand steady and strong as a mountain, or crumble as easy as an earth clumped in one's hand. Since the outbreak our City has once again marked its place within history, as a community which will continue to honor, respect, celebrate and care for each other.

As the gale force winds of this storm become more apparent, it will be essential for all of us to continue to hold steady to what defines Somersworth. We will get through this by taking care of each other and taking care of ourselves. Regardless of how long this storm will remain on the forecast, it will end. When it finally dissipates, what will be left standing is the "Bright Future" of Somersworth continuing to shine throughout the ten square miles we call home. The future of our community is the ingredients of each citizen who calls our Hilltop city their home. Therefore, let us continue to stand guard on each element of our success, each citizen who lives within Somersworth. Let us continue to aide, help and be there when any Hilltopper needs our support.

Let us also continue to celebrate each other and raise each other spirits during this time of social distancing. Now more than ever is the time needed for us to smile, to laugh, to celebrate and to rejoice in everything that makes some strong and makes the community that we are all so proud of and we all love so much. There are currently a few city wide spirit lifter programs that I encourage all citizens to participate in.

- Please Join the SYC the Somersworth Youth Connection in the Community Rainbow Challenge. Help us to spread some happiness and positivity throughout our community by creating and displaying a rainbow art of your own for all to see. We want everyone to start displaying your rainbows and to be as unique and creative as you want. Display your art in a window or multiple windows, then go outside for a walk of course while practicing social distancing see how many of the beautifully displayed rainbows you can find. The City Hall is already lit up with their rainbows. Take pictures and send them to [bfisher@sau56.org](mailto:bfisher@sau56.org) they will be posted on the SYC Facebook page and the Mayors Facebook.
- The Mayor's office in partnership with the Cultural Commission is encouraging all citizens to share with us your cultural traditions and practices as we continue to stay connected through social distancing. Do you have a special dis, or special tradition, a song or maybe an Irish jig, play the bagpipes, Greek Dance or sing a song in an ethnic language. If the answer is yes, we want to see it and we want you to share it. Film yourself on your phone and send it to Councilor Matt Gerding, Chair of the Cultural Commission at [mgerding@somersworth.com](mailto:mgerding@somersworth.com). We will compile your submission and share them with the community on Ch. 22. Together as a united community we will continue to celebrate all that is great about our Somersworth.
- Throughout this pandemic your City Hall team, along with all of your Elected Officials are committed to continuing to ensuring that you are updated on the latest information to keep you safe and healthy. All of us have been working diligently at ensuring that your safety is a top priority.
- Each week the Mayor's office has been on a conference call with the Governor's office and other 12 Mayors throughout the state. The weekly call has allowed each city to advocate for their needs and collectively share resources and build partnerships. The Governor also shares the most updated information to all of the Mayors in an effort to keep their respective citizenry informed. I am grateful to the Governor for providing this weekly call in update to all of the 13 NH Mayors. It has been a tremendous help.
- United States Senator Jeanne Shaheen has also sponsored a bi-weekly call with the 13 NH Mayors to continue to keep them abreast on the latest aide and decisions being made in Washington and the Federal Government. These calls along with the incredible accessibility of her staff has aided in not only allowing us know all of the information that the Federal Government is making decisions on but also how we can access it at the local level and distribute that information.

- The Tri-City Mayors continue to be in constant contact with each other and strengthening our partnership to support all of our citizens. Throughout the week we give each other calls and texts and also work on an updated distribution of a tri-City area newsletter. The Tri-City partnership continues to send out a weekly newsletter update regarding all of the latest information.
  - Locally the City Manager, Mayor, Fire Chief and Superintendent of Schools tape a weekly update show each Wednesday on channel 22. This update provides all Somersworth residents with the latest information and announcements regarding the Hilltop City and how to continue to remain safe and keep your spirits high.
- A. This evening laid upon the table on the agenda Ordinance No. 17-20 – Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Budget. The School budget has been presented by the Superintendent and approved by the School Board and awaits Council actions. The City Budget which is \$4,000 under the tax cap has been presented by the City Manager and awaits Council actions. Both budgets in my opinion meets the needs of the greater community and balance our desire to control property taxes while at the same time ensuring Somersworth remains on the move.

The School budget responsibly reflects the needs of ensuring our students are receiving a 21<sup>st</sup> century education while reflecting an understanding to keep Somersworth an affordable community.

On the City side once again the department heads under the direction and leadership of the City Manager have produced a budget which reflects the needs of Somersworth to meet on demands of services, keep our community competitive, and ensuring we will continue to have a bright future while not placing an unrealistic tax burden upon our community. While in the past we have gone line by line with the budget, primarily debating the increases each of us desire, this year I am respectfully requesting Council do the following this evening.

- Remove Ordinance No. 17-20 from the table
- Pass Ordinance No. 17-20 this evening both the City and School side without and additional increases or cuts
- Upon returning to normalcy I will introduce a Supplemental Budget Resolution outlining each Councilors additional project or increases they would have liked to have seen and debate in Ordinance 17-20. We can then debate each supplemental project and increase to the budget in the separate Resolution. We can then either pass or defeat them.
- The passage of the budget I see crucial tonight to brining normalcy and hope. With the passage of Ordinance No. 17-20 the public can see that

government is already prepared to move forward once the virus has ended. This will also allow our Schools and City Departments to begin to plan for the upcoming fiscal year, knowing their budgets are already in place. One of the most critical task we can do as city leaders is continue to install faith of the citizenry in their Democratic Government. The passage of Ordinance No. 17-20 this evening will aid in ensuring that faith remains. I respectfully ask Council to pass Ordinance No. 17-20 this evening.

- A sign that your city continues on the move, it will be witnessed this month when the construction trucks arrive to begin work on the living testament to our Veterans. While due to current restrictions placed on gatherings we will not be able to hold any formal grand breaking for the new Veterans Park. We will celebrate in full Hilltopper fashion when the project is completed and it is safe for us all to gather once again. To date \$43,250 has been raised in donations towards the park with an additional \$4,650 raised in the first batch of personalized bricks sold. This brings fundraising efforts to date to \$47,900. I would like to thank all sponsors to date for you dedication not only to this project but to every citizen who has ever worn the uniform of our great nation. Together as a united community we will continue to gather as citizens and celebrate all that our Veterans have done to keep Somersworth on the move.
- Construction will also soon begin on Somersworth Dog Park. I am sure when life gets back to normal routines all dog owners will grateful that their 4 legged friends can gather and have fun once again. To date \$2,000 in contributions has been raised towards the park. We thank every dog owner and four legged lover who continues to support this park and we are excited about the construction that will take place.

This respectfully concludes my April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020 Mayors Report

## **REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES**

Public Works & Environment – Councilor Witham stated that he didn't have a report but that he did engage with the City Manager in regards to a request to cut into new pavement waiving our paving moratorium that was sent out individually to Committee members and agreed to put this on as an agenda item under other this evening in lieu of a meeting.

## **REPORTS OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES, CITY OFFICERS AND CITY MANAGER**

### Special Committees

City Council Meeting

April 6, 2020

Joint Building Committee – Councilor Pepin stated that there was a meeting held on March 30, 2020 at 8am at the Career Technical Center, with most being done through Zoom. The reason this meeting was needed was because we had to approve some of the finance items that are being submitted by Milestone and the architect, so that would allow us to receive funding from the State. There was discussion about the timeline and construction. There was discussion about the elevator at the Middle School costs and timeline of construction. The next meeting is scheduled for April 13<sup>th</sup> @ 8AM through Zoom. Councilor Vincent asked Councilor Pepin about the elevator at the Middle School if it is going in the same location as the old one or a new location. Councilor Pepin answered it will be in a different location.

Veterans Park Commission – Councilor Dumont stated that the individual brick sales are going well. Tonight is the final time that you can get your order in before the first release of bricks to go into the park. We will keep selling them. Councilor Dumont added to the JBC report regarding of the elevator. The discussion of the elevator is very interesting because he thinks it will affect the other elevator that we may be looking at. Some of the bids we received, due to the current condition with getting materials etc., the lead time of the elevator were originally 26 weeks. Two of the bids came in at 55 weeks, so as we move forward we need to keep that in mind.

Cultural Commission – Councilor Gerding stated that he wanted to reiterate what Mayor Hilliard stated in his Mayor’s report in accepting videos to add to a program called “We are Somersworth” that will be aired on channel 22. He himself made one this weekend making pierogis. He would love to see and share more videos from residents.

City Manager’s Report

*Office of the City Manager*

**TO: Mayor Dana S. Hilliard and City Council Members**  
**FROM: Robert M. Belmore, City Manager**  
**DATE: Friday, April 3, 2020**  
**SUBJECT: City Manager’s Report for Monday, April 6, 2020**

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*Lay on the Table (Under Section 13) of Agenda)*

**Ordinances**

- A. Ordinance No. 17-20: Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Budget.** A presentation of the City Manager's Proposed Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Budget was broadcast via live streaming and on our Comcast Public Access Channel 22 on Thursday afternoon, March 26<sup>th</sup>. I presented an overview of the City's side of the Budget and Dr. Robert Gadomski presented the School Department's Budget. The telecast is archived for viewing and is being replayed on Channel 22. The PowerPoint is available on the City website under News & Announcements.

*New Business (Under Section 5 of Agenda)*

**Resolutions**

- A. Resolution No. 45-20: To Authorize the City Manager to enter into a Grant Agreement with the State of New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services for a Water Distribution Asset Inventory, System Master Plan and Financial Planning Initiative.** Attached is a copy of the memorandum that was provided to the Council's Finance & the Public Works & Environment Committees regarding the Grant as it is associated with the water tank assessment project. A copy of the NH DES Grant letter and Grant conditions are also included in this meeting packet.

Manager Belmore asked that the Council consider waiving rules as we are not sure when we will meet again and we would like to kick off this entire project in the very near future.

**Other**

- A. Vote to Waive the Excavation Moratorium on Indigo Hill Road to Allow for the Repair of a Sewer Service Line to No. 129 Indigo Hill Road (City Ordinance Ch. 12, Section 12.1, Moratorium Period, for Roads that have been Overlaid, the Moratorium Shall be Three (3) Years).** Attached is the written request for the waiver along with associated details and a map of the location. The memorandum from Director Mike Bobinsky outlines recommendations for conditions to consider attaching to any waiver granted.

*City Manager's Items (under section 11 of Agenda)*

**A. Informational Items.**

- 1. Facebook.** Just a note to let folks know that the City is live on Facebook as well as Twitter.
- 2. Malley Farm.** The City's brush and leaf drop-off area will be open as soon as the road and drop off area are safe to travel on. Please note times for Curbside Brush & Bagged Leaves:

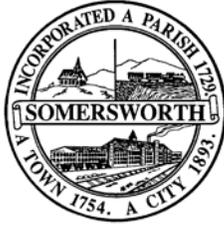
- a. **Brush will be picked up the third weeks in April and May.** You must call 692-4266 by Friday, April 17 and/or Friday, May 15 to be added to the pickup list.
  - b. **Bagged leaves will be picked up the fourth weeks in April (April 27) and May (May 25).** You do not have to call ahead for bagged leaves pickup.
3. **Veterans Memorial.** The project's pre-construction meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 9 at the site.

#### **Attachments**

1. **City Attorney Certifications One (1)**
2. **Community Support Requests – Proposed Budget, Elected Leadership, Pages C-7, C-8**

### **NOMINATIONS, APPOINTMENTS AND ELECTIONS**

### **LAY ON THE TABLE**



City of Somersworth – Ordinance

Ordinance No: 17-20

**FISCAL YEAR 2020-2021 BUDGET**

March 16, 2020

The City of Somersworth Ordains that Budgets for the City of Somersworth for the 2020-2021 Fiscal Year shall be:

<u>DEPARTMENT</u>	<u>ADOPTED BUDGET</u>
<b><u>GENERAL FUND</u></b>	
Elected Leadership	\$149,236
City Management	503,830
Finance and Administration	1,478,774
Development Services	893,828
Police	4,080,433
Fire	2,248,812
Public Works	3,264,251
Other Expenses	1,090,127
Capital Outlay	303,269
Intergovt Assessments - County	2,766,770
School Department	29,047,242
	<hr/>
<b>TOTAL GENERAL FUND</b>	<b>45,826,572</b>
<b><u>ENTERPRISE FUNDS</u></b>	
Wastewater Department	2,343,470
Water Department	2,178,516
Solid Waste	466,720
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<b>TOTAL ENTERPRISE FUNDS</b>	<b>4,988,706</b>
<b><u>SPECIAL REVENUE FUND</u></b>	
Cable Fund	60,839
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<b>TOTAL FY 2020-2021 APPROPRIATION</b>	<b>\$50,876,117</b>
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This ordinance shall take effect upon its passage.

Authorization	
<i>Sponsored by Request:</i> Mayor Dana S. Hilliard	<i>Approved:</i> City Attorney

**City of Somersworth – Ordinance 17-20**

<b>History</b>			
First Read Date:	03/16/2020	Tabled:	03/16/2020
Public Hearing:		Removed From Table:	
Second Read:	03/16/2020		

**Discussion**

On March 16, 2020, *Councilor Witham, seconded by Councilor Austin, made a motion to waive Council Rules to allow for Ordinance 17-20 to be read by title only. The motion passed, 8-0.*

*Councilor Witham, seconded by Councilor Austin, made a motion to waive Council rules to allow for a second read of Ordinance 17-20. The motion passed, 8-0.*

Following the second read, *Councilor Witham, seconded by Councilor Vincent, made a motion to table Ordinance 17-20. The motion passed, 8-0.*

*Councilor Witham, seconded by Councilor Dumont made a motion to remove Ordinance 17-20 from table. The motion passed 9-0, by roll call vote.*

*Councilor Witham, seconded by Councilor Dumont made a motion to adopt Ordinance 17-20. The motion passed 9-0, by roll call vote.*

Councilor Witham stated that he has had this budget for some time since March 15, 2020 from the City Manager and he has reviewed it. A couple of things that immediately came to mind as I reviewed the budget that is both prepared by the City Manager which includes the school budget and the Superintendent and his staff. For the first time in a long time we have a budget that doesn't have any cut, particularly on the school side of the budget. More importantly this budget includes adding staff on the City side, with these positions they are taking part time positions and making them full time positions, which he thinks is a logical step. So we have a budget that has no cuts, actually adding positions and is under the tax cap. Maintains road resurfacing around where we typically have been and other programmatic needs. Understanding the current crisis we are in with the COVID 19, this is an exceptional budget and one that he was prepared to vote on and approve tonight regardless of the situation we have with COVID 19. He as one Councilor does not have an appetite to override a tax cap, as there is no need. He would be in favor of a tax cap override if it involved impacting public safety or cuts at the school. This budget does not do that.

Councilor Vincent stated that he would like to start by with looking at the new section of the book, which is a staffing plan. He said that he has been doing this for 3 short years and that he loves the addition to this budget book. He gives credit to City Staff and City Manager. He is in favor of this budget, he doesn't think that it is anywhere out of line. He said he has talked to several Councilors, City Manager and Mayor and he likes it. A lot of the people

that he talked to said it's under \$1.00 which he thinks is important, but not the most important, what matters is that we get what we get need to move on as a City and to maintain. He did inquire about the school budget as he missed the presentation. He understands that it is \$.95, but that once the State gets involved it could be a little lower.

Councilor Paradis thanked the City Manager for the budget she thought it was a great budget. This is her first time so she was overwhelmed when she received the budget book to read through. She didn't realize the staffing plan is a new addition, but she found it really helpful along with the letter from the City Manager, the audit and the under 30 minute report given by the City Manager and Superintendent. She had a few questions that she asked the City Manager and he answered. She found a couple things interesting and wanted to share that she is excited for the funding for downtown for the multi-phase projects. Parking visibility signs to attract parking in the plaza and along Main Street, that people that live here know about but not people necessarily just driving through. The road resurfacing plan just looking at the line item she had a question on the 900,000 line. There was something in the Public Works & Environment minutes speaking of the grading of the roads that had suggested somewhere around \$1.1 million. She believed that to keep us at least not going down in our grade of roads, but going up, she had asked about why we were under that number and the City Manager very helpfully responded that there is more in the budget than just that one line item. There are additional line items that are added to the \$900,000, so we are close to the \$1.1 million overall. She spoke of the unassigned Fund balance that has about \$800,000, which is actually down from last year and a little lower in average for the past 6 years, which is good so we are moving in the right direction. She stated that balance is being used to offset the tax rate and not increase the tax rate or what we are pulling out of our general fund. She had a question and realizes there is no answer right now as everything is so up in the air, but seeing the seasonal employees called out as a line item makes her wonder what is going to happen potentially to some funds that won't be used because of COVID 19, particularly camp counselors, crossing guards, library staff or other positions within the City that have been temporarily furloughed or laid off or might be in the future or we won't be hiring as many camp counselors. In wondering about what that extra funding will do and knowing that we don't know how much money that would be, she is just thinking about to when we all come back for that supplemental budget. Maybe considering doing something for small businesses, she would like to explore that idea. Overall, she found that this budget is very well done and well communicated.

Councilor Gerding stated that he would be support of this budget because not only is this is a phenomenal budget and well within reason and below our tax cap which is important. The main reason he is in support of this is because the small increase added to the taxes is going directly to creating full time positions. More than ever keeping people employed and in this City, particularly, full time jobs are extremely important and he thanked them and really solidifies why this budget needs to be passed tonight.

Councilor Witham asked a question to either City Manager or Finance Director, if there are requests by this Council for supplemental budget appropriations after passage of the budget. He knows that we have \$4000 or \$6000 dollars of wiggle room if we exceed that does that then trigger a tax cap override and still require a 2/3 vote no matter what. Manager Belmore answered that regardless of the tax cap if we do a supplemental appropriation it requires a 2/3

vote anyways. One thing we can look at is the contingency that if it is a small amount of money we won't have to do a supplemental appropriation perhaps we could just look ahead to a transfer Ordinance. There are a few options we can look at moving forward. Councilor Witham thanked City Manager for the transfer Ordinance if we don't spend in one area we can ultimately transfer that money, typically it's done with snow removal if we have had a bad winter. Councilor Paradis brings up the fund balance and the Councilors that were around last year know that he had great angst and anxiety about excess use of the fund balance. He is glad that we are sort of out of that hole and another reason to support this budget. Relying on the use of fund balance in excess of what is put in the budget by the City Manager is not a sustainable practice long term; eventually you have to make up those funds somehow. You need those funds for emergencies, having a fund balance that is healthy allows us that flexibility. Another thing to comment on of which he applauds the City Manager and his team again is what he would call phasing of work, which is taking projects and dealing with them in chunks rather than all at once. His last comment, with Councilor Sprague not in the room with him but he is in spirit to say that we could spend \$1 million to \$1.5 million a year on road resurfacing, and we could but this budget is healthy and under the tax cap.

Councilor Dumont stated that he is going to support to approve the budget. As he looked at the composition of the current Council, of which he considers a very talented group of people. There are a group of our residents that don't benefit to getting into this period of time in our lives for restrictions that are placed upon all of us to act as a community from an income stand point. There are many that have lost their jobs; there is Federal legislation that should help as Congress stands ready to place dollars into the program. There are a couple areas that need to be cautious thereof as the state is suffering from unemployment we now have residents that will suffer with the \$.95 increase. We actually felt better last year because there was a \$6.00 dollar decrease in the tax rate in comparison to other communities. His concern for our community is that as the state of the nation is suffering from the unemployment situation that it is not going to improve, that the numbers are going to get lousier. In this case there are people that are in a position that they are living paycheck to paycheck prior to the corona virus that now we are subjecting people to looking at alternative lifestyles. He is strongly concerned because he sees a tendency in those communities who have strived and built housing to the term of affordable, is not really affordable. There has been some press that has indicated that those who have relied upon Section 8 certificates are now being turned down and making them a standard rate rental. He has the utmost confidence in the City Manager in his guidance with this budget.

Councilor Cameron stated that she wanted to reiterate that some of the comments before her. This was a very well presented budget by the City Manager, Staff and School Board with adding position and keeping within the tax cap. She was not in favor of a tax cap over ride so she is pleased with this.

Councilor Pepin stated that he is in favor of passing the budget, but will be looking into reviewing a supplemental appropriation. He was pushing to add an assistant fire chief position, he thinks out man power is lacking. He has changed gears a little bit what he would like to be able to see us do is ask the City Manager to figure out how much money it would cost to keep four firefighters on at all times. He worked with four men machine back in 1973

and there is a big difference working with four guys than it is three guys. When he left the fire station at night there were just two people, so he knows what it is like to work shorthanded and he knows what it is like to work with four people. He would like to have added fire personnel instead of making the secretary full time at this time. His hat is off to Scott Smith the Finance Director as he does a lot behind the scenes.

Councilor Austin stated he does want to say this is probably the easiest budget that he has had to work with in a number of years. He congratulated the City Manager and the Superintendent on coming in with budgets that are smart, reasonable and keep us within the tax cap. He along with Councilor Pepin looks forward to discussions on possible supplemental appropriations when it becomes appropriate to have that discussion. One of the issues he had was the funding for the Somersworth Youth Connection Program to get funded so that program can still run.

Mayor Hilliard stated that guiding you in regards to what he reported in his Mayor’s report is that if in fact Council does pass Ordinance 17-20 this evening that upon when it is deemed that we can safely gather in this chamber again the first order of business is that he will introduce with all of the supplemental appropriation projects that you wanted to see in that resolution will be that supplemental Resolution we can then take it up in its entirety, debate each section of that and Council can determine which projects will stand and which ones will not. It is his intention to have that drafted and introduced when we are able to safely meet within this chamber again. That is something that will be the first order of business, they have his word.

Councilor Gerding seconded what Councilor Austin stated regarding the Somersworth Youth Connection program. It provides a phenomenal enriching for before and after school care within our Community and has been doing this for many, many years. He thinks that many parents at home with their kids and can understand the importance of this through remote learning and students no longer being able to attend. This program has weathered many storms, including this COVID 19 storm and he is in full support of it as well.

<b>Voting Record</b>		<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Ward 1 Councilor	Pepin	X	
Ward 2 Councilor	Vincent	X	
Ward 3 Councilor	Dumont	X	
Ward 4 Councilor	Austin	X	
Ward 5 Councilor	Michaud	X	
At Large Councilor	Witham	X	
At Large Councilor	Gerding	X	
At Large Councilor	Cameron	X	
At Large Councilor	Paradis	X	
<b>TOTAL VOTES:</b>		<b>9</b>	
<b>On 04/06/2020. Ordinance 17-20</b>		<b>PASSED</b>	<b>FAILED</b>

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None

**NEW BUSINESS**  
**RESOLUTION**

	<b>City of Somersworth – Resolution</b>
	Resolution No: <b>45-20</b>  <b>TO AUTHORIZE THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO A GRANT AGREEMENT WITH THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES FOR A WATER DISTRIBUTION ASSET INVENTORY, SYSTEM MASTER PLAN AND FINANCIAL PLANNING INITIATIVE</b>

April 6, 2020

WHEREAS, the City Council adopted Resolution No. 34-20 to authorize the City Manager to contract with Wright-Pierce Engineers of Portsmouth, NH to provide a system-wide water storage assessment, a water tank condition assessment of the Hamilton Street water tank, and a distribution system master plan update, and

WHEREAS, the City of Somersworth has received notification of the establishment of a 2020 Asset Management Planning Grant Program to support the development of an updated water infrastructure inventory and distribution system master plan that can be used in conjunction with the work authorized in Resolution No. 34-20, and

WHEREAS, the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services has awarded the City a 100% matching grant of \$20,000 (Twenty Thousand Dollars), to be used to support the planning and development of an updated water asset inventory assessment, and

WHEREAS, the project will result in a condition analysis of all water assets and estimated remaining useful life, a level of service and priority ranking of asset condition, and an evaluation of the City’s distribution and storage system evaluation,

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 acceptance and execution, and take any and all other such actions relative to this grant project’s completion determined to be in the best interest of the City.

Authorization	
<i>Sponsored by Councilors:</i> David A. Witham Martin P. Dumont, Sr. Donald Austin Martin Pepin Richard R. Michaud Matt Gerding	<i>Approved:</i> City Attorney

**City of Somersworth – Resolution 45-20**

<b>History</b>			
First Read Date:	04/06/2020	Tabled:	
Public Hearing:		Removed From Table:	
Second Read:	04/06/2020		

**Discussion**

*Councilor Witham, seconded by Councilor Vincent made a motion to suspend Council rules to have Resolution 45-20 read by title only. Motion passed 9-0 by roll call vote.*

*Councilor Witham, seconded by Councilor Austin made a motion to suspend Council rules to allow for a second read. Motion passed 9-0 by roll call vote.*

*Councilor Witham, seconded by Councilor Pepin made a motion that Resolution 45-20 be adopted. Motion passed 9-0 by roll call vote.*

Councilor Witham highlighted that the City Manager stated that this did pass through Finance Committee as well as the Public Works & Environment Committee, prior to the COVID 19 pandemic, and that it was endorsed unanimously at both Committees.

<b>Voting Record</b>		<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Ward 1 Councilor	Pepin	X	
Ward 2 Councilor	Vincent	X	
Ward 3 Councilor	Dumont	X	
Ward 4 Councilor	Austin	X	
Ward 5 Councilor	Michaud	X	
At Large Councilor	Witham	X	
At Large Councilor	Gerding	X	
At Large Councilor	Cameron	X	
At Large Councilor	Paradis	X	
<b>TOTAL VOTES:</b>		<b>9</b>	
On 04/06/2020.	Resolution 45-20	<b>PASSED</b>	<b>FAILED</b>

## **OTHER**

Vote to Waive the Excavation Moratorium on Indigo Hill Road to allow for the repair of a sewer service line to no. 129 Indigo Hill Road (City Ordinance Ch. 12, Section 12.1, Moratorium Period, for Roads that have been overlaid, the Moratorium shall be three (3) years)

Councilor Witham stated that often we vet these in the Public Works & Environment Committee meetings and then bring to full Council, obviously we are not doing that this time around. However, we do have some past practice that helps to guide us here because in the past we have waived the moratorium pavement cutting a number of times provided that the work is done in a certain way. As the Public Works Director has outlined in his memo they will cut back 10ft to either side of the trench the width of the roadway and that works for a much better repair which is a consistent practice that we have now established.

Councilor Vincent stated that this case is a no brainer that if you have a situation with sewer or drainage or water issue we would most of the time grant them to go ahead and make the cut. He is urging all Council to be in favor of this. They are bound by certain stipulations for putting it back together.

Councilor Witham stated a couple points to put on the radar screen of the City Manager and the Public Works Director that if this work takes place after our pavement line striping program which is usually late spring should he would hope that whoever is doing the work is required to put back in the twenty plus feet of missing yellow line. The sidewalk in that area has one of those asphalt berm curbs that is in some disrepair and they are requiring that to also be repaired at the end of the project. He finds it interesting that the Director shared that because we have two areas where our snow plow damaged over the winter time and Public Works Director said it couldn't be repaired, yet we are requiring this developer to fix the hot top curbing, he finds it contradictory. So hopefully we can come to some resolution as to whether that can be repaired or not.

Councilor Paradis asked about adding in place the language by Director Bobinsky if we were to waive that moratorium. Manager Belmore stated that you could add that conditioned upon all the requirements in the Directors memorandum as well as adding line striping to it if that is indeed done after line striping takes place.

Mayor Hilliard stated that without objection from Council we will add both languages to waiving the moratorium.

***Motion to waive the Moratorium passed 9-0, by roll call vote.***

## **COMMENTS BY VISITORS**

None

## **CLOSING COMMENTS BY COUNCIL MEMBERS**

Councilor Pepin shared that he went to Market Basket this morning at 6am, there was a line but we were all spaced out 6ft wearing masks. They let us in 2 or 3 at a time and we did our shopping, no one wanted to talk everyone was pure business. Speaking of that, he misses all the other Councilors and it is driving him nuts not seeing anyone and he is not someone who socializes a lot to begin with. He has been listening to the President often and said that some this could change the way people socialize in the future, that they may revert to not hugging and not hand shaking after all of this. His son hasn't been over since this started and he would give him a hug. He hopes that none of this ends up that way. He doesn't know how larger cities or towns, such as New York City, are handling this and how someone can prepare for something invisible. He questions do people have enough money to stockpile, or enough room to stock pile. He doesn't know how anyone can prepare for every single scenario, you can't. His hat is off to the Federal Government, State and Municipal Government on how to handle this.

Councilor Vincent stated that with this COVID-19 going down he thought the economy itself would slow down and take a dip. Instead the economy is being driven down by the pandemic, something that he never thought that he would see. The sad thing about it is that good people are going to lose their businesses and a whole bunch of stuff. His prayers go out to everyone, especially the new businesses owners who have taken risks, put all they had into the business to be open for a short period of time, using Stripe Nine as an example that is tough. He said that the banks are very helpful and allowing loan payments to be kicked to the end of the loan, they are trying to do different things. On a different note, he had the pleasure of visiting the City Hall today through the drive-up window, everything was great and the clerk taking the minutes waited on me and he had a pleasant experience. He does understand that we have some issues with the drive up window drawer, but it works.

Councilor Dumont stated that he also has visited the drive-up window 4 times within the past week and everything was handled efficiently and he is pleased with the service at the City Hall Tax Office. He was even more pleased that he had to do some business in the neighboring City of Dover and they have no capacity whatsoever to do business everything has to be done through the mail or appointments made. He thinks we are an exemplary City Hall that has the ability to service our citizens. So thank you to the staff Clerk/Tax Office, they are always pleasant and smiling, it's a wonderful thing. Market Basket & Walmart he complimented them for their compliance to the guidance that they are getting. Walmart has been very proactive and as well as Market Basket. Unfortunately, because of the virus he has been unable to go into the stores, because he is considered vulnerable. So his wife doesn't allow him to go into the store, so he has to take up his stories out in the parking lot. Before we started the meeting tonight he had given Councilor Witham a few clues on what he is about to do and he is very proud of him because he even mentioned it to me tonight something about reading things. He had the opportunity to read the Business magazine and on page 9 the first article is an article about Primex, Councilor Witham is quoted several times on the cyber security situations that are going on within Municipalities. He stated that his David's Dad would be proud not only can you talk well but now you're getting printed material out there. He would like to present this book to you in person when the time allows us and he wants his autograph. Councilor Witham thanked Councilor Dumont. We have a

group of people that are giving a special service to the Corona virus needs. When they talk about PPE he is not sure what that means and hates it when people use acronyms. He now understands that it is for protective gear such as masks, ventilators and things like that. He found out that on his own street we have a lovely woman that is sewing masks for those that needs masks. He is referring to Brenda Heon, so a shout out goes out to her on Crest Drive because she is one out of seven hundred women who are making masks. He felt so compelled once he found that out that he was able to help them in finding something they had a tremendous need for and the product has been delivered. He commends her and her husband Dan who has been in service at the Riverside Rest Home and Brenda has always offered great service, he wishes her well in her endeavor. They were able to provide some masks to an entity that didn't have any that really needed them. He thanked everyone up to this point with the Veteran's Park, unfortunately he wasn't able to physically do the things that he thought he would have been able to do in 2019 let alone 2020, but he can assure everybody that has wished him well that he is fine and completely healed and he is ready to go. As he had said to some colleagues, it is not a lot of pleasure sitting on the porch watching the wind blow so fortunately most of the birds would show up at the later part of April are now in his feeders, the bear hasn't come to destroy them. So he is very entertained and has started to walk and get back into shape, but he thinks he is in better shape now than he was before he got sick. Everyone that is still offering a service to the Community his prayers go out to them.

Councilor Austin comment about how the stories we are hearing now more and more every day about how communities are banding together to get common good things done. Crises seem to bring out the good in people in a lot of ways and we are hearing more and more of those stories, kudos to everyone who is able to make a difference. He is worried about the emotional aspects of all of this as we move through it right now it is about physically getting through the virus. He thinks we will have months and maybe years of psychological and mental impairments as a result of this, that will be the legacy of this thing as we move forward. He does think this brings out the best in humanity and he likes hearing about those things. Keep up the good work, stay home, don't be out gallivanting he knows there are people that think it is still okay to congregate around and it's not. Do your essential stuff and come back home and be safe.

Councilor Michaud said hi to all the Councilors and is looking forward to when we can all meet in person again in the Council chambers. He thanked the City Manager, Finance Director and City Staff for doing an outstanding job on the budget this year and made it easier for him. He hopes everyone is doing well and staying safe. He has a friend in Rochester that found out his brother has come down with the virus and fortunately enough he didn't have to be hospitalized he is recovering right now and they are watching his wife to make sure that she doesn't come down with it. It was a beautiful day today and he was able to get outside and did some yard work while his neighbors are out walking around. It was nice to get to know his neighbors that he hasn't gotten to know over the years. Stay safe.

Councilor Witham stated that as a guy that likes his props every now and again and as he is at home and realized that in the background there are a couple of them. First, on top of the filing cabinet is a bugle that he received when he retired from the Fire Department and that reminds him to just say thank you our first responders who are on the front lines of this crisis,

and that includes those that work in healthcare. The second prop is a frame that looks like flowers but it is a bunch of hands he thinks his son did that back in kindergarten or first grade it is a symbol of helping hands and he thinks during this time of crisis he thinks it is appropriate to just say let's help each other out. In terms of giving thanks, he thanked our outgoing City Clerk Trish Harris; we have all seen the announcement that she is leaving and moving out of state for a bunch of job requirements for her Husband. Trish has been a fabulous City Clerk. Councilor Dumont remarked his experience in going to the drive up window and Councilor Vincent as well and that doesn't happen by accident. The care and compassion and the extremely positive customer service that comes out of that office certainly Trish had a heavy hand in that and he wished her all the best, we will miss her. He would like to communicate this information to her before she leaves. He spoke at the beginning of the meeting regarding the Public Works working on the knotweed at the Noble Pines ball field working on it and it has never been in such good shape as it is now for the high school baseball season which remains in limbo right now. He says that particularly for all the high school seniors whether it is playing baseball, lacrosse, prom or graduation. There are a lot of things uncertain right now and he thinks we should all have some positivity and try to find our way to the end of this crisis because so much looms on the other end.

Councilor Gerding thanked everyone in the Community who are battling this virus first hand, nurses and doctors as well as retail and the essential businesses that are still open, they are phenomenal. He gets nervous just going to the grocery store right now, so he can't imagine how difficult it is for them to have to work in those places and he commended them. He commended businesses for taking extra precautions by adding shields and marking the floors 6 feet apart to separate people. In his recent extra time he was cleaning out his garage, he had found a bunch of extra N95 masks from construction projects he had in the house. He reached out to his brother in law who had also had some N95 masks and collected about 20 of these masks. He then reached out to a friend in the Corona Virus unit at Brigham & Women's and he donated them to her, she was very excited to receive them. If anyone finds any please reach out to him or to your local hospital.

Councilor Cameron thanked everyone that has reached out to her, because she is someone who works on the front lines it is very stressful. She had a meltdown last week because it's not easy when you are shorthanded and the way that people are. She has a very special friend that made her masks and stated that as most of you know she is a light house buff and she made her some light house masks. She had the opportunity to man the lines in front of the store and was able to wear one of the light house masks. She received a lot of compliments and her friend is making her more for everyday of the week. Stay safe!

Mayor Hilliard gave a personal thanks to Councilor Cameron as he always tries to look for a positive in any negative and he certainly thought that one of the positives that will come out of the society is that the people that are so often forgotten within our economy are now being viewed as essential and you always were essential. So thank you, for being on that front line and continuing to keep retail places open so that all of us can continue to have everything that we need as essential to keep our lives going. Again, thank you for everything that you are doing with showing up with a smile and handling a very stressful situation within the retail industry of ensuring every citizen is going to be able to grab the products that they need patiently as you guys continue to restock your stores.

Councilor Paradis seconded the Mayors remarks and everyone on the front lines. Thanked Councilor Gerding and all the teachers for completed online learning at a moment's notice for all aged students, and some that may not be familiar with or equipped to go online. She thanked first responders, postal workers and our postal carriers as well. Say hello and thank you, but keep your distance. She echoed Councilor Witham and stated that she is sad to see her leave as our City Clerk but thanked Trish Harris for her years of service. She also thanked local businesses as well. Many of our local businesses have found creative ways to stay open and keep driving our downtown business. Poppy Seed Studio is doing something where you can phone in and tell them someone you want to buy a gift for likes and they will do a gift concierge service and allow you to pick up or mail to you. The Gathering Place is allowing you to pick up supplies that they will leave outside and they are hosting webinars and crafts. Teatotaler is doing deliveries of bubble tea as well as hosting online business forums. Our Chamber of Commerce has put together a lot of things as she has received emails from them with helpful COVID 19 information. They have also worked together with others to put together a Somersworth and Berwick take out Facebook group. You can search of that and support our local businesses with ordering take-out food for delivery. She replied to an email that they all received from a resident who had an idea to put some programming on channel 22 for our school students, and it was determined that he was actually her neighbor. They put little post it notes on their windows that say "Hi" or have a smiley face written to each other. She was able to still have coffee with a Councilor via a remote meeting, and a resident was able to actually show her the road that he lives on that is not paved. He was able to show her how he has stakes in the ground because sometimes people drive up on the lawn because it is not a paved road. She wanted to make sure she underscored what the City Manager's email that went out today stated about wearing masks when you go out in public. The CDC is recommending wearing a mask when you go out in public and will be outdoors when you area around other people. Stay safe out there and continue to flatten the curve. Continue to put up those rainbows around the City as it is really great to see.

Mayor Hilliard stated to all our citizens continue to keep yourselves healthy and safe and continue to let that Hilltopper spirit shine. For all who celebrate Happy Easter, Happy Passover for all who don't happy spring!

**FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

**NONPUBLIC SESSION**

**ADJOURNMENT**

*Councilor Witham made a motion to adjourn the meeting at the call of the chair. The meeting adjourned at 8:48pm by the call of the chair. Passed 9-0, by roll call vote.*

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Kelly Gagne, Deputy City Clerk

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Dana Hilliard, Mayor