

## MINUTES OF CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Somersworth, NH  
May 15, 2017  
7:00 P.M.

The meeting was called to order by His Honor, the Mayor, Dana Hilliard, and upon roll call the following Council members were present: Pepin, Soldati, Dumont, McCallion, Messier, Witham, Sprague, Cameron, and Paradis.

### MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING.

PUBLIC HEARING ON ORD. 19-17 - Supplemental Appropriation of \$600,000 for Improvements to the Somersworth Blackwater Road Pump Station held on May 1, 2017.

***Councilor Pepin, seconded by Councilor Messier, made a motion to accept the minutes. The motion passed unanimously. Councilor Soldati abstained.***

PUBLIC HEARING ON RES No. 38-17 - To Authorize The City Manager to Sign a Payment-In-Lieu-Of-Taxes (PILOT) Agreement with NhSolar Garden of Portsmouth, NH Pursuant to a 20 Year Land Lease on the Somersworth Sanitary Landfill on Blackwater Road held on May 1, 2017.

***Councilor Pepin, seconded by Councilor Messier, made a motion to accept the minutes. The motion passed unanimously. Councilor Soldati abstained.***

CITY COUNCIL MEETING held on May 1, 2017.

***Councilor Messier, seconded by Councilor Pepin, made a motion to accept the minutes. The motion passed unanimously. Councilor Soldati abstained.***

### COMMENTS BY VISITORS

Superintendent Jeni Mosca, 51 West High Street, said she wanted to thank the Council from the bottom of her heart for the support of her position as the superintendent of schools. They have attended many meetings together. They are a supportive group of people with a great vision for the school. Their collaboration and cooperation with the school board, City Manager's help, and Mayor Hilliard's help, has been beyond belief. She thanked them for being on this journey with her.

### COMMUNICATIONS

#### **Resignation Letter from Bill Griffith**

Letter was read by the Clerk and will be kept on file.

The mayor Accepted Mr. Griffith's resignation with regret and said he was an asset to the Zoning Board.

#### **Letter from Yehuda Yaakov, Consul General of Israel to New England**

Letter was read by the Clerk and will be kept on file.

### **Letter from William Connor**

Letter was read by the Clerk and will be kept on file.

### **MAYOR'S REPORT**

#### **Mayors Report for City Council Meeting May 15th 2017**

- Each morning men and women throughout the county reaffirm their oath to “**Serve and Protect**”. With pride they put their respective uniform, and say goodbye to their loved ones, unassured what will unfold during their shift and if they will return.

Yet despite the unknown and uncertainty, despite the prospective danger, willingly, with bravery and honor they carry forward walking the “Thin Blue Line” of keeping our lives and property safe.

Since 1791 more than 19,000 United States law enforcement officers had made the ultimate sacrifice enshrining their names upon the honor roll of eternity. Without haste or reservation, they laid down their lives for the safety and continuing of democratic values for all.

For those who never experience the demands, the stress, the danger, the unknown, it is easy for us to question, to scrutinize or to verbal attack. Yet, despite a current climate in some manners hostile to those who protect, with unwavering dedication the men and women in law enforcement recommitted and reaffirm their oaths to their communities each day.

Today we honor all those that have lost their lives, their personal hopes and dreams in the name of the safety of society. We remember our own Hilltopper Officer Donald Kowalski who on September 4<sup>th</sup>, 1979 lost his life in the line of duty protecting our great city at the young age of 24.

As a nation, state and Hilltop city, let us honor their sacrifices by continuing to aide our brave law enforcement officers by holding true to the values which define us and keep us safe as Americans.

The Hilltop city is forever grateful for your commitment, we are forever grateful for your sacrifices and the eternal sacrifice of Officer Donald Kowalski.

As a society may we continue to honor, understand and work with you for safer communities. May your bravery continue to guide you in holding the “Thin Blue Line”, and may God continue to bless all of you each and every shift.

- A very successful Mayors community forum recently took place on May 6<sup>th</sup>. A packed room continued to engaged in conversations on issues of importance and offering suggestions and ideas on how we can continue to keep our Hilltop city “On the Move”!. The May 6<sup>th</sup> forum conclude the series until fall. New forum dates will be announced after Labor Day.
- I was honored to join Father Andrew Nelson from our Somersworth Catholic parishes in welcoming our newest member of the Hilltopper community, his rescue dog

Bandit. Thank you Father Andrew for registering your dog, and a friendly reminder to all residents who have your own special loyal friend to do the same. The City Clerk awaits your visit.

- Thank you Dina Gagnon, for recently hosting me at your business the “Gathering Place”. The visit was part of a highlighting Small Business week throughout the United States. Dina was presented with a proclamation affirming Somersworth participation and commitment to the success of small business within our community.
- Standing room only at the Cultural Commissions ethnic food tasking. Thank you Councilors Nancie Cameron and Marty Dumont for planning a great evening celebrating Somersworth’s “Proud Past” and “Bright Future”, which highlighting our rich diversity.
- I left with a very full stomach after being hosted by the proprietors of the “Bali Sate House” located on High Street. Thank you for treating me to your fine Indonesian cuisine. Welcome to Somersworth and best wishes on success of your business.
- Congratulations to all who joined me Saturday morning on a successful 5k run, participating in “Teddy’s run” and helping raise awareness autism.
- A high energy event took place Friday evening celebrating all who are committed to keeping Somersworth “On the Move”, at the Greater Somersworth Chamber of Commerce annual awards dinner. Congratulations to this year’s recipients.

Board member of the year: Lara Willard

Educator of the year: Matt Lagarde

Citizen of the year: Donald Houde

Business of the year: Cross Insurance

Non-Profit of the year: Cornerstone VNA

- May 21<sup>st</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> will mark National Public Works week. Each year members of the Public Works Departments continue to keep our community progressing forward through road and infrastructure improvements. They value and possess in-depth knowledge and understanding for the need of sound environment polices, protecting our drinking water, natural resources and open space. I would like to welcome the Director of Public Works Mr. Michael Bobinsky to receive a proclamation.
- The SYC Program, a 21st Century Community Learning Center Project through the NH Department of Education, in existence for the past 10 years, serving over 250 youth in grades 1-8 per year and an integral and valued program in our community, has just been awarded another 5 year grant cycle.

Funding will commence July 1, 2017 and continue through June 30, 2018, **pending the availability of federal funds**. Monies for year two and three will be at full funding, year four at 75%, and year five at 65%. Your award will be renewed annually pending the receipt of an Annual Performance Report that indicates sufficient progress and the availability of federal funds.

This was a highly competitive process with **\$2,197,581.03 requested for \$949,000.00** in available funds. Peer Reviewers worked in teams and were represented by experienced 21st Century Community Learning Center and school day professionals, higher education, state agencies and community based organizations. Thirteen proposals were reviewed with only 5 communities receiving funding. Somersworth also received the highest score on their grant proposal, ranking in at number 1.

- As part of the Somersworth Festival weekend, join me on Saturday June 17<sup>th</sup> at 8:30am for the annual Hilltop Hustle 5k. Walkers are welcome to participate and it would be wonderful to have a large City Council, School Board and City Department delegation. As an incentive any member from the Council, School Board or City Departments that signs up to participate will receive a Hilltopper Pride shirt. Show your commitment to wellness and Hilltopper pride and join me on June 17<sup>th</sup> for the annual Hilltop Hustle.

#### **Appointments**

Under nominations, appointments and Elections; **In accordance with Council Rule 17 Appointments**, the following are being brought for nomination.

- **Edward Levasseur**, As an Alternate member of the **Historic District Commission** with a **term to expire June 2020**

**In accordance with Council Rule 17 Appointments**, the nomination shall remain open until the June 5<sup>th</sup>, scheduled Council meeting

**This respectfully concludes my May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2017 Mayors Report**

#### **REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES**

**Economic Development** – Councilor McCallion said they met on May 5<sup>th</sup>. On the agenda was the TIF district. Director Saunders discussed what she has been working on. A lot of discussion was different areas that they are looking at. They plan to have a workshop at some point.

**Recreation** – Councilor Pepin said they met on May 5<sup>th</sup>. They discussed Stein Park. They reviewed a letter that will be sent to local Businesses about how they can help to

improve the community. They are scheduling a meeting and will be opening it up so the businesses can have some comments. He is looking forward to gathering and input. They asked for more police monitoring at Mast Point Dam. There was discussion about a Dog Park. Staff looked into some estimates and cost of a dog park. They also looked at possible areas for the park. A Coach was asking about a location for summer basketball. Staff is looking into it. St Laurent Park has been dismantled. They will now refer to it as the Blackwater Road Basketball Court. They discussed recommendations on improvements for the courts.

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

### Special Committees

Cultural commission – Councilor Dumont reported on the Ethnic Sampling Night and the trip to Thetford Mines. Dates are August 18-20th. Details for the trip will be finalized soon. Next Meeting will be held on June 1st.

Joint Committee of School Board and City Council – This was the last meeting with Superintendent Mosca, new superintendent coming on June 10.

School Board – Councilor Pepin congratulated Mayor Hilliard. The Somersworth Middle School was awarded a Spotlight School award. This award doesn't come lightly. They passed a budget, and the additional \$70k went for a teacher for kindergarten. He was surprised that there are 47 homeless students in our school system; Idlehurst has 21.

### 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, May 12, 2017

**SUBJECT:** City Manager's Report for Monday, May 15, 2017  
City Council Agenda

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**6:30 p.m. Workshop**  
**Somersworth First Impressions – UNH Planning Club**  
Attached is a copy of their Presentation.

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

**A. Informational Items**

- 1. 1 Winter Street – Former Breton's Cleaners Site.** The NH DES Brownfield's Grant has been approved by the Governor and Executive Council. Director Shanna Saunders and I discussed next steps with NH DES Brownsfield's Program Coordinator Mike McCluskey this past Friday. Our first step is seek proposals from qualified Environmental Consultant Engineering firms. Our goal will be to move forward as expeditiously as possible. Council passed Resolution No. 37-17 (copy attached) that authorized the City Manager to execute documents and agreements necessary for the Grant's execution. Unless directed otherwise by the Council, I will move forward with the selection process and contract hiring of the Environmental Consultant, abatement Contractor, as well as any other needed expenses to complete the Grant project's completion.
- 2. Recreation Committee – Stein Park.** Attached is a "*Sample*" letter that the Recreation Committee has approved. The Committee requested that the Mayor and all Councilors sign it. The letter will be mailed to businesses located in the City. As you will read, the meeting date is scheduled for Thursday, June 22 at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers.
- 3. Plan NH.** As I mentioned in my last Council meeting Manager's Report, the City did receive notification of this Grant's acceptance. Director Shanna Saunders and I had a preliminary meeting with the project leaders last Monday. We are targeting late September to conduct the Planning Charette over a Friday-Saturday series of meetings. Plan NH hopes to have 8-12 professionals assigned to our Downtown Project which will focus on several key development points and the downtown areas from Stein Park, to the Plaza, and down to the Somersworth-Berwick bridge. I will be providing more information closer to the event as well as pushing information and invites out to the public, our City Boards and the Community as a whole.

**B. Attachments.**

- 1. Department Head Monthly Reports.**
- 2. City Manager eMails:**
  - a.** Former Chabot's Dairy Purchaser's Work Update.

**b. National Guard Site Replacement Tree Planting Update.**

**NOMINATIONS, APPOINTMENTS AND ELECTIONS**

Mayoral Nomination – Requires Council confirmation vote.

- a. Edward Levasseur – as an alternate member of the Historic District Commission, with term to expire in June 2020.

***Appointment will remain open until the June 5, 2017 City Council Meeting.***

**CLOSING COMMENTS BY COUNCIL MEMBERS**

Councilor Pepin thanked the UNH Students for their presentation. Looking back in the archives, he has seen the community change so much. Urban renewal took all the people out of town. GE, shoe shops, those people that worked there are gone. He has heard comments that the streets in Somersworth are rolled up at 9pm. There are no activities in the evening. He said they need to find something to draw people back into our community. If Freeport didn't have LL Bean, it would be like Somersworth. Everything has moved out of the community. Hundreds of cars drive through Somersworth and they have nothing to stop for. When the trains went through, they would stop in Somersworth. We no longer have the trains. We were designed for rail. It would draw people in to our community. The other business will flourish around it. He will miss the Superintendent of schools. She was above and beyond.

Councilor Soldati thanked Jeni Mosca and wished her the best of everything in her future endeavors.

Historically, we were an agrarian society. It was the Industrial Revolution that pulled us away from farming. Farming began to be looked down upon. Farming was in disfavor. People wanted to be City People; work in the mill, in a factory. It was glamorous and life was going to be easier. Over time and with the withdrawal from nature, bringing in malls, pulled people from the center of their community. This is changing. People are growing their own food. Culturally, the new generation, are more connected to nature, more natural, chemical free. She appreciates the study of the UNH students. Don't get too pessimistic about our community. She hears comments and people are liking what is happening. Our trees can do better. They help clean the air and atmosphere.

Councilor Dumont said a trip down memory lane is a good feeling. We all need time to reflect. We are on the move for the future. He thanked the Chamber for a wonderful awards night. Congrats to the award winners. Special congrats to Matt Legarde, teacher of the year. This is well deserved. He is a music teacher for middle and high school. A young student nominated him.

During the Cultural Ethics sampling, there was a Full room and a diversity of attendees. People from outside our community were in attendance as well. There were many comments about the CTC and the school. These are the things from the Cultural

Commission perspective that makes our community better for the future. It shows that when we do things, we are taking care of things. Kudos to the janitorial staff, to the Chef and the assistants. This event showed the students at their best.

To the students of UNH who put together the report. He is happy that Vision2020 will be reviewing this. We need to stop and look at the opportunities.

Flag raising committee, Rick Michaud, has done a stellar job on organizing this and putting it together. This was a brainchild of the Mayor. We had a very emotional flag raising to honor the Police. We lost a policeman in our history.

Letter from Israel Consul. We are not far away from becoming THE City in NH. That may be overly optimistic, but if you are going to dream, dream big! That's what he likes about this Council. They don't worry about the small stuff.

The challenge in life is things like the Hilltop Hustle. He'd hate to say he would commit, but if there was a 3x shirt, he could be convinced.

Food truck festival is a wonderful thing to be involved with. It will be held on June 18<sup>th</sup>. There is large interest in this project. Thousands of people have liked it on Facebook and they haven't even started advertising yet. The City of Somersworth is On The Move!

Councilor McCallion thanked UNH Students and said this is part one of Director Saunders' plan. Thanks to Jeni Mosca for all the time that she has served with the city. He attended the prom and everything looked clean; it has a good image.

To reiterate Councilor Pepin's point; everything coming 'round and 'round. It doesn't take much to see everything is going smaller. It is coming to the point where things will change and we will see little markets. That will be the shopping in the future to get anything good and local. Maybe we need to look at the plaza, and we could have a non-farmer's market. We could have a great little restaurant row on Main Street by Stein Park if we choose, but we need to look at the infrastructure.

Councilor Messier thanked the UNH students. This is another tool in the book to help with the plan. Big industries are going away. Everything is online; even big malls are starting to dwindle.

Hilltop hustle; he will think about it. The Ethnic Food tasting went well, thanks to all those involved. Those are committees of volunteers. There are numerous volunteers.

Thanked Maureen Jackman, for receiving the highest award. He was surprised to hear that there are so many children in our community who don't have homes.

He thanked Jeni Mosca, and said good for her. This is going to be a change for this community.

Police week, thanks to those people.

Spotlight award. Congratulations to the Mayor and the Middle School.

Children's Festival is coming up, and he is anxious for the Food Truck Festival.

Councilor Witham commented on Police Memorial Week; for those in the community who have not been to Concord, the memorial, on the lawn of the legislative building, it is an event to see. He is proud of the bravery of the Somersworth Police.

He thanked the Public Works professionals. Their jobs are critically important. As we complain about the pot holes, street sweeping, know that they are doing what they can.

There was a theft at Noble Pines; somehow people gained height and remove basketball backboard and hoop. This would require a lot of tools and a tremendous amount of effort. We have cameras so time will tell.

The Chamber Awards went to well deserving recipients. He has heard students are choosing band as a elective because of the teacher, Matt Legarde.

Superintendent Mosca was the puzzle piece that fit our puzzle. He wished her well.

Councilor Sprague said the box stores took away our core downtown. Our downtown has moved. All of the box stores brought is a lot of cars and road damage. He hopes the new Dairy Queen doesn't affect the smaller ice cream shops. As for parking for the dog park, we are encouraging a walkable community. He is looking forward to the Food Truck Festival. He hopes it can continue and be successful.

He thanked Bill Connor for the kind comments to the Council; we never hear the good things. He misses having him at the meetings and appreciates the words. Hats off the Keller Williams Realty for their Red Day on May 12<sup>th</sup>. They pick out something in the community to add to. They worked on Lydia's House of Hope. It looks stunningly beautiful. They also planted flowers at Hilltop School.

Councilor Cameron thanked Councilor Dumont for his efforts to make the cultural event a success. Thanks to all who came out. The Food Truck Festival has over 22k facebook likes. She is in charge of the gates that day and they are looking for more volunteers. Jeni Mosca, shoes will be hard to fill thanks for the dedication.

She can't participate in hilltop hustle because she is working sign in.

Councilor Paradis said congrats to all of the award winners. She is grateful to the Mayor for inviting her to attend the community forum. There was lengthy discussion about the food stamp issue. Situation has been rectified. She has worked with Jeni Mosca on the School Board and City Council. She has taught us all about playing nice in the sandbox together. It's not optional. It's the only way to get things done.

#### ADJOURNMENT

***Councilor Witham, seconded by Councilor Cameron, made a motion to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 8:12 pm.***

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Trish Harris, City Clerk

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Dana Hilliard, Mayor