

MINUTES OF CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Somersworth, NH
March 19, 2018
7:00 P.M.

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: Pepin, Vincent, Dumont, McCallion, Messier, Witham, Cameron, and Levasseur. Councilor Sprague entered at 7:10pm.

Councilor Vincent led the Pledge of Allegiance.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING.

MINUTES of the CITY COUNCIL MEETING held on March 5, 2018

Councilor Cameron, seconded by Councilor Vincent, made a motion to accept the minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

MINUTES of the STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS held on March 12, 2018

Councilor Cameron, seconded by Councilor Messier, made a motion to accept the minutes. The motion passed unanimously. Councilor Witham abstained.

COMMENTS BY VISITORS

None

COMMENTS BY COUNCILORS

None

COMMUNICATIONS

Presentation of Financial Statements for year ending June 30, 2017 by Vachon Clukay & Co., City Auditors.

In attendance for the presentation was Bob Vachon, President of Vachon Clukay, and Matt Murray, Manager. The presentation is on file.

Following the presentation, Council had the following questions:

Councilor Dumont asked about the GASB Statement 68. Relative to the small portion that we face and what the state is faced with, being \$34mil of unfunded mandate. Murray explained in depth that 75 will be replacing the GASB Statement 68, and the ramification of this change.

Councilor Dumont asked about the school budget underspending. He said that for the past couple years, they have had to override the tax cap to supplement, yet this report is telling us that they are underspending.

Vachon and Murray explained that the tax cap over ride is based on the budget. The numbers that are included in the report are the actual numbers.

Councilor Witham asked if they had looked at a similar budgeted to expend on the City side as well?

Murray stated that they do, but not to this degree. The city was under expended by \$426,000. Both the City and the School have underspent.

Councilor Witham stated with regards to the two enterprise funds, water and sewer, is it fair to say that our rate structure, what action Council has taken has positioned those funds well for maintaining a positive cash flow and for projecting out towards capital needs. Is that a fair statement?

Murray responded that that is a fair statement. This is one of the more important parts. If you are looking at your revenues compared to your expenditures. On an annual basis, you are projecting out what capital cost needs are. It bids well for the city to not have to bond, or bond less, for future projects.

Councilor Witham asked, in regard to the fund balance, we often look at that as a way to limit the impact on the resident's tax assessment at budget time. It looks as though our fund balance has gone down and we are at the bottom end of where we should be, so we need to be mindful of that as we enter another budget season.

PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS AND DISPOSAL THEREOF BY REFERENCE OR OTHERWISE

None

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayors Report for City Council Meeting March 19th, 2018

- Congratulations to the Indonesian Community Connect for their recent ribbon cutting and inaugural food tasting event. The well attended event reinforced the Hilltopper values of commitment to our rich ethic heritage. I look forward to continue to work with the Indonesian community and attending future events.
- Happy 106th anniversary to the American Girls Scouts. I recent had the honor of hosting over 50 Girl Scouts and their family members at City Hall to honor them for 106th years of Scouting. The gathering included speeches, a flag raising at citizens place and of course some delicious cookies.
- The next Mayors Community forum will take place Saturday April 14th from 9:00 – 10:30 at City Hall. Including in this forum will be Ward 3 City Councilor Martin Dumont and Ward 3 School Board member Karen Hiller. The purpose of the forums are to foster dialog and ideas, in a non-formal setting to continue to

move our community forward. All members of the community are welcome to attend any forums

Nominations, Appointments and Elections:

Under nominations, appointments and Elections; In accordance with Council Rule 17 Appointments, the following are being brought for this evening for a Confirmation Vote.

- Matthew Gerding as a member of the Historic District Commission with a term to expire on March 2021
- David McNicholas as an Alternate member of the Historic District Commission with a term to expire March 2021
- Shane Conlin as a member of the Conservation Commission with a term to expire March 2021

This respectfully concludes my March 18th, 2018 Mayors Report

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Finance Committee – Councilor Witham reported that the committee met on March 14th.

- They discussed funding some school technology through the Comcast Franchise Fee Fund which receives approximately \$120,000 annually through this franchise agreement and there is currently about \$320,000 in the fund. Interim Superintendent Lori Lane was in attendance and she presented three projects under technology; the first being a cabinet based switching mechanism to communicate in and around the Idlehurst School which needs to be replaced at a cost of about \$66,400. There is a possibility of a federal E-rate reimbursement of approximately \$40,000. The second project is to replace wireless access points for wireless internet connection at Idlehurst Elementary. The approximate cost of this upgrade is \$62,200, with federal E-rate reimbursement eligibility around 60%. The third project is replacement of approximately 35 projector systems, with LED Technology at Idlehurst, to accompany the current smartboard technology, at a cost of approximately \$49,000. This is not E-rate eligible. The committee will be endorsing a resolution to full council.
- There was a discussion about the TAP Grant; CMA engineers will be completing the engineering portion of the TAP Grant, which include pedestrian upgrades on High Street, sidewalks on Cemetery Road, and trail improvements between the Middle School and Maplewood Elementary School. The contracted cost for CMA is approximately \$123,000. This project still needs state approval. The engineering numbers seem high. There was lengthy discussion about the intersection of High St and Memorial Drive.

- There was discussion about needed building repairs in within city. There is a reserve for needed repairs. There is about \$98,000 in that fund at this time. The needed repairs are to the Historical Society roof at an estimated cost of \$6,660. The other issue is the front steps at the Library are in need of repair at an estimated cost of \$8200. The committee will be endorsing resolutions to full council.
- There was an update and lengthy discussion regarding current negotiations for the solar array project.
- Under Reporting, Finance Director reported that things look in line with the city budget. DPW is projected to go over with the large storms the city has had. City Manager Belmore noted that the city is reviewing an abatement request from Aclara.
- Under Miscellaneous, City Manager Belmore distributed a draft resolution regarding the EPA demand for financial assurance. This is for the superfund site, the Landfill on Blackwater Road.

Government Operations – Councilor Dumont reported that the committee met on March 14th, 2018.

- Talked about realigning the wards. As a census process, the wards are skewed with the population.
- There was discussion about a Consent Calendar for the City Council, this will be coming to full Council.
- Discussion about the process used to evaluate the City Manager on an annual basis.

Recreation – Councilor McCallion reported that the committee met on March 8th, 2018.

- Capital reserve fund for park improvements. Money for rentals will go back into the parks.
- Recreational program fees. An increase will be expected. We are lower than other communities around us.
- Talked about the revamp of Jules Bison Park. The project cost is approximately 90,000, but there is a match, so the City’s portion is \$45,000

REPORTS OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES, CITY OFFICERS AND CITY MANAGER

Special Committees

COAST – Councilor Pepin stated that the meeting was centered around the “on time” schedule. He explained the timing and rider activity for the different routes.

City Manager’s Report



CITY OF SOMERSWORTH
Office of the City Manager

TO: Mayor Dana S. Hilliard and City Council Members

FROM: Robert M. Belmore, City Manager

DATE: Friday, March 16, 2018

SUBJECT: City Manager's Report for Monday March 19, 2018
City Council Agenda

6:00 p.m. Council Workshop

Re: City-wide Property Assessment & Discuss Elderly Tax Exemption

Attached are documents that our contracted City Assessor Marybeth Walker will present.

6:45 p.m. Public Hearing

***Re: Resolution 25-18 To Discontinue the Hilltop Rehabilitation Capital Reserve Fund
in Accordance with RSA 34:11-A.***

Unfinished Business (under section 13 of Agenda)

Resolutions

- A. Resolution 25-18 To Discontinue the Hilltop Rehabilitation Capital Reserve Fund in Accordance with RSA 34:11-A.** Again, the Finance Committee recommends the discontinuance of this fund. As of December 31, 2017 there was \$24,683 in this fund.

New Business (under section 14 of Agenda)

Other

- A. Update on Superfund Landfill –Solar Array (Requested by Finance Committee).** Attached is a memorandum that provides some key considerations regarding this Solar Array project.

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

A. Informational Items.

1. **City Council Goal Setting.** Reminder, the Council Goal Setting Session is Saturday, March 24th starting at 8:30 a.m. Coffee and light refreshments will be provided.
2. **Spirit Up Somersworth.** Attached is the announcement from Somersworth Youth Connection Director Maureen Jackman regarding this year's event. The City will continue its support in the 11th Annual "Spirit Up" Somersworth Community wide clean-up day: Saturday, May 5th from 7:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
3. **City Manager's FY2018/2019 Proposed Budget.** The City Manager Proposed FY 2018/2019 Budget and School Department Budget has been submitted in accordance with the City Charter. Mayor Hilliard has scheduled the Public Hearing for Monday, April 2nd. The City Manager will provide a Budget Presentation starting at 5:30 p.m. The Budget Hearing will start at 6:00 p.m. Budget Workshop is on Saturday, May 31st starting at 8:30 a.m. FYI: This Workshop will be televised.

B. Attachments.

1. Department Head Reports
2. Downtown Business Roundtable Packet – May 10th at 9:00 a.m.

NOMINATIONS, APPOINTMENTS AND ELECTIONS

Mayoral Nomination - For Council confirmation vote

Matthew Gerding, as a member of the Historic District Commission, term to expire March 2021

Motion was made by Councilor Witham, seconded by Councilor Messier, to confirm the nomination. All in favor.

David McNicholas, as an alternate member of the Historic District Commission, term to expire March 2021

Motion was made by Councilor Levasseur, seconded by Councilor Vincent, to confirm the nomination. All in favor.

Mayoral Appointment -


Shane Conlin as a member of Conservation Commission, term to expire March 2021

Motion was made by Councilor Cameron, seconded by Councilor Messier, to confirm the nomination. All in favor.

LAY ON THE TABLE

None

Resolutions:

	City of Somersworth – Resolution
	Resolution No: 25-18 <u>TO DISCONTINUE THE HILLTOP REHABILITATION CAPITAL RESERVE FUND IN ACCORDANCE WITH RSA 34:11-A</u>

March 5, 2018

WHEREAS, the City Council adopted Resolution No. 12-13 to establish a capital reserve fund for the purpose of reconstruction or rehabilitation of the former Hilltop School property, and

WHEREAS, the City sold this property in December of 2017 to a private developer thereby making the purpose of this fund moot, and

WHEREAS, the Council Finance Committee determined no present need for said fund; recommending its discontinuance and moving the funds to the City's General Fund, and

WHEREAS, RSA 34:11-a grants the City Council the authority to discontinue a capital reserve fund and direct the Trustees of Trust Funds to pay all the moneys in said fund to the city treasury,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SOMERSWORTH THAT the Hilltop Rehabilitation Capital Reserve Fund shall be discontinued in accordance with RSA 34:11-a and direct the Trustees of Trust Funds to pay all the moneys in said fund to the city treasury.

Note: RSA 34:11-a requires a public hearing, and the public notice for the public hearing must include a statement distinctly stating the reason(s) for which such reserve is to be discontinued.

Authorization	
<i>Sponsored by:</i> David A. Witham Martin Dumont, Sr. Martin Pepin	<i>Approved:</i> City Attorney

City of Somersworth – Resolution No. 25-18

History

First Read Date:	03/05/2018	Tabled:	
Public Hearing:	03/19/2018	Removed From Table:	
Second Read:	03/19/2018		

Action

Councilor Witham moved for adoption, seconded by Councilor Pepin.

Discussion

Councilor Sprague stated that we have this capital reserve fund, if we discontinue this, it will go back into the general fund. Maybe rename this fund; call it a city property fund.
City Manager Belmore said he has allocated \$3000 to this fund, in the current budget. Explained there would have to be a second resolution to hold a public hearing for the change.

Councilor Sprague, seconded by Councilor McCallion, made a motion to suspend council rules to allow Finance Director Smith to address the council.

Finance Director Smith explained that we would have to rename and redefine the purpose for the fund.

Councilor Messier said he goes along with the concept of taking their time and sliding this money into a separate fund, and not into the general fund.

Councilor Witham said the idea is brilliant. He plans to vote in opposition and defeat this.

Voting Record		YES	NO
Ward 1 Councilor	Pepin		X
Ward 2 Councilor	Vincent		X
Ward 3 Councilor	Dumont		X
Ward 4 Councilor	McCallion		X
Ward 5 Councilor	Messier		X
At Large Councilor	Witham *		X
At Large Councilor	Sprague		X
At Large Councilor	Cameron		X
At Large Councilor	Levasseur		X
TOTAL VOTES:			X
On 03/19/2018 Resolution No. 25-18			DEFEATED

NEW BUSINESS

Other:

Update on Superfund Landfill –Solar Array (Requested by Finance Committee)

Councilor Witham said he would like to defer to a meeting when Attorney Belliveau is in attendance.

City Manager Belmore provided a memo outlining the issues regarding concluding this lease agreement. Perhaps they misunderstood how the net metering agreement would be implemented. There was a conference call between Belmore, Smith and Andrew of NH Solar, and they have a better understanding of how the metering will be done. There is some more homework that will have to be done.

Councilor Witham said it would be helpful to have Attorney Belliveau here for this discussion. He just wanted to make sure that we are moving very cautiously, with the solar array and EPA mandates. His insight would be valuable.

Councilor Vincent stated that he sat on Science Technology Committee on the state level. We can burn oil and sulfur and put the bad stuff into our atmosphere, but clean energy is different. Second thing is, if we are purchasing power, an agreement over a 3 year period, we don't know what is going to happen.

Councilor Messier said he it would be better to wait until we have clarity from NH Solar, and then bring Attorney Belliveau here after that, when we have a firm contract.

Councilor Witham said that is his thought process as well.

CLOSING COMMENTS BY VISITORS

None

CLOSING COMMENTS BY COUNCIL MEMBERS

Councilor Pepin thanked Highway Department for their snow removal efforts during the recent storms.

Councilor Vincent thanked Highway Department for their snow removal efforts during the recent storms.

Councilor Dumont thanked Highway Department for their snow removal efforts during the recent storms.

Councilor McCallion, thanked Highway Department, Police Department, and Fire Department for all of their hard work and commitment.

Councilor Messier thanked the Finance Department for their work for the positive audit. Congratulated the Boys Basketball on becoming State Champions. Concerning the change in revenue for the parks, it goes to the image of the city and those using the parks. Running paths are a safety concern. Spirit up cleaning our city is coming up. He encouraged all to get involved.

Councilor Witham said if he were to be a high school teacher, the DPW made the honor roll. Congratulations to the High School Boys Basketball team; his kid was one of those boys. He has pride in what it does for the community as a whole. He has heard that the LED street light upgrades are complete, but we still have a dozen of so street lights and parking lots, that need to be completed.

Councilor Sprague congratulated the boys' basketball team. The community adores their efforts. He thanked the finance department and auditors for the financials. Shout out to this council and to the previous councils for what they have done with the enterprise funds. When he started they were in the red.

Councilor Cameron reminded everyone about Cultural Dinner on April 18th, tickets will be available in advance. When she went to the basket ball game it brought back memories for her. It is a community effort and the pride he feels for the kids.

Mayor Hilliard announced that they will be honoring the boys Basketball Team tomorrow at 6:30.

ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Cameron, seconded by Councilor Dumont, made a motion to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.

Trish Harris, City Clerk

Dana Hilliard, Mayor