

MINUTES OF CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Somersworth, NH
February 19, 2019
7:00 P.M.

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: Pepin, Vincent, Dumont, Michaud, Witham, Sprague, and Levasseur. Councilor Cameron was excused and Ward 4 is currently vacant.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIENCE

Councilor Witham led the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Ordinance No. 13-19 - To Amend Chapter 7, Streets, Highways, Sewers, by Renaming the Title to Solid Waste & Recycling, and Amend Chapter 7.1.C, Residential Recycling Bins

No public comments

Ordinance No. 14-19 - To Amend Chapter 8A, Sewer Ordinance, Section XV.C, by Deleting Language Regarding the Sewer Special Assessment District

No public comments

COMMENTS BY VISITORS

Steven Potter, 8 Maize, ward 4, stated that he put his name in for consideration for the open Ward 4 Council Seat. He informed the council that he is withdrawing his name for consideration of the Ward 4 Council Seat. He stated that he has a strong desire to serve on the Council, but with knowing one of the candidates, Don Austin, is from the School Board, he asked that the Council show support for Don Austin.

Mr Potter stated that he has a stronger commitment to the youth community, where he has taught baseball, coached football, assisted with the SAA, has attended school board meetings to address issues. If Don Austin is voted in as Ward 4 Councilor, he will be spending his time running for candidacy for the open School Board Seat. He has a son who will become a freshman at the Somersworth High School next year. So he regretfully withdraws, but looks forward to hopefully accepting a School Board nomination in the near future.

Christien Dubois, 202 Maple Street, ward 3, thanked the Council for their consideration of appointment to the Zoning Board of Adjustment. He was a member City staff and was involved with the Zoning Board and took minutes. He is looking forward to being appointed to the ZBA.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Approve Minutes of the City Council Meeting held on February 4, 2019
Councilor Witham, seconded by Councilor Levasseur, made a motion to approve the Consent Calendar. The motion passed, 7-0.

Mayor Hilliard went out of order of the agenda to vote on the nomination of Ward 4 City Councilor, without objection from Council.

- A. City Council, Ward 4, with term to expire November 2020:
 - a. Steven Potter (withdrawn)
 - b. Donald Austin

Councilor Pepin, seconded by Councilor Vincent made a motion to nominate Donald Austin as Ward 4 City Councilor.

Councilor Sprague asked if Council was required to vote on the nominee at this meeting.

The Mayor clarified of parliamentary procedures, stating that the notice of vacancy needs to be posted for 14 days before Council can vote, but nothing in the Charter says that they must vote by a certain time.

Mayor Hilliard stated that he does have a resignation from Don Austin from the School Board, as the City Charter specifically states that individuals cannot hold 2 elected positions.

Councilor Sprague went on to ask who confirms School Board Appointments.
The Mayor responded, saying that City Council confirms School Board appointments.

Councilor Witham stated that letters of interest in the Ward 4 Council Seat needed to be submitted by a certain date. We received 2 letters, one of which has been withdrawn. He asked if there was a way to get more candidates.

Mayor Hilliard said that we have fulfilled Charter obligations by posting the notice for 14 days; it was duly advertised, and we received letters of interest during that time. We have one candidate before us this evening.

Councilor Sprague said, we have fulfilled Charter obligation, but we could run with 8 Council members for the rest of the year.

Mayor Hilliard stated that technically the Council could do that, and Council would be saying that they are comfortable with a Ward not being represented. To do that, Council would have to not confirm the nomination this evening. Then the vacancy would have to be posted for 14 days, essentially, not confirm those nominees again, because the charter does call on a specific process of when a vacancy is in occurrence. To not confirm a nominee, the process would start again.

Councilor Pepin stated that we are at the beginning of the budget season and he thinks that all wards should be represented. He is all in favor of voting this evening.

Councilor Sprague asked for clarification if the position on the School Board would be at large.

The Mayor confirmed that if Don Austin was appointed as Ward 4 City Councilor, then there would be an At Large School Board Vacancy and any person could apply. Following the City Charter, the vacancy will have to be advertised for 14 days, with the same process that we are going forward with this evening, to fill that vacancy.

Donald Austin was appointed as the Ward 4 City Councilor by a roll call vote of 6-1, with Councilor Sprague opposed.

The Clerk read a letter of resignation from Don Austin.

Mayor Hilliard called for a brief recess as the Clerk administered Councilor Austin's oath of office and Councilor Austin took the seat for Ward 4 Councilor.

COMMENTS BY CITY COUNCILORS

There were questions regarding Announcements and Comments. It was clarified later in the meeting that there was an error on previous agendas. In accordance with Council Rules and Regulations, this section is COMMENTS by City Councilors

COMMUNICATIONS

None

PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS AND DISPOSAL THEREOF BY REFERENCE OR OTHERWISE

None

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayors Report for City Council Meeting February 19, 2018

- History was made in Somersworth last Saturday as over 500 citizens gathered at Citizens Place celebrating the Statehood of the Vatican. Members of St. Ignatius parish converged on Citizens place not only raising the Vatican flag in honor of the 1929 statehood but also bringing over 3,000 pounds of food which was donated to the local food pantry. Since its creating, Citizens place continues to exemplify the Hilltopper values which has gained our community the reputation of "NH Welcoming City". The flag raising on last Saturday not only broke a record in attendance but I hope also set a new trend within this community, to use each flag raising as not only an opportunity to celebrate our difference, but to also give back to the community which embraces and honors them.

Thank you members of St. Ignatius, for being the trend setters for what I hope brings new meaning to Citizens Place, a small spot in the smallest city in NH which represents our human diversity and commitment to service to others.

- Last night the school board completed their due diligence by adopting and passing forward to this body the 2019-2020 proposed school district operating budget. While the budget does not truly reflect the needs associated with acquiring a 21st century education, it does balance the incredible restraints placed upon communities like Somersworth to continue to provide access to high quality educational opportunities while governing under a tax system which favors affluent communities over working class communities like ours.

As has been echoed by members of this Council and several members of the School Board and citizens last night, the system of taxation we continue to govern under within our state, claims the victims of each generation by lost education experiences and opportunities based upon geological location. We cannot change where we are born, and nor should the city or town you live in dedicated the barriers of your journey towards success. Yet, each year this Council and School Board continue to raise with a united voice our redress of grievances against an outdated system of broken promises and finical support. While we will continue with our blue and white Hilltopper determination, to bring to light the NH disadvantage from our local governing perspective, the tone defenses and unwillingness of the legislature to acknowledge and correct this problem, reflects a complete blindness of both parties and those in power of the reality of the struggles of cities and towns throughout NH to continue to provide services and deliver the education and skills necessary for the next generation to complete in a global economy.

In our ten square mile community this Council and School Board will continue to struggle to balance the scales against the dire needs of our community and the affordability of the budgets which we pass to each taxpayer. Despite these barriers, we will, with unwavering commitment keep Somersworth “On the Move!” As we enter into our budget session, we will continue to explore methods of progressing our home forward with the openness, statesmanship, and the cooperation we have become known for. While divisiveness, partisanship and attacks continue to be the common practices at the state and national level, within our Hilltop City Hall, we will continue to erode the superficial barriers which lead to stagnation and discontent. Our voice will continue to echo from the highest hills of our hilltop city, and while we may become fatigued with the repetitiveness of our message, until tax and equality of opportunity become the common practice of the granite state we will not rest. Until then, we will continue to be the stewards of keeping Somersworth “On the Move!” and govern as a team ensuring that our “Proud Past” continues to lead to a “Bright Future” for all.

- Thanks to all who attend and participated in last Saturdays Mayors community forum on the Historic District Commission. The presentation and conversation were insightful and we look forward to continue to work together towards implementing reforms within the commission. The next Mayors Community forum will take place

Saturday March 16th from 9:00 – 10:30 at City Hall. Including in this forum will be discussion and insight from the Fire Department. The purpose of these 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.

Item 12 Nominations, Appointments and Elections:

- Under Nominations, Appointments and Elections; In accordance with Council Rule 17 Appointments, the follow are before the Council this evening for a confirmation vote.
 - Philip Munck re-appointment as a member of the Ethics Commission with a term to expire in February 2022
 - Roger Berube re-appointment as a member of the Ethics Commission with a term to expire in February 2022
 - Christien Dubois appointment as an Alternate member of the Zoning Board of Adjustment with a term to expire in February 2022
- Finally under Nominations, Appointments and Elections, in accordance with The City Charter Article 3.5 C Appointments; I am naming Councilor Austin to the following committees;
 - Economic Development Vice Chair
 - Recreation
 - Joint Commission of Council & School Board
 - I am also naming Councilor Michaud to the Tri-City Coalition

This respectfully concludes the Mayors report for February 19th, 2019

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Finance Committee

Councilor Witham reported that the Committee met on February 15, 2019. The committee discussed:

- Approved minutes
- School Department request for funding for energy efficient upgrades as part of the Maplewood school project. As Council knows, what was bonded was for the individual classroom heaters. It was determined that this is not the most energy efficient way to go. A rooftop system is more efficient. The School Department was working with EEI, for energy efficient improvements. They determined that by putting in rooftop units, the savings would be equal to or greater than the cost.

This does not require Council approval. It rests solely in the hands of the School Board. No action needed by the Council.

- Blue trash bags distribution. The bags are manufactured by a company called Waste Zero. The bags are shipped to the City, stored in a warehouse and orders are delivered once a week based on orders that the Public Works Department receives. Public Works staff goes to the warehouse, to pick up the bags and delivers them to the 12 or 15 different locations in the City. It is labor intensive on a number of scales, particularly difficult when it snows. The department is short staffed as it is. For an additional 5cents per bag, the bags could be shipped directly to the end location. The committee endorsed a change.
- Recycling cost; the City is looking at approximately \$60,000. Overage due to the market not being what it used to be. Robust discussion; no decisions made.
- Reporting – watching the Fire Department overtime, and a few other lines. Generally the budget looks good other than the solid waste recycling.
- Requested that we do an examination of the salt usage. City Staff provided a comparison of salt usage based on road miles compared to Dover and Rochester. Our salt usage is generally in line with other communities.

Economic Development

Councilor Dumont reported that the Committee met on February 13, 2019. The Committee discussed:

- Look at demographic for the form based code. Resilience Planning Consultants was retained and Steve Whitman was there to explain the process to designate an area.
- Parking restrictions were discussed, and a draft was submitted to look at the general parking within the city.

REPORTS OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES, CITY OFFICERS AND CITY MANAGER

Special Committees

School Board- Councilor Pepin stated that the Board met. There was a public hearing for comments from the public regarding the budget. Three members on the community commented on the Budget. The School Board Budget passed during the meeting.

SAU Withdrawal Committee – Councilor Witham reported that the Committee met last Wednesday. Cost was a big piece of the conversation.

Veterans Park Commission – Councilor Dumont Reported that the Commission met on February 19, 2019. There was a presentation from Jan Martel of Ironwood Design. The presentation was well received by members of the Commission, all were happy with the design ideas and vision. They hope to have photos within the next month or so.

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, February 15, 2019

SUBJECT: City Manager's Report for Tuesday, February 19, 2019
City Council Agenda

6:00 p.m. - Workshop
Re: Marketing Plan / Branding Identity
Presentation by Christina Pappas, Open the Door, Inc.

Lay on the Table (Under Section 13 of Agenda)

- A. Ordinance No. 4-19: To Amend Chapter 19, Zoning Ordinance, Section 14, Historic District.**
- B. Resolution No. 22-19: To Authorize the City Manager to Take the Necessary Actions to Discontinue Fair Court as a Class V Highway.** City Staff and I met with Attorney Barrington and the property abutter to discuss a resolution. Attached is a copy of his emailed proposal that was not supported by the Public Works Committee.

Unfinished Business (Under Section 14 of Agenda)

Ordinances

- A. Ordinance No. 13-19: To Amend Chapter 7, Streets, Highways, Sewers, by Renaming the Title to Solid Waste & Recycling, and Amend Chapter 7.1.C, Residential Recycling Bins.** Again, the Public Works & Environment Committee recommends this title change and also to move forward with allowing residents to use their own recycling bins/containers.

- B. Ordinance No. 14-19: To Amend Chapter 8a, Sewer Ordinance, Section XV.C, by Deleting Language Regarding the Sewer Special Assessment District.** Again, the Public Works & Environment Committee recommends removing this language from this Ordinance since the need for this District ceased a number of years ago.

New Business (Under Section 15 of Agenda)

- A. Ordinance No. 15-19: To Amend Chapter 19, Zoning Ordinances, Section 21, Requiring Paved Parking Spaces for Residential use and Deleting Parking Requirement in the Historic Moderate Density District.** This Ordinance change was discussed at the Economic Development Committee meeting on February 13; the Committee voted 3-1 to support the change. Currently the Zoning Ordinance Chapter 19, states that there needs to be a minimum of two parking spaces per residential dwelling, however it doesn't address the need for them to be paved. Additionally, the deletion of the parking requirement in the HMD District is of a housekeeping nature as this has been moved to the City's site plan regulations. Attached is memorandum from Director Saunders explaining these amendments.

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

A. Informational Items.

- 1. FY 2019-2020 GeoSyntec Contract-Landfill Superfund Site.** In keeping with past practice, and without objection, I will be signing the attached Draft Contract Amendment for proposed monitoring work to be done by Geosyntec Consultants as required by the EPA, this would cover FY 2019-2020. This Remedial Action Services contract outlines our compliance obligations in accordance with the existing EPA Consent Decree and Record of Decision (ROD) as well as other work that may be required by the EPA from time to time. Attorney Beliveau will provide legal guidance on any needed language amendments to this Agreement, which I have attached. The Contract costs and other associated budgeted expenses are split between the City at 50.5% and GE at 49.5%.
- 2. Financial Statements.** At the meeting, I will be distributing copies of the audited Financial Statements for year ending June 30, 2018 from Vachon Clukay & Co., the City's contracted Auditors. We are scheduling their audit overview presentation to Council for the March 18th Council meeting.

Calendar Reminders

- Monday, March 4th at 5:30 p.m. – *State of the City Address* – Council Chambers
- Monday, March 11th at 6:00 p.m. – *Joint City Council & School Board Budget Workshop*
at the Career Technical Center.
- Saturday, March 30th at 8:30 a.m. – *Budget Workshop: Non-Profits & City Departments* – Council Chambers

B. Attachments.

- a. City Attorney Certification – one (1)**
- b. Department Head Reports**

Councilor Witham stated that he was ok with sticking with Geosyntec for the monitoring of the superfund landfill site. These are professional services. We have been with Geosyntec for as long as he has been on the Council. They know our system well, and trying to find another firm would be very difficult.

NOMINATIONS, APPOINTMENTS AND ELECTIONS

For Council Vote:

Philip Munck, reappointment as a member of the Ethics Commission with a term to expire, February 2022

Roger Berube, reappointment as a member of the Ethics Commission with a term to expire, February 2022

Christien Dubois, appointment as an Alternate Member of the Zoning Board of Adjustment, with a term to expire, February 2022

Councilor Witham, seconded by Councilor Vincent, made a motion to approve the slate of nominees. The motion passed, 8-0.

LAY ON THE TABLE

Ordinance No. 4-19 – To Amend Chapter 19, Zoning Ordinance, Section 14, Historic District

Ordinance 4-19 remained on the table.

Resolution No. 22-19 - To Authorize the City Manager to Take the Necessary Actions to Discontinue Fair Court as a Class V Highway

Councilor Witham, seconded by Councilor Vincent, made a motion to remove Resolution 22-19 from the table. The motion passed, 8-0.

Councilor Witham, seconded by Councilor Pepin, made a motion to approve Resolution 22-19.

Councilor Witham stated that this has been on the agenda for quite some time. There have been a number of negotiations, looking at different options and feasibilities, all of which require some level of discontinuance. The roadway (Fair Court) is not in good condition. At this point, this is just a simple ‘divide it down the middle’, we take half, the abutters take half, which is what state law calls for. There have been public hearings regarding this resolution. This has had more vetting than many other things within the Council and he is ready to move on.

Councilor Vincent stated that he read the email from the City Manager in regards to the maintenance of the road. As a point of clarification, the City will no longer maintain the road which is the alley behind the building.

City Manager Belmore stated that the alley behind the building is a private alley that is not maintained by the City. He provided information regarding an offer from the abutter through their attorney. This was discussed at length at the Public Works and Environment Committee Meeting. If Council votes to discontinue Fair Court, then we cannot touch their half; can’t plow or maintain.

Councilor Vincent said that this is where he has a bit of heartburn. These people are tax payers and they are citizens of this City and he believes, to make that a non-safety issue, to be able to make emergency vehicles to get in and out, he suggested maybe it could be opened up or delayed somehow to be able to maintain this to allow access for emergency vehicles.

Councilor Sprague explained that Fair Court connects Elm Street to Main Street. There are 2 lots that could use Fair Court, and upper lot and a lower lot. Both of these properties have frontage on two roads. The top lot has frontage on Elm Street and the lower lot has frontage and an opening on Main Street. He doesn’t know how an emergency vehicle can’t get in there. We are just saying that this road, that is not beneficial to the City, is being discontinued. We don’t want to maintain it and we want to make it part of the park. The other half of the road, by law goes to the property owner. If they want to make a driveway or whatever, they can get a permit and do so. Emergency vehicles can get it.

Councilor Witham stated that he recalls communication that the fire chief indicated that it is not likely that he would put a piece of apparatus in that alley; it is too narrow and too close to the buildings.

Councilor Vincent stated that he had some confusion. The City Manager did say that the alley is a private way and it always has been, and has not been maintained by the City. So the only piece really is toward the top near Elm Street. That area can be maintained by the contractor for the upper lot.

Resolution 22-19 was adopted by roll call vote, 8-0.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

ORDINANCES

Ordinance No. 13-19 - To Amend Chapter 7, Streets, Highways, Sewers, by Renaming the Title to Solid Waste & Recycling, and Amend Chapter 7.1.C, Residential Recycling Bins


Councilor Witham, seconded by Councilor Levasseur, made a motion to adopt Ordinance 13-19. The motion passed, 8-0.

Ordinance No. 14-19 - To Amend Chapter 8A, Sewer Ordinance, Section XV.C, by Deleting Language Regarding the Sewer Special Assessment District

Councilor Witham, seconded by Councilor Levasseur, made a motion to adopt Ordinance 14-19. The motion passed, 8-0.

NEW BUSINESS

ORDINANCES

	<div style="text-align: center; background-color: #d3d3d3; padding: 5px;">City of Somersworth – Ordinance</div> <p>Ordinance No: 15-19</p> <p>TO AMEND CHAPTER 19, ZONING ORDINANCES, SECTION 21, REQUIRING PAVED PARKING SPACES FOR RESIDENTIAL USE AND DELETING PARKING REQUIREMENT IN THE HISTORIC MODERATE DENSITY DISTRICT</p>
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February 19, 2019

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SOMERSWORTH THAT the ordinances of the City of Somersworth, as amended, be further amended as follows:

Amend Chapter 19, Zoning Ordinances, Section 21, Circulation & Parking Regulations, by:

1. Add ‘paved’ to section 19.21.A. The section will read as follows:

19.21.A.1. In all districts permitting residential uses, except where otherwise dictated below, a minimum of two (2) **paved** parking spaces per dwelling unit shall be provided on the lot which they are required to serve.
2. Delete Section 19.21.A.2. in its entirety.
3. Renumber Section 19.21.A accordingly.

This Ordinance shall take effect upon passage.

Authorization	
<p><i>Sponsored by:</i></p> <p>Martin P. Dumont, Sr. Richard R. Michaud Martin Pepin</p>	<p><i>Approved:</i></p> <p>City Attorney</p>

Ordinance 15-19 will remain in first read until the March 4, 2019 City Council Meeting. A Public Hearing for Ordinance 15-19 is scheduled for March 4, 2019.

CLOSING COMMENTS BY VISITORS

None

CLOSING COMMENTS BY COUNCIL MEMBERS

Councilor Pepin welcomed Don Austin to the City Council. He enjoyed working with Don on the School board; Don made comments, was rattling peoples cages and going out for more grants. He knows how hard the School Board, City Manager and Finance Director all work to get funding.

Councilor Pepin went on to say that he turned on the news and listened to politicians talk about free college education, health care. Our School budget will have \$700,000 less this year than last year. How can we have students in College, if we can't even get them through grammar school? The politicians don't work together; they all have their own agenda and don't want to listen to anyone else. Want to have a green community? It's time to ask politicians; ask the tough questions. We are cutting the budgets so badly; we can't get supplies, books, or computers. He is not in favor of the tax cap. It is not a fair look at the budget, because there is nothing left to cut. Council has always done a good job proposing a budget that is fair and just for the residents to pay, but let's make politicians be accountable. They are cutting funding from the local schools.

Councilor Vincent stated that he is still working hard on the \$10million from the state level. The City will need to go after it as a grant.

He would like to see if the School Board could give a report of how we are doing with the energy efficiency. This is the best bang for your buck, since New Hampshire has the highest energy bills in the country.

Constituents are talking about the upcoming budget. As on person said, when the tax goes up a buck, it costs \$500, and that is difficult on a fixed income. Our backs are against the wall, and sometimes it is a goal that can't be met. This past year, we faired better than we anticipated.

Don Austin, welcome aboard.

Councilor Dumont welcomed Don Austin. Dumont thanked all the people at the Vatican Flag Raising event at Citizens Place. To see a sector of our community to gather together motivated to come and benefit the community food pantry. It was difficult to not be emotional on that day. He thanked all who came and stated that he is so proud of that community and for the City of Somersworth.

Councilor Dumont thanked the Mayor for his comments, in reference to, the mandates flow downhill to the cities, communities and towns, and yet we are given assurances that they will there to help. He talks about state leaders and goes on to the federal government. We are a community and we are on the move, but there are a lot of hurdles and guys like him can't jump them all. There are a lot of hurdles to get a few dollars that we are supposed to feel good about when the promises that were made were more than for just the few dollars that we received. The schools deserve better. We follow the rules and the guidelines that they put out, that we have to follow. The administrative requirements that are placed upon our SAU, School Board and Administrative Staff, are

far beyond what any of those people would comply to. But it is easier to be sitting behind a desk, thinking you have all of the right answers.

One of the questions he would like an answer to is when we were presented the opportunity for Keno, it was said that it would be used to offset the kindergartens. He hasn't seen anything regarding this. Last time he checked, Two Doors Down on Route 108 is the number one Keno place in New Hampshire. They run a good business, people are happy and it's hard to get a place to park on a Friday night.

He is not sure that our kindergartens are getting what is projected. He'd hate to rely on rumors, so it would be nice to see a report.

This past week in the paper, our State Senator Waters is submitting legislation to look at the Keno proceeds to start using the funds for buildings now. If we are not fulfilling our promise for what we were going to do for the kindergartens, but want to take funding for buildings. He is not sure what is driving that.

Crest drive has a 3foot pothole that is about 6 inches deep. He got a call that a person's front end was hurt. When there is snow in the road, you can't see the pot holes. Drew Road is delaminating. Fox Court, in terrible shape. Main Street is showing separation at the seams on a new road that is not finished yet.

Something concerning to him, on a general consensus, out of all of the states only Vermont had a successfully higher average (approximately 60%) of people in the US can pass a test to become a citizen of the US. He finds it hard to believe that our kids coming out of school can't pass this test.

He heard the other day that the state of New Hampshire was identified as one of the 5 or 6 states that has no law on the books regarding Right to life and late term abortions.

Councilor Austin thanked the Councilors for their support and for approving his nomination and to fill the Ward 4 seat. He brings a lot of background and experience this position. With the School Board and City Council working together over the past several years, they have built an honest relationship together. He is looking forward to working with everyone on the Council forward the goals and objectives for the City of Somersworth.

Councilor Michaud welcomed Don Austin, and he thanked the Mayor for his appointment to another board (as he held up a sign stating 'NO').

Councilor Witham went to the podium and stated that there is nothing in Council Rules that states comments have to come from his seat.

He displayed a blue Somersworth pay-per bag and blue recycling bin.

Councilor Witham stated that he wanted to talk trash a little bit. We (the council) often get questions about the blue bag. Where does the cost come from? How come this blue bag cost \$1.85? And with the proposed ordinance, will increase the bag to \$1.90.

He also set out a sign regarding the cost of bags.

Make bag	5cents
Ship bag	5cents
Collection	85cents
Disposal (tip fee)	95cents

- Waste Zero makes the bags at a cost of approximately 5 cents.
- The cost to get the bag to the place of distribution is 5 cents.
- We then fill the bag with whatever we have at home and the green truck (Waste Management) with the guy on it, comes and picks up the blue bag. He guessed that the cost of collection would be approximately 85 cents.
- Then there is the Disposal Fee, also known as the tipping fee, which is based on weight, to take that bag out of the truck and put it into the landfill, is approximately 95 cents.

Councilor Witham continued by saying that we also know that the recycling in the blue bins are picked up every other week. There has been lengthy discussion about the recycling bin. What happens with the stuff that is in there? Unlike the bag, we don't pay for the recycling stuff to be picked up, as a user. It gets funded out of the City tax rate. And he has reported as the Finance Committee Chair that we are looking at about a \$60,000 overage in the pickup of this container. Because, there is no market on the stuff that goes into the blue bin (recyclables), so Waste Management has a dilemma on their hands. They have to stockpile or store it somewhere. Some of it doesn't even get stockpiled or stored; it goes where the blue bags go.

So, the dilemma is that we have money in our budget for this, but when it gets to \$60,000 over budget, it becomes less sustainable year after year after year. So, the options are, eat that cost and increase the overall budget by approximately \$60,000, which would mean a potential increase in taxes, or get rid of recycling, which would mean more bags.

He has asked the City Manager to work with the Finance Director to draft an ordinance to propose a solid waste fee of approximately 3-5 cents for a solid waste fund, which could be used to offset the cost of solid waste recycling, education, to build a fence around the cardboard recycling area at Public Works, or other things. This would be similar to the transportation fee that is included in vehicle registration and the surcharge on the cable bill.

There have been conversations at various levels about the plastic blue bags; can it be made of something else; something that is more biodegradable? Yes, probably, but why hasn't this been used elsewhere? There are many pay-per bag programs like ours in this state, and everyone is using the plastic bag. Inside of our blue non-biodegradable bags are more bags. Nothing in the non-biodegradable bag is biodegradable.

Councilor Sprague commented of the blue bags. This has come up in the Committee several times. They have discussed looking into biodegradable options. Leaf bags will break down with weather and there will be trash all over the City.

As for the \$60,000 overage in solid waste recycling, that would pave Crest Drive, Fox Court, or one of the many other roads that need attention. He would love to do every road in Somersworth, but if we don't want to raise the budget and put \$3mil into paving, then don't talk about it. As for the cracks down Main Street, we are happy that we got that level of construction done. There is a bad base on that street and we knew this going in to paving that road.

He asked staff, in regards to Ordinance 15-19, he would like to know all districts that are permitted to have residential uses. He is against the mandate of having 2 paved spaces per dwelling. Paved is more than just asphalt. Sustainability might care to know that petroleum bases are not good for the environment.

There are also some places that are built and do not have paved parking places, they are grandfathered. How do we define grandfathering in our ordinances?

Councilor Sprague welcomed Don, and he stated that he hopes the school board can go on. It is tough to see a Chair leave the school board.

For Public Works Department, he would like the manhole covers to be inventoried. When Blackwater Road was paved, the proper covers were not put on. We have a lot of mismatched manhole covers, and this could be dangerous. There was recently a case in Massachusetts where there was a lawsuit over a death because of a loose manhole cover.

Councilor Levasseur shared that he has recently had three conversations with different people in the region. All have only been to Somersworth once or twice. Our bright future is more in grasp after seeing and hearing the presentation on the Marketing Plan.

He stated that the Public Works Department needs to clear the crosswalks. He was recently at Smoke and Cream, and witnessed a woman crossing the street and couldn't continue on the crosswalk. Anyone with mobility issues would not be able to traverse these areas. Some operators may need to get out and shovel certain areas by hand.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

NONPUBLIC SESSION

ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Michaud, seconded by Councilor Vincent, made a motion to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 8:28 pm.

Trish Harris, City Clerk

Dana Hilliard, Mayor