

MINUTES OF PUBLIC HEARING
ORDINANCE NO. 15-17
APRIL 3, 2017 – 6:00 P.M.

ORDINANCE NO. 15-17 FY2017-2018 BUDGET

Mayor Hilliard opened the public hearing at 6:06 p.m.

Mark Hiller, of 3 Lenox Street, commended the school board and the Superintendent for operating and developing a budget, which he finds extraordinary in the context of them meeting their obligations. At the same time, as a resident and as an interested participant in education, education is the future. What we do for our children is going to result in what we will have as ‘we’ get older. The concept of being forced to operate kindergartens at the current capacity is shameful for a city in this day and age. The concept of discussing whether or not the buildings are ultimately safe in regard to asbestos, regardless of the current condition; it’s a capital investment that will pay dividends in securing the safety of the kids in the school system. The Superintendent brought out that over the past several years, more and more budget items in the schools have been cut to meet the restrictions and limits that have been placed upon the schools’ budget. Many services have not and are not likely to be replaced in the future. There is no more meat on the bones to be cut, in regard to the city budget. He said he believes that the City Council has the ability to add money above the tax cap. He encouraged the Council to think about this and the cuts that have been made.

Mr. Hiller went on to say, he knows things have already been set for approval of an extended contract with Comcast. In the future, he’d like to see the City take a survey of the people about their input about Comcast. There have been problems with service and customer relations. Fees are being increased; if one calls Comcast to get a cost item for each item in a bundle, they can’t get it. We are paying for premium channels that aren’t needed. Portsmouth recently did a survey which showed a majority of the community being critical of Comcast.

Michelle Nash 78 Winter Street said, as a parent of an 8th grader. She does not like seeing positions and programs being cut from the schools. Maybe the city could consider moving around positions. She is a kindergarten aid who works with 23 students. She is one of the Paraprofessionals, whos hours are likely to be cut. It’s a big pay cut and its not easy. She is a tax payer and wants the city moving forward.

Mayor Hilliard closed the public hearing at 6:15p.m.

Trish Harris, City Clerk

Dana s. Hilliard, Mayor