



CITY OF DOVER

CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

Meeting Type: **SPECIAL MEETING**
Meeting Location: Council Chambers - 288 Central Avenue, Dover, NH 03820
Meeting Date: **Wednesday, July 18, 2007**
Meeting Time: **7:00 p.m.**

1. PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE

Councilor DeDe led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. ROLL CALL

Councilors Present: Robert Keays, Mayor Scott Myers, David Scott, Dean Trefethen, Harvey Turner, Catherine Cheney, Dennis Ciotti, Doug DeDe and Deputy Mayor Jason Hindle.
Also Present: City Manager Mike Joyal and City Attorney Allan Krans.

3. CITIZENS FORUM

The Citizen's Forum is limited to the Resolution on this Agenda in Accordance with City Council Rules, Item 12H.

Mayor Myers opened the Citizen's Forum asking if anyone wished to speak:

Ed Bleiler, 28 Isaac Lucas Circle – stated it is his understanding that the city is buying 2 acres of land for \$85,000 an acre but we are selling 22 acres of land for \$1,000,000 which is \$45,000 an acre and feels there is something wrong with this scenario. He continued by stating that there is a lack of workbooks and other tools in our schools and doesn't feel this is the best way to spend money. He continued to cite several other school projects and their costs and feels that the Council needs to learn to say no.

Rick Hebbard, 97 Spruce Lane – stated he is also against this and feels there are more important issues to spend money on. He stated there are already lots of ball fields in Dover and Dover High needs a new roof. He urged the Council to exercise courage and vote no.

John O'Connor, 15 Emery Lane and Dover Schools Supt. – reviewed the history up to this point for the purchase of this land from an abutter of the high school stating it has been reviewed by the City Planners, engineers, School Board and City Council and hopes they will vote favorably.

Mary Hebbard, 97 Spruce Lane – stated that the school wants this land for recreational uses but we were told that they couldn't cut anything from their budget because all of the money was needed for the schools, but now we have this money to spend. She stated if we have a surplus of money it should be used in other places and that the current ball fields we have in the city cost a lot of money to maintain and feels that students would rather have text books and materials. She urged the Council to vote no on this.

Seeing no one else wishing to speak the Mayor closed the Citizen's Forum.



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4. PUBLIC HEARING:

- A. Resolution RE: Purchase of Bellamy Road Parcel for School District. Sponsored by Mayor Scott Myers by Request.

Mayor Myers opened the public hearing stating that this is required by State law, but is the same topic as was discussed in Citizen's Forum. Seeing no one wishing to speak, the Mayor closed the public hearing.

5. RESOLUTIONS:

- A. RE: Purchase of Bellamy Road Parcel for School District. Sponsored by Mayor Scott Myers by Request.

Hindle moved to adopt, seconded by DeDe.

DeDe stated it is true that the schools have many needs, books, roofs, etc. but the probability that this property would be available in the future is unlikely and it could be built on instead and feels that the immediate adjacency to the school means it is something that could be used in the future by the schools.

Trefethen stated that people have the notion that the school board is finding money every year that isn't included the budget process but a surplus is actually additional revenue that was not anticipated when the budget was set. He further explained that the way the budget policy is structured, additional money that isn't spent goes into the general fund balance and the fund balance grows, but it does not reduce taxes and is not rebated. He stated he finds it interesting that people who have closely followed the budget process for many years don't understand the distinction. He stated he has spoken to people who tell him not to spend the money that don't have kids in school now, but when they did were here to speak when athletic programs, etc. were threatened. He supports this purchase as it has no effect on taxes.

Keays stated he has listened to the City manager say that the money comes from the fund balance leftover but the money goes into the general fund so how can he take it back without permission.

Mayor stated no, he can't take it out of fund balance once it goes back, but if it is encumbered before the end of the year they can use it.

Keays explained his understanding of how the fund balance is supposed to work stating there is nothing in the Charter on how this money is supposed to be dissolved and feels that anytime the school needs something they use it. He stated that we shouldn't be buying land now when the city is in debt.

Turner stated he has been requesting information on this via e-mail for what the property would be used for etc and feels that there are no current constraints on the fields we have now so why do we need this. He continued that he heard from people during the budget process that schools are under funded for supplies, etc. and now we are using a surplus to buy land and it bugs him that they can't use the surplus to offset their budget.



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Scott stated that in Ward 3 most people feel the taxes are too high and that the Council should vote on essential and desirable items.

Cheney would like to know if the couple will be subdividing the property.

O'Connor stated no.

Cheney stated it is her experience that if there is land made available by an abutter then it is a good investment, but feels that we do have other things that we need.

Ciotti asked how much money is being returned by the School Department to the general fund.

Joyal stated he doesn't have the figure yet.

Ciotti stated there are some opportunities that arise that the timing is bad but you have to do it anyway and he quoted Will Rogers stating "buy land because they aren't making more" and he supports this purchase.

Myers stated that they have had 2 executive sessions on this with the Supt. of Schools where there were questions in the first one so they came back in the second with maps and answers. He stated the Turner was not present and it was his responsibility to get the information. He stated this property borders the high school and there are no immediate plans for its use but it is dry and usable and could be used in the future for whatever they deem necessary. He went on to discuss the use of fund balance last year which was an 8-1 vote to use \$400,000 to fund the teachers contracts and he was the one against it because it came out of the taxpayers pocket.

Discussion ensued regarding the potential uses of the land in the future and past years fund balance uses.

Motion to adopt passed on a 7-2 roll call vote, Keays and Scott opposed.

6. COMMITTEE REPORT – APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE

Councilor Ciotti stated the appointments committee met this evening and are recommending Brian Gottlob for appointment to the Dover Business and Industrial Development Authority (DBIDA) and are recommending 3 people for reappointment to committees as follows: Marcia Colbath to the Conservation Commission, Rick Wallis to the Economic Loan Commission and Ed Wentworth to the Transportation Advisory Commission.

He reminded everyone that there are positions open on several boards and encouraged people to fill out an application at the City Clerk's Office.

Hindle moved to accept the Appointments Committee Report and recommendations, seconded by DeDe. Motion passed on a 9-0 vote.

7. ADJOURN INTO WORKSHOP

Hindle moved to go into a Workshop Session at 7:50 p.m., seconded by Ciotti.

Motion passed unanimously. (Councilor Scott left after Special Meeting)