



CITY OF DOVER

CITY COUNCIL - MINUTES

Meeting Type: Workshop
Meeting Location: Council Chambers - 288 Central Avenue, Dover, NH 03820
Meeting Date: **Wednesday, May 6, 2009**
Meeting Time: **7:00pm**

Present: Mayor Myers, Deputy Mayor Trefethen, Councilors Callaghan, Carrier, Cheney, DeDe, McCusker, Scott and Weston.

Also Present: City Manager Joyal, City Attorney Krans and City Clerk Lavertu.

Deputy Mayor Trefethen led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Myers switched the items for discussion under Budget Review, because several School Board members were present.

1. BUDGET REVIEW

B. DISCUSSION ON SCHOOL BOARD PORTION OF BUDGET

Mayor Myers said this discussion was to give direction to the School Board on their budget, because they have contractual obligations that need to be followed by certain dates. Councilor DeDe said he supported the School's budget as presented by the School Board, but things were different this year. He said the unusual circumstances with the legislature in Concord, and the \$600,000 that may or may not be forthcoming for the School's budget, would impact his final decision.

Deputy Mayor Trefethen said he agreed with Councilor DeDe's comments. He said as of today he would support the School's budget. He said the Council doesn't know what the State legislature is going to do, and the Council may have to reopen the Budget process in July or August after the City hears from the State. He said he finds the silence at this meeting deafening, and he is confused by it. He said the mantra from the public has been to cut spending and employees. He said the School Department has not been subjected to the same reductions as the City side. He said it was interesting that an overall 3.18% increase is acceptable on the School side, but a 2% increase on the City side has been deemed unacceptable. He said people are sensitive to the bottom line on their tax bill. He said as things stand right now taxes will be going up.

Councilor Callaghan said he plans on supporting the School Board's budget. He said if the School loses any more people then the quality of education will be affected. He did agree that the Council may have to rework the budget after they hear from the State legislature, but as of now he did support the School's budget as presented.

Mayor Myers said he generally supports the School's budget. He said he agreed that the Council doesn't know what the State may do at this point. He said the Rooms and Meals Tax may be removed again, which is \$1.2 million for Dover. He said it was unlikely the State will pass a budget before the City passes this Budget. He said if the revenue received from the State is cut, then the Council will have to review the entire budget again. He said the City portion of the Budget has seen cuts with layoffs, decreased hours, services, and employees who had cuts in salaries and benefits.

A. COMMUNITY SERVICES

City Manager Joyal said Doug Steele, Community Services Director, would be reviewing the General Fund portion of his budget, along with the Water and Sewer portions, with the Council. He told the Council that the employees of the Community Services Department, between



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reductions, wage freezes, and adjustments in health insurance, will be foregoing \$41,362 in expenses that would otherwise have been programmed into the budget.

Mr. Steele gave his presentation to the Council on the General Fund portion of the budget for the Community Services Department.

Deputy Mayor Trefethen referred to the City Engineer and Assistant City Engineer positions being redistributed across the General Fund and Enterprise Funds, and asked what that decision was based on.

Mr. Steele said it was primarily based on their workload for those individual divisions.

Deputy Mayor Trefethen referred to the storm water management, and asked if it was money for people or equipment.

Mr. Steele said in-house staff will assist with it, but most of the work will be done by a consultant.

Deputy Mayor Trefethen asked what the total overtime budget was for snow removal.

City Manager Joyal said it went from \$70,000 to \$100,000.

Deputy Mayor Trefethen said we're in New England and the City is still likely to overspend that amount.

Mr. Steele said that was likely.

Councilor Carrier said it was a good presentation, and he didn't know how Mr. Steele and his staff kept up. He said his one concern is general streets and sidewalk maintenance, and he felt that cutting the funds will put the City behind in keeping up maintenance. He said some of the streets are in tough shape.

Mr. Steele said the price of asphalt was an eye-opener to him, and they are going to recalculate the amount for overlays.

Mayor Myers referred to Page 4 of the presentation, that Community Services has cut 8 people, even with adding more roads. He referred to Pages 3 & 5 of the presentation, stating that the budget for Community Services went up \$83,000 this year, while \$108,000 came from two areas that are now being required by the EPA, making up more than the increase. He said he was concerned with this, because maintenance for the roads continues to fall farther and farther behind.

Councilor Cheney referred to the 9.5% increase for general government buildings, and asked what that referred to.

Mr. Steele said \$9,000 of that amount was for electricity and oil at the Oak Street Armory building, and \$15,000 was for the front steps of the City Hall.

Deputy Mayor Trefethen asked why the Oak Street Armory needed heat.

Mr. Steele said it was for minimal heat. He said if there was not heat in the building then the building will deteriorate quicker.

Mr. Steele continued with his presentation on the Enterprise Funds portion of the budget.

Deputy Mayor Trefethen referred to the increased costs in chemicals, and felt all the chemicals were needed except for fluoride.

Mr. Steele said fluoride is not mandated, and it was something that they have been discussing for some time. He said the City pays \$23,000 for fluoride. He said it is a sensitive topic, but fluoride is provided for in all toothpastes today.

Deputy Mayor Trefethen referred to the pickup replacement, and asked if there was anything special needed on this vehicle, or if they could get it off a dealer's lot.

Mr. Steele said they will go with the State bid price, which is usually the best price.



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Mr. Steele continued with his presentation on the Sewer Budget, which included the Waste Water Treatment Plant.

Mayor Myers asked if the City was testing the water for pharmaceuticals.

Mr. Steele said there were no requirements for that, and the City didn't have the means to do that sort of testing or the process to remove them from the system.

Deputy Mayor Trefethen referred to the comparisons of water/sewer rates with Portsmouth and Rochester, and said Portsmouth is looking at a major repair of their waste water treatment plant. He asked if Dover was looking at any major repairs.

Mr. Steele said it could get costly if phosphorus and nitrogen need to be removed from the water.

Mayor Myers asked for an amount on that.

Mr. Steele said many, many millions.

Councilor Carrier referred to Page 15, and asked what the cause was for the spike in 2007-2008.

Mr. Steele said it was due to the increased growth of the City.

Councilor Carrier referred to Page 14, and asked about the 40% increase.

Mr. Steele said it was department overhead charges. It was discovered that the Sewer Department hasn't been paying their fair share.

City Manager Joyal said it was covering administrative duties done for the Sewer Department.

Councilor DeDe said he made an assumption that the increase with sewer was due to the new hotels.

Mr. Steele said the water usage doesn't match up, which he feels means there is still infiltration into the system, which they are still working on.

Councilor DeDe spoke on his concerns about roads and sidewalks. He said the Council should be addressing this now, even with the poor economic times. He said the increase in asphalt costs is scary, and will eventually come back to bite into the budget, and will have to be addressed.

Councilor McCusker referred to the fact that the Deputy Community Services position should have been filled. He said the City should find another suitable candidate.

Mayor Myers thanked Mr. Steele and his staff for stepping up to the challenge.

2. CITIZEN'S FORUM

Citizens are invited to speak on the subject matter of the Workshop. Statements shall be limited to five minutes.

Mayor Myers, seeing no one wishing to speak, closed the Citizen's Forum.

3. ADJOURN

Deputy Mayor Trefethen made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Councilor DeDe.

Vote: 9/0.