

**MINUTES
WORKSHOP
DOVER CITY COUNCIL
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
FEBRUARY 19, 2003
6:00 PM**

Members Present: Mayor Nossiff, Mayor Pro Tem Dunnington, Councilor Keays, Councilor Whitmore, Councilor Mayberry, Councilor Tweedie, Councilor Hindle, Councilor Christenbury and Councilor Quigley (arrived at 6:20 p.m.)

1. DEPARTMENTAL OVERVIEWS

Mayor Nossiff opened the workshop and explained that the School Board would be meeting at 7:30 and asked that everyone keep their presentations brief. Tweedie stated that he would like to have time to ask questions.

A. Finance

Finance Director Jeff Harrington began by stating that his presentation is meant to inform the viewers at home as well as the Council, but will be as brief as possible. He then presented his power point presentation (see handout in 02/19/03 meeting folder).

Tweedie referred to page 4, regarding 9% supplies expense, and asked if we participate in any group discount programs with other municipalities or the County and does this refer to office supplies only or include other items such as gas, oil, etc.

Harrington explained that this includes gas, oil, etc. as well as office supplies.

Beecher stated that we do participate in some group discounts, ie., the State of New Hampshire for gasoline and vehicles. We have explored working with the County, but nothing has come of it as of yet.

Tweedie then asked about the 9% for street lighting, and is this for electricity costs only, or does it include maintenance as well. Harrington stated it is for electricity only.

Whitmore asked if all fuels are listed as line items in each budget. Harrington stated no, not if they are small amounts. He then explained that we do piggy back oil expenses with the School Department.

Christenbury stated he had received an e-mail from a constituent who was inquiring about Corcoran and Associates as to whether they are subcontractors.

Harrington stated yes.

Christenbury wants a copy of the contract. He then asked if there are any city vehicles used in the Finance Department.

**MINUTES - WORKSHOP
DOVER CITY COUNCIL
FEBRUARY 19, 2003**

Page 2

There are 2 vehicles used by the Assessing Office. One is used by the Assistant Assessor and one by the Data Collection Technician. These are both city positions and neither are taken home.

Whitmore asked what are the hours of the Assessor (Corcoran and Assoc.)?

Beecher asked that these questions wait until the Assessor's portion is being discussed.

Harrington continued by stating that they have been able to downsize the accounting division over the last few years due to technology, but the Assessor's office has had an increase in positions due to having to meet recently passed Statute requirements requiring more data.

Mayberry asked about the use of technology and being able to pay different bills on-line, thereby saving on postage costs.

Harrington explained that this happens with property taxes to an extent, as there are electronic files set up with 5 or 6 major service companies who work with banks and mortgage companies. He stated that the majority of tax bills are paid by these companies via electronic files and one check is sent with a disc of all of the tax accounts that are being paid for that period. He stated this is not yet done with Water/Sewer bills.

Mayberry would like to offer e-billing on the city website as a voluntary option for those who want to participate.

Harrington explained that by law, we still have to mail bills. He stated that there are some on-line programs being introduced by companies, but he doesn't know of any one using them as of yet. He has not had time yet to explore any of these options, but feels that people still prefer to pay by phone, in person or through the mail at this point in time.

Mayberry stated that he wants to keep moving forward with this idea.

Tweedie stated that on page 9, it states that the Finance Department represents 4% of the budget and asked how this compares to other municipalities.

Harrington stated that he doesn't know, but it is difficult to make apples to apples comparison as duties differ in each municipality ie, vehicle registrations and/or are sometime done in Clerk's Offices, etc.

Christenbury stated that when he was on the Council a few years back they were trying to consolidate the Finance packages of the City and School Department, but it didn't work out. He asked if this is still trying to be worked out.

Harrington stated he is not sure where the school stands at this time, but the two software packages were not compatible and the City had a successful system in place.

Christenbury then asked about the tax-exempt properties ie, Wentworth Douglass Hospital, and what is the value, including the new addition. (Christenbury later clarified that he would also like a list of all HUD properties as well the formula used in lieu of taxes).

Wil Corcoran stated he has looked at these properties recently because of the new requirement that they must prove their tax-exempt status every 5 years, but he doesn't have

any figures at this time. He stated it has not been a priority because they don't collect money from these properties. He stated he will get that information to the Council.

Whitmore asked about page 13, 2nd slide, which states "Initiation of \$81 million of electronic transfers" and what does that include.

Harrington stated it includes debt service payments, school general fund, interest accounts. Etc.

B. Planning

Planning Director Steve Stancel presented a power point presentation (See 02/19/03 meeting folder).

Mayberry asked about permit applications and can these be done on-line. Stancel stated the applications are currently done in triplicate, but the original applications can be down-loaded from the city website.

Mayberry referred to page 24, slide 2, stating the staff participates with 20+ boards and commissions and asked for a list of those (See 02/19/03 meeting folder).

Christenbury asked how many vehicles are used in the department. Stancel stated that the 3 inspectors use the vehicles during the day and park them in the library lot at night.

Tweedie referred to page 23 clarifying that the cost to the city for the Planning Budget of \$1,104,392 is only \$119,458. Steve stated yes for FY02 that was the cost.

Whitmore asked about the allocations of the Open Lands Funds and who will be overseeing this program.

Stancel stated that City Planner Steve Bird will be overseeing this program.

Stancel then discussed that there is another potential revenue source for the department via the TIP projects being done in the next 18 months as we may be able to charge some management fees.

C. Human Services

Human Services Director Janet Poulin began by stating she has no vehicles in her department.

She reviewed her power point presentation (see 02/19/2003 meeting folder) and stated that her budget is economically driven and is always in flux. She stated that all of her staff, including herself, is involved with dealing directly with the public. She then explained that since the Youth Resources Division has been in the same building with the Welfare Division they have felt more like a unit than previously when they were in separate locations.

Hindle asked if there has been any attempt to get other grants other than the two the department already receives (McKinney Grant and CDBG).

Poulin explained that grant writing is a time consuming process and she would need to have a ½ time person hired to help her to this. She also feels that most grants come with strings attached, such as matching funds, additional staff, and they eventually dry up.

Whitmore asked if there are any duplication of services at the county level.

Poulin explained that there are no duplicate services, but feels that it is difficult to explain as there is a 3 tier delivery system of the services.

D. Library

Library Director Cathy Beaudoin presented a power point presentation (See 02/19/03 meeting folder as well as www.dover.lib.nh.us). She stated that library usage goes up in bad economic times and the internet has not had a negative effect on patronage.

Mayor Nossiff adjourned promptly at 7:30 stating that the School Board was waiting to meet.

Hindle asked how much is charged for out of town patrons.

Beaudoin replied that it has been \$93.00 a year but they are probably going to raise it to \$100.00 per year.

Hindle asked about increasing the overdue fine from 10 cents a day to perhaps 15 cents.

Beaudoin stated that the fine has not been increased for at least 25 years, so it may be time to do so.

Mayor Nossiff once again adjourned the meeting entertaining no further comments.

Valerie A. French
Deputy City Clerk