

**MINUTES
COUNCIL WORKSHOP
DOVER CITY COUNCIL
OCTOBER 26, 2000**

6:00 P.M.

CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE
NON PUBLIC SESSION:

A. CITY MANAGER'S EVALUATION

7:00 P.M.

COUNCIL CHAMBERS
WORKSHOP SESSION

Mayor Boc, Mayor Pro-Tem Berry, Councilor Nossiff, Hindle, Mayberry, Schmidt, Andrews-Parker were present. Councilors Reese and Dunnington were absent.

A. TRAIN STATION

The Mayor called the workshop to order, stating he normally does not allow public comment but offered anyone a chance to speak that wants to.

Mr. Beecher asked Bruce Woodruff, the City's point person, to speak on the train station. Woodruff stated there has been movement on the coming of the train station to Dover. He went on to say Bill Hunt is here, Chair of the rail committee and Nancy Mayville of NHDOT. Bill Hunt stated he has been involved with the train station for a long time now, since the project was first organized. He stated, in about 1965 the last passenger train left Dover and we have now come full circle. It's been a long process and started back in 1989 when Maine ordered passenger rail service again to run from Boston to Maine. He reviewed the past history of how far we have progressed in restoring passenger train service to the area. In 1994, they had a roadblock in negotiations that took a year to resolve. They had originally considered two sites, one on Route 155 and one on Chestnut Street. After due consideration, and the council's recommended the use of the Chestnut Street site. In 1996, negotiations began with Gilford Train Service, Amtrak, and the State of Maine on the operation of service; this was also a long process. Some of the issues that were not resolved were sent to the Federal level. Then, in May of 1998, they received a ruling from them. Finally, in 1998, the City acquired funds from CMAQ for design.

The construction on the corridor did remain on schedule and was completed on time. In the spring of 2000, they had design work done. The service was to begin in November but was then postponed due to a Boston problem, and now the target startup date is April of 2001.

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He asked Nancy to speak. She feels this is kind of a fun project, she has been the project manager of all three train station sites that are proposed for NH; in Durham, Exeter, and Dover. They are now ready to advertise for bids. The design is 100% complete but they still have a few issues to clear up. One is with the owner of the parking lot and one is with the NHDOT. They plan to start construction this winter on the 45 foot-long platform. There will be a handicapped access ramp to the platform. Trains will have a dining car. In the spring they will begin on the sidewalks and the whole station will be completed by the end of June. T

The station is 80% Federally funded, and 20% will be with city funds. They will go out for the low bidder but will ask for the city's approval on the award of contract. They will need to have traffic control, to keep people out of the way of cars and trains. Nancy feels they are pretty close to having it all tied up. Bill Hunt stated one of the items to be addressed is Amtrak and the City. Amtrak agrees to service the train for the full duration of the service. Amtrak will agree to the most advantageous timetables for the City, the city is going to assume the responsibility for taking care of the facility and making it accessible. Also, the facility will be open from one hour before the first train until one hour after the last train of the day.

The Mayor asked who would be selling the tickets, Amtrak or the City? Bill Hunt thinks Amtrak will sell them on the train.

Woodruff went on to mention the final RFPs and the request for proposals, in the council's packet, (see Council folder of 10/26/2000).

Schmidt asked if this is the Federal DOT or NHDOT. Nancy stated NHDOT. He also commented on the accessibility of the hour before and hour after, he also had questions about how wide the platform will be, Nancy stated this issue has not been resolved as yet, but they are working on it. She also said the audio and visual signals have not been resolved yet, either. Nancy stated the NNEPRA people would work this out. Nossiff asked about the guarantee that Dover will always have service as long as the trains run and as long as the City has a platform. Woodruff commented on the draft agreement between Amtrak and Gilford. Nossiff also asked about the kinds of businesses that might operate at the train station.

Woodruff stated the contract is written in an open fashion. They will be looking for assorted businesses. As for alcohol being served, the business itself would have to get their own State licenses and liability insurance to serve alcohol.

Mayberry asked if there was going to be a tie-in to the bus lines, for instance, C&J and COAST. Woodruff would like to tie the transportation all together and make this the transportation center for the City. He went on to say, about 60% of the people that use the service will be commuters, and about 40% will be for just travelers going from one city to another. Mayberry asked how many parking spaces are on site right now. Woodruff stated in excess of 120. Mayberry asked how fast the train will be going when they reach the city limits. Woodruff thinks about 25, 30 or 40 MPH or quite a bit less than outside of the City. Nancy commented on the speed issue, stating on, Wednesday, November 1 at 7 p.m., Gilford is coming to Dover along with Amtrak and NNEPRA, for an informational

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meeting to resolve some of these issues. She added, the train goes from a traveling speed of 79 1/2 MPH, then it will start slowing down about a mile before the station.

Mayberry asked about the frequency of trips into the City, and how long will it take to go from Dover to Boston. Woodruff stated about 1 hour and 5 minutes from Dover to the North Station.

Berry asked about cost issues and liability issues. Woodruff stated, the train operators are required to carry their own insurance. We may be looking at a \$4,000 liability fee from the City. Berry wants to see the general costs of the project. According to Woodruff's latest information, we will receive an additional \$100,000 from CMAQ funding. The council also approved \$170,000 for the station, for a grand total of \$550,000 including federal funds.

Andrews Parker asked about the 1,500 passengers, and where are they all going to park; 125 spaces will not cut it. How are we going to alleviate congestion and will we synchronize the lights downtown? Also, how will we take care of the downtown traffic problems. Woodruff stated the Master Plan has just completed a study on this issue. With regard to the number of cars parking in the lot, only about 2/3's of the lot is currently used.

Andrews Parker has a problem with us speculating on CMAQ money; she wants a guarantee. Woodruff stated, we have to see what the demand is for commuter traffic on this train.

Hindle asked about the status of the old bridges that are on the route, such as the overpass on Broadway. Woodruff has seen a report on the structural condition of the bridge. It does have some minor problems but they will be corrected before the train starts. There will be four round trips per day, stopping in Dover. They will stop about five minutes each time here. Mayberry asked the width of the ROW and how far do they control. Nancy states it varies from area to area along the train route. Again Woodruff says, November 1 at 7 p.m. here at city hall for the meeting to have several issues addressed including fencing along the track.

Schmidt commented on the downtown congestion in the city. Woodruff also mentioned inner city bus service that will be in effect in about 4 years.

Jimmy Jalbert spoke and put the fears to rest. There will not be 1,500 passengers per day, it will be more like 219 per day. C&J Trailways runs 52 trips per day and the average day has about 900 passengers per day. Also, in answer to the question on how long we will provide service, Jim stated this is a 20-year project. He is here tonight because of the feasibility; he is not a proponent of this location. He wanted it outside of town. He went on to say, it should be on the Spaulding Turnpike. This is not a revitalization project. He says, if you read the RFP, it would suggest this station is going to be open 18 hours a day, and there is no commission from Amtrak. NNEPRA is not going to sell tickets, only Amtrak, as they run the service. There are also a lot of liability issues. He feels a tenant will have a tough time of making it on his own and will need

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the City's support. His bus station is open from 4:30 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. each day; you must look at it for what it really is.

Steve Wells, Executive Director of COAST, stated they are very supportive of the project and want to coordinate their routes with the train service. COAST is undergoing some changes currently and they want to increase the number of routes.

Berry has question about the additional City services such as Fire and Police. The City Manager stated the staff has discussed this matter, and we also will be responsible for plowing, as well as, the streetlights. Woodruff clarified, the numbers would be about 300 passengers on an average weekday to start.

Schmidt stated the police are currently using the old station for a substation. He understands the police will have a room in the new station in order to monitor activity after hours. That was confirmed.

PROPOSED CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROJECTS (CIP)

Mr. Beecher stated he had forwarded a copy of 2002 thru 2007 of the CIP plan to the Council. He is starting on page 18 of booklet.

Sandy Erdman from the Public Library spoke on the Library's requests. She clarified, E-service is electronic services. She went on to say they need replacement of the library terminals, as well as, a small web-based server is needed. They are looking to install a wireless system for further stations there, as the demand for internet access is tremendous.

On page 20, under debt finance, the City Manager called the Police Chief to explain. The Chief stated, as to the new Police facility construction, this portion is for land acquisition. They are still studying the old Dover Middle School, but they feel it might be cheaper to construct a new facility. His projections are for a much larger square footage area than that old building has to offer. They are very cramped now. Currently, their evidence rooms have water on the floor, they have people in the hallways, and they have no training facility. They have branched out throughout the community, because of lack of space in the basement of City Hall. He added, they are short on space in all areas.

The Mayor has a question about where would we find land in the downtown area. The Chief stated he has some viable locations from downtown landowners. Berry feels it is now time to start working and start solving this space needs problem.

Mayberry asked about the projection of office needs and how many years would a new facility cover. The Chief states with this projection, we will never have to build another facility. Schmidt stated, it is clear to him it is a miracle that the police operate as well as they do under the current cramped conditions. Mayberry asked Steve Stancel, when they looked at the annex needs, did they consider including the Police Department. Stancel stated, they have included the Police Department in the plan; but there would

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also be a domino effect, so if the police were to move, that would vacate space out of the basement.

Andrews Parker asked the Chief, has any case ever been dismissed because of damaged evidence in the evidence room? The Chief stated, no. She asked, if they were not close to City Hall, would they maintain a substation either in or close by City Hall. The Chief stated, they would.

The City Manager called on Chief Bibber. The Chief spoke about his request for a North End Fire Station, and a three-bay station. They are looking for a substation, not a new central station. He would like to be able to stay downtown. The new station would be 12,000 square feet, and they do have a piece of property across from Members Way on Indian Brook. He went on to say, the other issue they are looking at is a new Fire Pumper this year, as there is a difficulty in getting parts for the old one.

The Mayor asked what fire engines would be needed to go into a new station, and would we have to purchase a new truck. The Chief says, they would need one more fire truck. Hindle asked about additional personnel. The Chief stated they would need 16 additional personnel, as well. He would like to slowly start the process this year. He also has a concern about the train station coming into town; with both fire stations on the same side of the tracks, if there was a derailment, it would not allow them to get across town.

Berry asked about the old issue of combining Police and Fire services. The Chief feels it would work, but the Police need to be downtown and the Fire Department needs to be at the North End due to a declining response time.

The City Manager stated, with the way we operate in both departments and the unions, etc. we feel we would lose a lot of efficiencies that we now have. The Police operation needs to be downtown for visibility. Berry asked what we need to do at the South End Station. The Chief says, we need to expand the living quarters, as they are substandard.

Mayberry asked if we should we give additional funds now for a four-bay station, as we do not want to get up at the north end and have to expand soon thereafter. The Chief sees a truck, a pumper, and an ambulance; as all they will need up there, but not four bays. At the Central Station their hands are tied until they find out about the North End Station. The Chief wants to keep his staff people together also. But because of the response time, that is impossible. Mayberry asked about the ambulance purchase; the Chief states that would be a replacement vehicle.

Schmidt asked about getting the equipment under the Broadway Bridge. As the underpass gets repaved, it tends to get shorter. The Chief feels it is a problem all the way around with that bridge. Schmidt concurs that we do need a north end fire station.

The City Manager called Pete Lavoie, Community Services Director. Pete has brought his staff to answer any questions. He explained his vehicle plan, and how they had just bought a heavy loader for plowing last year. Street improvements have been upped to \$750,000 because they have to strip the streets before repaving them. He has a list of

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street locations for the upcoming street improvements of next year and also where they will be replacing sidewalks.

The Mayor asked, what areas? Pete stated Applevale and the Grove Street area, Hindle asked about the criteria that are involved with sidewalks. Pete stated he will be glad to do a sidewalk presentation, Hindle wants to know about any additional sidewalks. If he was to see any change in the CIP, he would like to increase the sidewalk improvements by \$200,000 and general street improvement also should be increased. Within the next five years, he would like street improvements increased to close to a million dollars. Vlasich passed out the potential street improvements list. (See council folder 10/26/2000)

The Mayor complimented Pete for completing County Farm Road quickly and very efficiently. Andrews Parker asked if Oak and Broadway are coming up soon. She asked if sidewalks would be included in the Glenwood Avenue area. Pete said the costs stated do include sidewalks as well. On the local share of TIP, Woodruff spoke referring to pages 26 and 27. He mentioned the four new projects that will be started in the coming year.

Berry asked about the lighting issue at Dover Middle School. He then asked for an elaboration of the Back River Road project. Woodruff wants to find out what we need to do out there. Mayberry asked Woodruff what the \$130,000 is for, and how much will be used for shoulder improvement. Woodruff says, the figures are set by State of NHDOT.

Pete stated, they are recommending that the recycling center be put with the new public works facility. They feel it can be more efficient this way and the \$4.7 million does include the recycling center.

Andrews Parker questioned the total amount of the new Public Works facility. Pete stated the total is \$5.8 million dollars. She has a real problem with this project. Mayberry jumps in with Andrews Parker, saying he would like to have seen the facility on one line and the recycling center on another line, with separate amounts. Lavoie went on to list the additional items under the Community Service list, on page 20 of the CIP booklet. Mayberry has a question on all the construction going on. He asked Pete if he has enough personnel. Pete explained they design in house, he thanked Pete and the City Manager for moving up Henry Law Avenue on the list.

Berry thanked Pete for putting in the middle school traffic signal in the CIP. Pete asked Gary Bannon to present the Recreation section of the CIP. Bannon mentioned the property on Shaws Lane for athletic fields. The Mayor asked how much is in the Severino account from Mast Road sand so far. Bannon says \$375,000 is in the account currently. He went on to highlight the list of improvements he wants to make to the recreation facilities. The Thompson Pool Filtration System is his number one priority and is mandatory for them to open the outdoor pool next year.

Berry asked about the athletic fields and Shaws Lane, also. His other issue is we have an Olympic hero; therefore, we need to upgrade the pool. Perhaps to use it year round with a solar cover. Nossiff asked if \$450,000 would get us a ballfield? There is lot of site

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work Bannon stated but \$450,000 will get us 3 or 4 ballfields. Mayberry asked about an amphitheater charette and an outdoor pool enclosure. He asked, how much does it cost to run the pool year round? Bannon answered, about \$750,000 per year. Mayberry feels we need to give the citizens a break, as we seem to be building a whole new city.

Berry made a motion to adjourn, seconded by everyone; all were in favor at 9:45 p.m.

**Judy Gaouette
City Clerk**