

MINUTES
Special Meeting
DOVER CITY COUNCIL
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
Wednesday
April 29, 1998
7:00 PM

1. ROLL CALL:

Members Present: Councilor Wilson, Councilor Berry, Councilor Rawding, Councilor Reese, Councilor Jalbert, Councilor Johnson, Mayor Pro Tem Perry, Mayor Wil Boc
Absent: Councilor Landry

2. Resolution RE: Award of BID #B98047 for construction of Griffin Well Improvements. Sponsored by Mayor Wil Boc by Request

Perry moved to adopt, seconded by Berry.

The City Manager stated 14 applications for bids were mailed out and six responses were received. He stated the lowest bidder was for \$277K.

Rawding stated he would abstain from the vote.

Motion passed on a 6-0 roll call vote. Landry absent. Rawding abstained.

3. OTHER BUSINESS

Perry stated there were two proclamations.

The first proclamation is for Arbor Day. The Mayor read the proclamation, which set May 8, 1998 as Arbor Day in the City of Dover.

The second proclamation is for Drinking Water Week. The Mayor read the proclamation, which set the week of May 3 – May 9, 1998 as Drinking Water Week.

Wilson stated he would like the support of the city council for the City Manager to conduct a feasibility study of restructuring the Fire, Rescue, and Police Department and combine it into one administration. He stated he would like the City Manager to look into the possibility of using the rescue services and extending these services to some rural areas with a revenue flow generated for the City.

Wilson also stated at the same time the City Manager should look into regionalization of our Fire Department. He stated we should consider combining services. This would mean not duplicating some of the equipment that other cities (i.e., Somersworth, Rochester, and Portsmouth) already have.

Wilson went on to say, the City of Dover should invite other city councils to meet with us to discuss some of these issues common to all of our communities.

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Jalbert asked if Wilson was going to create a resolution.

Wilson stated he didn't feel this was necessary. He stated he feels there is enough interest in this area and requested the City Manager report back to the city council.

The City Manager stated a preliminary step might be to meet with other mayors and city managers in these communities first.

4. ADJOURNMENT

The Mayor moved to adjourn, seconded by Berry.
The motion passed on a 7-0 vote.

JUDY GAOUETTE
DEPUTY CITY CLERK

1. BUDGET WORKSHOP:

2. Fire and Rescue Department

Chief Bibber reviewed the handout including the budget. (Refer to the Proposed Budget on page 320.) The fire administration budget has increased \$8,853. There is a part time, 20 hour per week clerical position open. This position is needed since the current full time person does all the paper work for the fire and rescue, including all the ambulance billing.

The City Manager stated, the city takes in approximate \$450K in receipts for ambulance services. The more timely we are in billing for these services and receiving payment, the more interest we make. He stated hiring a part time person would offset some of the overtime hours the current full time person has to put in which is six or seven hours each week.

Chief Bibber stated the overtime pay requested is minimal. Supplies and materials went up \$7,560. This is for uniforms, etc. You can't re-issue shoes and other items to new personnel.

Bibber stated Account #4346 Vehicle Maintenance increased \$4,252. He stated they are still working through the costs to maintain equipment to determine the average (van versus large truck or a medium size truck). Overall the total charges have gone down. He continued through each line item.

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He stated Suppression increased by \$116,132. Fire Prevention increased by \$11,272. Outside Services increased by \$1,603 and Emergency Management increased \$20,981.

Bibber stated we need four more people to “beef up” our staff. He stated the city is growing. We have had a 30% increase in calls over the past few years.

The City Manager asked the Chief to explain the reimbursable aspect of the Emergency Management Fund.

The Chief explained under Emergency Management, 50% of whatever we spend is reimbursable by the federal government. He stated we don’t always get that. It’s like a grant with a 50/50 share; we have been getting every year.

Perry asked a question regarding staff development for EMT training. What is the retention and how long do the employees stay after being trained?

The Chief stated we have lost one person who went to another department. The only others we have lost have been due to promotion and we still use them.

Perry asked a second question regarding the hazardous material training on Tolend Road. He stated he knows Tolend Road is a superfund site; what is the hazardous material?

Chief Bibber stated he is not into the hazardous materials items, but he is aware there are certain levels of training and certain types of equipment to handle these situations. The police also have at least the minimal amount of training for these types of materials. This is more to prevent a lawsuit.

Berry had a couple of questions. On the two new requested positions would it be possible to know the salaries.

The Chief stated the new position’s salary would be \$45K for each position. The Chief verified this with Jeff Harrington.

Berry continued with the second part of that question asking if there would be some offset from overtime.

The Chief indicated, yes, there would be some offset of overtime and there would be savings.

Berry’s asked his second question, since we recently moved the CIP would there be any offset for maintenance costs in your budget or is that something we need to think about.

The Chief stated there might be, but it would be minor.

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Wilson asked if Dover was coping with hazardous materials on its own or is there a regional plan to handle hazardous material?

Bibber stated there are different departments that have put small groups together. What we want to do is have a small portion of it and then pull all the communities and eventually share. We have never had the equipment in this area. He stated he did not want to get into a position where we foot the entire hazardous material bill. We can't afford it, I don't believe in it, and it's too much of a draw on our resources. Bibber stated now that we have the vehicles, we need to have the basic equipment. He stated maybe we could charge a fee, either an annual fee or a charge per call. Bibber also stated, if we know who the responsible party is, they now have to pay for the cost of the clean up.

Wilson stated it does sounds like with regards to hazardous materials, you are looking at regionalization.

Bibber stated he looks at regionalization every chance he gets. It is a viable alternative. He stated it saves money and reduces the overlap of equipment and personnel hours.

Wilson asked how the ambulance rates are set.

Bibber stated the ambulance rates are set by the figures that Medicare will allow for reimbursement. He stated since there was a small increase in the rates this year, he spoke to the City Manager and they felt it wasn't worth increasing the fees this year. It would be an average of \$85K in revenue this year.

The City Manager stated the council sets and sends the staff a recommendation to go with what is currently reimbursable with Medicare and Medicaid. He stated comparing the charges with surrounding communities and the private sector, which is somewhat higher, we feel we have been able to more than cover our costs by what is currently reimbursable and provide a reasonable service to the citizens. He stated we could actually charge more, however, in a lot of cases the people transported have no other insurance.

Wilson stated we are charging the highest practical cost and asked if the collections are good.

Bibber stated we feel they are good, they're running 71 – 72%. We have seen a small improvement on them now, probably since the economy is good. However we have never dropped below 69%.

Rawding stated he had three questions. The first question for account #4420, what size is the proposed generator?

Bibber stated 20 - 25KW.

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Rawding asked Bibber to provide him with the exact size.

Rawding stated he would like a list of everything that adds up to \$24K. Bibber stated he would get that information.

Rawding stated his last question is the E-911. We've changed a few streets and renumbered a few houses. He asked if this costs the city money, and are we getting to places quicker? How is this going?

Chief Bibber stated he thinks this is going well. He couldn't give any exact examples. He stated it gives personnel the opportunity to know where to go from the get go. It has reduced confusion on the streets. He also said there are more streets that he would like to see changed.

Rawding replied he has not received any complaints with the service yet.

Johnson asked what is currently available for underwater operations.

Bibber stated some of our people already have regulators and wetsuits, for those who don't have wetsuits we're going to get them. Berwick and Somersworth work together; they have a small team. Some of their equipment has been purchased by a Community Mutual Aid organization, which Dover is a member of. He stated this is a small step to get started. This will include their training, as well.

Johnson also asked for an explanation of the \$9,900 that was for equipment.

Bibber stated this is a type of extrication equipment. He stated we want to upgrade our Jaws of Life equipment. Our current equipment is over ten years old. Bibber stated they are going to go to the State Highway department to get some 50/50 money for that.

Reese asked under Administration Account #4392 Transfer to Special Revenue. The City Manager stated this is a paper transaction. This reverts back to the emergency management account.

Community Services

Bobinsky presented the FY99 Community Services Operating Budget. Bobinsky introduced Pete Lavoie, Superintendent of Public Works and Utilities, Dean Peschel, Environment Project Manager, and Paul Vlasich, City Engineer.

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Bobinsky stated there are nine major divisions within Community Services. He went on to give the department highlights which include maintaining a fleet of 140 vehicles, providing water and sewage services for Dover residents, we maintain 77 acres of cemetery land, we have 300 acres of park and grounds property, maintain 12 neighborhood playgrounds, and we provide service and maintenance to our pump stations and wells.

Bobinsky stated he is very pleased and proud of the department achievements. He stated we have received some environmental awards. One is recycling efforts. Another is the "Yellow Fish" Environmental Awareness Program for storm runoff and drainage. Also the "Adopt-A-Spot", and Employee of the Month program to recognize outstanding performance.

Bobinsky stated we are in the community a lot promoting and talking about the services we provide such as Public Works Week, National Safe Drinking Water Week, Arbor Day, and have the now established snow plow "Ride-A-Long" program to let the citizens of Dover see what goes on in a storm.

He stated the department has initiated an accreditation process. Bobinsky stated we are the only city in New Hampshire. He stated the bottom line for this is improvement. This is a self-assessment process and will take approximately two years to complete. Bobinsky stated we could use this to compare our operations to other communities.

Historical staffing. Bobinsky pointed out that most everyone was aware there was a significant reorganization in FY95. He stated the overall request is for \$10,083,364. We currently operate with 65 full time, 5 part time, 147 seasonal positions. Bobinsky stated he would quickly go through the nine divisions.

The next is the Administrative Division. He stated there are 4 full time positions and the overall request is for \$232,516. The Streets and Highways Division has a budget of \$1,077,532 with 12 full time positions. Bobinsky stated we maintain 125 miles of roadway. We sweep streets and assist other divisions as needed with emergencies and other projects. He went on to say storm drainage comes under this division as well.

Bobinsky mentioned the Geographic Information System (GIS). He indicated the hand out included a diagram of the Dover streets that it manages.

Bobinsky stated the Capital Improvements Budget was approved for \$300K. \$200K was earmarked for streets and \$100K for sidewalks. He stated they would maximize this as best as our staff can.

Recycling & Waste Division. Bobinsky stated this is the general fund for drop off services and also oversees the curbside collection for recycling. We do about 5K tons of

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recyclables for over 11K households. He stated the residents are very supportive and participate in this. The budget is for \$377,733 with 2 full time positions.

Engineering Division. Bobinsky went on to state the Engineering Division is involved with plans and projects, evaluating our Capital Improvements needs, working with staff on design efforts, issuing excavation permits. The budget is \$217,422 with 4 full time positions.

Snow Removal. Bobinsky referred to the graphic what the costs look like over the last five to seven years. He stated we all know we can not predict when it is going to snow. If it snows on the weekend that means overtime and that drives up costs. Bobinsky stated their expectation is to have bare pavement on all the primary roads within 24 to 48 hours after a storm. We are constantly looking at different products. (Less corrosive and less environmentally harmful). This budget is for \$146,804.

Facilities and Grounds Division. Bobinsky stated this is the division responsible for grounds maintenance, as well as, custodial care. He stated they oversee our energy management program. They maintain city facilities, and they also maintain traffic lights and signals, which is a unique task for this division. They coordinate our Adopt-A-Spot program.

He stated the Adopt-A-Spot program continues to be successful. We have about 50 individuals and some businesses that participate for the community and they have done an excellent job. We really appreciate that. The value of this program to us is about \$30K. The F&G budget is \$811,645 with 9 full time, 4 part time and 5 seasonal positions.

Bobinsky addressed something he has heard a lot about and that is our ability to meet ground maintenance, park maintenance, river walk issues, even the cemetery. He stated we maintain approximately 300 acres of city owned land. He understands the council members have heard some complaints and he has heard complaints about the timeliness of the maintenance.

The department used between 16 and 22 seasonal grounds personnel from FY91 to FY94; since FY95 only 6 seasonal positions have been funded. He stated the department is requesting 2 additional positions this year.

Cemetery Division. Bobinsky stated the budget is \$176,476 with 2 full time positions and 4 seasonal positions. The Cemetery Division maintains 77 acres of cemetery land. He stated the estimated number of annual burials is between 80 and 90. Bobinsky stated the cemetery does generate revenue; approximately 40% to 50% of its cost are recovered.

Bobinsky continue to explain the information in the handout (See City Council Meeting folder for Community Services Department dated 4/29/98).

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Perry asked about the Bag & Tag income – should it be treated like solid waste income?

Bobinsky stated yes. We may have to consider increasing the cost of the bags to help offset other solid waste.

Perry stated he had the same concern about the Cemetery. The enterprise fund should pay more of its perpetual care and pay for itself.

Bobinsky stated the 50% that does not pay for itself is the older part of the cemetery; that was not established with perpetual care. He stated an alternative to that would be not to maintain the older section but that has an impact on the community, the historical beauty, etc.

Perry stated maybe we should consider increasing the fees.

Bobinsky stated the last time we increased the fees was in 1995.

Perry stated he had a question regarding the Arena. In the presentation given for the CIP we talked about increasing the size of the arena.

The City Manager stated in the next month or two we will provide a more detailed analysis of this issue.

Rawding stated it is not a good idea to increase government and add another department unless we are totally convinced of substantial savings. He is not convinced the city can just take over the WWTP project. He stated doesn't want an analysis he wants a detailed workshop with competitive bids.

Rawding asked everyone to turn to page 338 – Account #4154 Retirement – why has this amount substantially increased? Why has it increased by 20%?

Bobinsky stated the increase is based on salaries. It is a formula the staff goes through with all the department budgets.

Rawding asked about page 339 – Account #4101 what is incentive pay?

The City Manager stated this is merit pay. This is a negotiated amount that was voted in the contract with Mr. Bobinsky. The City Manager has the ability to negotiate to hire the right people.

Rawding next asked about page 342 – Account #4344 Maintenance Charges-Improvement on Other Buildings for \$27K.

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Bobinsky stated this is for cracked ceiling, guardrail repair, asphalt recycling, and crushing operation. The asphalt recycling takes place behind the public works facility on River Street.

Rawding stated on the same page 342 – Account #4390 Contractual Services, Miscellaneous \$30K.

Bobinsky stated the council approved a service contract with a firm for restriping parking lot lines and centerlines.

Rawding continued questions on Account #4330 Improvements to Buildings for \$52K.

Bobinsky stated that is for guardrail replacements, street lighting along Alumni Drive.

Rawding asked regarding Account #4444 Machinery and Equipment for \$10K.

Bobinsky stated there is a share for a hot top roller of \$2500 and a trench box in the amount of \$7500.

Rawding stated page 368 – Account #4430 Capital Outlay \$20K.

The City Manager stated this is for cemetery road paving in the older part of Pine Hill cemetery.

Rawding addressed page 378 – Account #4303, Contingency for \$25.

The City Manager stated this is for contingency reserve for labor contracts.

Rawding addressed page 378 - Account #4346 Vehicle Maintenance. He noted substantial increases in all vehicle maintenance accounts.

Bobinsky stated this includes operational parts also this is because of the hiring of a new mechanic. The costs are spread throughout the budget.

Rawding addressed page 386 - Account #4342 – Machine & Equipment for \$60K.

The City Manager stated this is for Pump Station Maintenance.

Rawding commented on two other items. He stated the sludge is a source of revenue and we could make some money but he is opposed to it. Also he will be opposed to including outside sludge in city limits. There is a problem trucking the sludge in. There is odor and a potential for sludge on the highways.

Bobinsky answered that he was just looking for additional revenue.

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Rawding stated his other issue is the golf course. He is not convinced adding a golf course is the way to go. He is against it but he does appreciate Bobinsky looking for additional revenue.

Berry stated he had a concern regarding Alumni Drive and field use. He stated he feels we need to look at combining resources; city and school.

Berry addressed the vehicle replacement CIP reserve issue. This may not be the year to do it, but maybe in next year's budget.

Berry stated he is working on the school board, as a private citizen, and on the council; we need a MIS director & a GIS person. He asked if we are trying to get this back in the budget.

Berry's stated his final concern is getting back to sharing the resources with the school side of the house.

Wilson stated he likes the new sources of revenue that Bobinsky mentioned. He relates these new revenues to a tax decrease. He wants to be sure the council has an opportunity to look at these new plans for revenue.

Wilson addressed the Adopt-a-Spot program. These are volunteers and this does not cost the city any money. This is a volunteer project and is there any progress in companies buying banners or baskets of flowers for the telephone poles in the summer.

Bobinsky has not heard of any interest in this matter.

Jalbert wanted to let everyone know this was a great presentation. He also would like to debate the OMI issue in a workshop. He stated he agrees with the fleet replacement program. He also mentioned the costs of the new Public Works facility.

The Mayor stated this is a \$10 million budget, so can we pick up Christmas trees this year?

Bobinsky will consider this. He stated the value of this project is \$25K.

Rawding asked how the tree and brush collection is going.

Pete Lavoie stated they are in the middle of town and moving towards the south end with about two more weeks to go.

Meeting adjourned.

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