

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
June 18, 2012

The Town Council meeting was held in the Moose Hill Council Chambers, Town Hall, 268B Mammoth Road, Londonderry, NH.

PRESENT: Chairman, John Farrell; Councilors: Tom Freda, Jim Butler; Joe Green; Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director, Sue Hickey; Executive Assistant Margo Lapietro.

Absent were Vice Chairman Dolan and Town Manager Dave Caron.

Call to Order

Chairman Farrell opened the meeting at 7:04 PM with the Pledge of Allegiance. This was followed by a moment of silence for the men and women fighting for our country as well as for members serving in the military and for first responders.

Public Comment

Chairman Farrell read **Resolution 2012-09** whereby Council accepted the leave of absence of Town Manager Dave Caron and appointed Londonderry Police Department Chief William Hart as the Acting Town Manager according to the Town Charter, Section 4.5. Chairman Farrell asked everyone to respect the privacy of the Town Manager. **Councilor Green made a motion to accept, second Councilor Freda. Council's vote 4-0-0.**

Representative from US Senator Kelly Ayotte's Office – Simon Thompson was in attendance and he was from the Senator's Manchester office. He said his visit is part of the Senator's "Out Reach" project. Staff visits towns/cities on an annual basis. He was there to talk to citizens to see if they had any concerns. He said he will be in an adjoining conference room if anybody wanted to talk to him. Chairman Farrell stated we are always looking for help with Economic Development for Pettengill Road. S. Thompson said that staff had previously met with Sen. Carson concerning this matter; Senator Ayotte is aware of the issue and he said he will take it back to her.

Communication Plan – Town-Wide Disasters – Londonderry Fire (LFD) Chief Kevin MacCaffrie was in attendance. He explained there are two parts to the revised plan: communication with residents and communication with the public utilities. He quoted the objective which is to have effective communications during a disaster is the key to productivity and outcome of any emergency response plan. He stated that this addendum to the town's Emergency Management Plan is designed to outline protocols for reporting, mitigating, and communicating disaster recovery impacts and efforts.

Communications Plan with Citizens: There will be one point of communication from the town. The Emergency Management Director (EMD) shall designate a Point Information Officer (PIO) to handle all out going communication to the general public and media outlets. He outlined the general means of getting the information out to the public. General notices could be left at various locations in town; all means of electronics will be used to include radio station WLOO, cable access, town website, 211 notification system, Twitter and Facebook. The Nixel system is in place at the LPF and will be used. They will attempt updates at least 5 times/day. Chairman Farrell asked how to contact the Fire Chief. He responded they will have 1 general information line that will have a direct line to the emergency operations center or the PIO. Everything depends on the scale of the disaster and who the PIO is depends on who gets to the emergency center first. Councilor Butler asked for a flow chart for the chain of command. Chairman Farrell summarized that the Chief is in charge, and requested that he prepare something for all department heads so that they know the protocol and who is in charge at that time. We are looking for a comprehensive plan that the Town Manager can look at. Councilor Butler said we need to know where the notification flyers are located. Chief MacCaffrie said they are in the plan book, but he will give them a list.

Communications with Utilities – The EMD is the contact person with the utilities. If it is a normal outage the homeowner should contact the utilities as well as the LFD. If the emergency is large scale the EMD or his designee will contact the utility by the emergency number and also by the local Customer Representative which is Elizabeth LaRocca. She wants to be notified directly so a personal liaison can be assigned to the town. We have one point of contact with them and they have one point of contact with us. We will directly contact the liaison person for updates. Councilor Green asked @ satellite phone. Chief MacCaffrie responded there are a few satellite phones in the possession of the LPD. Councilor Green asked if the liaison had a satellite phone, Chief MacCaffrie said he would ask PSNH. Chief MacCaffrie said the utilities will assign a damage assessment team to the town and we will have direct contact with them. Blocked roads with wires down will be a priority and we have to wait for PSNH to clear them; if no wires are down then the DPW will handle them. Councilor Green asked @ having elderly housing listed on a priority list. Chief MacCaffrie responded medical alerts are a priority; however infrastructure is the first priority, next is large areas where the elderly are located. He reminded the public that PSNH brings electricity back up by circuits, not by individual homes. The utilities are scheduling 3 updates per day. Chairman Farrell asked if there was any kind of social media being used by PSNH. He responded they do have Facebook, twitter, and their own website. They want just one point of contact with the liaison but if you contact them via their website that was OK. Councilor Butler asked where is the communication center going to be located. Chief MacCaffrie said their grant is finished and the main EOC center is at the LPD in the training room. Chairman Farrell asked how can we get ALERT organized so they can help us. Chief MacCaffrie responded they already are, they are an internal source. Chairman Farrell asked Chief MacCaffrie to show where they are on the flowchart.

Chairman Farrell said he received a letter from a citizen @ the Conservation Commission having a meeting on 6/25 @ green infrastructure. He proceeded to read parts of the letter. Chairman Farrell asked the Conservation Commission to come to Council in July and explain what the meeting was about. He said Council has a plan in place for the Conservation Commission and they don't remember this being a part of it.

Public Hearing

Councilor Freda made a motion to open the Public Hearing, second Councilor Butler. Council's vote 4-0-0.

Receipt of Unanticipated Revenues – ATM/Finance Director Sue Hickey explained the Council has to vote to formally accept any grants, cash equipment and donations received by the Town in FY12. She presented a list totaling \$297,888.44. **Councilor Freda made a motion to accept, second Councilor Green. Council's vote 4-0-0.**

Councilor Green made a motion to close the Public Hearing, second Council Freda. Council's vote 4-0-0

Old Business

Fire Department Staffing - LFD Chief MacCaffrie said they discussed various options and they all come down to money either for replacement time or hiring firefighters to set the goal of 10 on duty every day or going up to 11. There are options on how that happens. Councilor Green asked @ the costs of replacement time versus hiring.

Adding personnel vs. Replacement Coverage – In FY11, there were 264 out of 365 days where there was a need for at least one out of the 10 emergency personnel slots. If you factor in the cost of replacement and the over time rate with benefits it is about \$53.90/hour. That consists of the average overtime rate of \$42.11 plus the retirement cost of \$11.79. If we employ just one firefighter the estimated cost is \$83,841 with benefits. Typically we can get 2,184 hours for that person. Out of those hours, 193 hours are planned unavailable time. They would only be actually available for 72% of that time. The actual replacement time for that one firefighter is about 1,434 hours or approximately 60 shifts per year. In order for the effective rate to be equal with the replacement coverage rate of \$53.90 the firefighter would have to work 78% of shifts where replacement coverage is needed. Chief MacCaffrie said it would be more economical to add a firefighter rather than use them for replacement time. Councilor Green summarized that if we could do it with one person it would be cheaper but it is impossible to do it with one person due to the variable shifts. Councilor Freda asked if we could add just 2 firefighters, the Chief responded yes. Councilor Freda asked what kind of amendment would we need for the collective bargaining unit. Chief MacCaffrie said the contract will have to be amended that those two people would be hired with a different schedule, a fixed 4 day or a variable 4 day flex schedule. Chairman Farrell asked if he has talked with the union, the Chief responded yes, they came up with some other ideas as well. Councilor Butler clarified if the staffing at 9 is one captain and 8 are firefighters, Chief MacCaffrie responded that is correct. Chief MacCaffrie said their original proposal is staffing to 11 and if necessary drop back to maintain 10. The other proposal is adding 2 firefighters on a 4 day flex schedule. He explained that they are hiring 5 call firefighters to the ranks. Hiring full time firefighter options are very little. He said if we could hire 1 a year for the next 4 years it would be an option or two this year, skip a year and hire two again. Councilor Freda said the estimate of adding 2 firefighters would avoid approximately \$159K in overtime costs and that would be a cost of \$167K in salary.

Revenue enhancements were another area they looked into. The towns of Auburn & Litchfield ambulance contracts are not up for renewal yet.

Chairman Farrell talked about an advertised Request for Proposal for a staff command vehicle that is driven by the Captain who runs the shift. He asked if it will be a lease vehicle, Chief MacCaffrie responded that was correct. Chairman Farrell verified that we purchase our engine and pumpers. Chief MacCaffrie said we also lease the utility vehicle which is rotated out into a brush vehicle. The Chief explained that we lease/purchase small vehicles. Councilor Butler said there was a need for more water at fires, there was discussion to look at a tanker rather than an engine and wanted to know why we were not looking at the tanker. Chairman Farrell said the tanker is on the CIP; the problem is we need a body to drive it. Captain MacCaffrie said they also looked at need versus the benefit. The problem is putting it on the road and the priority is replacing old equipment before a tanker. We use an engine every day versus the less used pumper.

Chairman Farrell surmised that the Council is giving direction to the LFD to keep thinking about how to keep their employees and the community safe. We should communicate better with the information we have on hiring the extra firefighters to the public. Councilor Freda said we have to show them that we are spending \$159K in overtime; explain if we spend \$167K we could get two additional firefighters.

FY13 Bonding Options – ATM/Finance Director Sue Hickey talked about selling the \$500,000 Highway Maintenance bond and an additional \$1.2M in Exit 4A bonds previously authorized by the voters. Selling the bonds would relieve the deficit fund balance in the capital project fund that accounts for 4A at a lower interest rate. Selling the bonds will be done with local banks and if we combine the two we can still break out into a ten year term for the roadway management and a 20 year term for the \$1.2M. Councilor Freda asked how long the \$1.14M has been outstanding. S. Hickey said it goes back for years and had accumulated since the early 2000. Chairman Farrell suggested waiting until the close of books for the fiscal year at the end of the month and look at it again. Councilor Green asked if there was any time limit to make a decision regarding interest rates. S. Hickey responded after the summer there might be a change. The consensus was to close out the books for the fiscal year and see where we are.

New Business

Order 2012-07 – Relative to the Licensing of a Junkyard pursuant to RSA 236 (Murray’s Auto Recycling) - Councilor Green read the Order and made a motion to accept, second Councilor Freda. Open for discussion. **Council’s vote 4-0-0.**

Order 2012-08 – Relative to the Licensing of a Junkyard pursuant to RSA 236 (S & S Metals) –Councilor Freda read the Order and made a motion to accept, second Councilor Butler. Open for discussion. **Council’s vote 4-0-0.**

(Councilor Butler left the room at 8:05PM).

Order 2012-09 – Relative to the Licensing of a Junkyard pursuant to RSA 236 (Londonderry Salvage) - Councilor Green read the Order and made a motion to accept, second Councilor Freda. Open for discussion. **Council's vote 3-0-0.**

Order 2012-10 – Relative to the Licensing of a Junkyard pursuant to RSA 236 (Hill's Salvage Facility) . Chairman Farrell read the Order. **Councilor Freda made a motion to accept, second Councilor Green.** Open for discussion. **Council's vote 3-0-0.**

Councilor Green suggested listing infractions incurred during the year to Councilors to keep track of them. Richard Canuel, Senior Building Inspector said there have been no incidents this past year, it is a historic year. R. Canuel said he can provide a summary of those incidents. Chairman Farrell said an overview at the end of the year would be great.

Order 2012-11 – Relative to the Expenditure of Ecological Industrial Park Trust Funds – Chairman Farrell read the order. **Councilor Freda made a motion to adopt, second Councilor Green.** Open for discussion. **Council's vote 3-0-0.**

Order 2012 – 12 – Relative to the Expenditure of Non-Capital Reserve Funds for the Master Plan Update – Councilor Freda read the order and made a motion to adopt, second Councilor Green . Open for discussion. **Council's vote 3-0-0.**

Chairman Farrell called for a 5 minute break at 8:13PM to allow Councilor Butler to return to the meeting. Councilor Butler returned at 8:16PM and the meeting resumed at 8:18PM.

NHRS Retirement Expenses - Chairman Farrell talked about what is happening with the NH Retirement System. He said that Councilor Freda did a spreadsheet analysis and they have found that a trend is emerging. Councilor Freda said he broke out the personnel costs for the budget and the retirement health benefits. Since 2008 we have had a stable workforce of roughly 190 full time employees. He said that in 2008 the retirement percentage cost to the town for employees was 5.29%. For the FY 13 budget the cost for 189 employees is 7.91% of the budget. He said that the Town Manager had told Council earlier in the year that we can expect a half a million dollars in retirement costs due to reforms at the state level. In a period of 7 years we have gone from 5.29% to almost 9%. When the budget comes out we will have a contractual requirement that will cut out \$600K or \$700K in tax money. It cuts out a lot of services, the problem has to be addressed at the state legislature. Chairman Farrell said we have to give the town management team a direction to convey this information to the state legislatures and we want to know what they are going to do about it. He said he needs a consensus to send a letter from the Council to the state legislatures who represent our constituents and ask them what is the plan going forward and why do we continue having downshifting to the town and get an explanation from them. The consensus was to ask the state representatives to come in and explain. Councilor Freda pointed out that health insurance and salaries have been relatively flat it is just the retirement that is increasing.

