

The Claremont City Council held a meeting on Wednesday, December 14, 2011, in the Council Chambers of City Hall.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Cutts at 6:30 p.m.

Members of the Council present were:

Ward II Councilor Keith Raymond
Ward I Councilor Victor Bergeron
Ward III Councilor Nicholas Koloski
Assistant Mayor Andrew Austin
Mayor Deborah Cutts
At-Large Councilor Adam Burke
At-Large Councilor Christopher Lewis
At-Large Councilor Kyle Messier
At-Large Councilor Thomas Burnham

Also present were:

Guy Santagate, City Manager
Jane Taylor, City Solicitor

Presentation of Claremont Savings Bank New Community Center Donation

Sherwood Moody, Claremont Savings Bank (CSB) President, and Joe Gorman, CSB Board of Trustees, presented to the City the deed to the 1.6 acre property and a check for \$3 million for the New Community Center (NCC). Mr. Moody said he believes the NCC is an important part of the economic development in Claremont.

Councilors thanked Claremont Savings Bank for the great gift to the City.

Mr. Santagate said that CSB is a valuable presence in the City. The land is in a perfect location; it makes a campus-type atmosphere with Claremont Middle School, Sugar River Valley Regional Technical Center, Arrowhead and Monadnock Park. It has been a difficult four-year period to put this together. Every time he called the bank to ask for an extension, CSB agreed. He thanked them for their patience. CSB is a great corporate citizen. We believe this will be a big part of the economic development in the City. Mr. Santagate thanked CSB. Scott Hausler, Parks and Recreation Director agreed with Mr. Santagate.

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY

A motion was made by Mr. Koloski and seconded by Mr. Burke to accept the minutes of the November 9, 10, 19 and 22, 2011, City Council meetings.

Ms. Messier abstained because she was not present at those meetings.

Roll call vote: motion carried 8-0 and 1 abstain (Ms. Messier).

MAYOR'S NOTES

Mayor Cutts presented departing Councilors Adam Burke and Christopher Lewis plaques in recognition of their time on the Council.

Assistant Mayor Austin presented a plaque to departing Mayor Deborah Cutts in recognition of her time on the Council.

City Manager Santagate thanked Mayor Cutts for her service to the City over the last several years. He talked about some of the projects that have been completed during her time on the Council. She is an asset to the City. He thanked her for past contributions and looked forward to her serving in the future.

Councilors thanked Mayor Cutts and Councilors Burke and Lewis for moving the City forward.

Mayor Cutts recognized James Foster, Fosters Professional Painting, LLC, for receiving the NH Business Review's 9th Annual Excellence Business Award.

Mayor Cutts read a proclamation in honor of Jim Hanson who will be retiring from the City of Claremont Public Works Department after almost 38 years of service.

Jim Hanson shared a little history of his time and thanked the City for the opportunity.

Bruce Temple, Public Works Director, on behalf of Public Works thanked Mr. Hanson for his years of work.

Mayor Cutts read a proclamation for Guy Santagate recognizing his 10 years of service as the Claremont City Manager.

Mr. Santagate thanked Mayor Cutts and the Council for the kind and thoughtful words. When he got here in 2001, he was concerned about the fit for a city boy. This is home to him now, because the people in the city have made it that way. As he begins his second decade here, he looks forward to the challenges ahead; he has promises to keep and miles to go before he sleeps.

Mr. Burnham talked about the changes at the water plant from 2001 to now and that they are due to Mr. Santagate.

Stevens High School Student Council Update

None

APPOINTMENT TO BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

Claremont Development Authority

Mr. Raymond nominated Candace Crawford to seat #7 of the Claremont Development Authority.

Mr. Raymond nominated Alan Spahr to seat #8 of the Claremont Development Authority.

Mr. Raymond nominated Andre Lafreniere to seat #3 of the Claremont Development Authority. Mr. Austin seconded the nominations.

Roll call vote for all three: motion carried 9-0.

Tax Increment Finance District Advisory Board – River Road

Mr. Bergeron nominated Harvey Hill to seat #1 of the Tax Increment Finance District Advisory Board – River Road.

Mr. Bergeron nominated William Greenrose to seat #2 of the Tax Increment Finance District Advisory Board – River Road.

Mr. Bergeron nominated Robert Porter to seat #4 of the Tax Increment Finance District Advisory Board – River Road.

Roll call vote for all three: motion carried 9-0.

Claremont City Center Project – Steering Committee

Mr. Burke nominated James Feleen to the Claremont City Center Project – Steering Committee.

Roll call vote: motion carried 9-0.

Mr. Raymond reminded everyone that there are open seats on many of the boards and commissions.

OLD BUSINESS

Ordinance 524 Public Parking – Broad/Tremont/Wall Streets – Second Reading – Public Hearing

The purpose of this proposed change is to remove the designation of two municipal parking lots, resulting from the completion of the CVS development. Replacement parking spaces are located

both within the northwest corner of the new CVS parking lot and within the public right-of-way on the southerly side of Wall Street.

Enactment of this Ordinance will conform the Claremont City Code provisions related to municipal parking lots.

Nancy Merrill, Planning and Development Director, said this is to delete two lots because the City does not own the land anymore. This also adds no parking in any municipal parking lot 12 midnight to 7 a.m., except as indicated.

A motion was made by Mr. Burke and seconded by Mr. Lewis to adopt Ordinance 524 Public Parking – Broad/Tremont/Wall Streets.

Mr. Burke read the explanation of proposed action as well as the section related to no parking in municipal parking lot 12 midnight to 7 a.m.

Mayor Cutts opened the public hearing. No one spoke. She closed it.

Roll call vote: motion carried 9-0.

CITIZEN'S FORUM

Cynthia Howard, Ward 2, submitted a petition with over 300 signatures requesting a statistical update of assessed properties. It requests the City cut spending to reduce the tax burden and also requests the City repair and/or pave our streets in Claremont. She referenced the 2006 statistical update. She said home values are down. She said the reduced assessment would result in a lower tax bill, but may result in a change to the rate. This could be offset by using funds in the overlay or capital reserve account. The other option would be to reduce spending.

Jim Neilsen thanked Mayor Cutts for her service to the City. He thought the Mayoral recount did what Mayor Cutts wanted: it reaffirmed everyone's confidence in the voting process. He said she has done a fine job as mayor.

Steve Cutts, Ward 1 (Mayor's husband), said thanks for the support from the citizens. This Council has worked well together. Mayor Cutts' dedication is amazing. She really cares for Claremont. He thanked the Council for moving the City in the right direction.

NEW BUSINESS

Tolles Home Update

Andrew Fennelly, Ward 2 and Executive Director of the Frances J. Tolles home, said the home is at 44 Sullivan Street. The home was originally started for worthy elderly ladies in straightened circumstances and was started in 1922. This is supported by several trusts. They have an annual budget of \$202,000 that is fully funded by trusts and rents collected. Trust Accounts: Operation

\$3.9 million; Building \$1.7 million; and total trust \$5.6 million. They are governed by a board of trustees that are appointed by the Council. Trustees are: Vickie Landry, Treasurer; Alison Raymond, Secretary; Rebecca Vinduska; Debra Yurek; Wendy Moquin; and himself, Chair. It is now called the Tolles Home Complex; it has 19 living units: Tolles home has 5 private units; Nellie Lewis Apartments has 6 apartments; Helen Jones has 8 apartments for men and women. They are currently at 100% occupancy. Staff is 1 part-time site manager, 1 maintenance director, and 4 cooks. Annual income limit for single person is \$22,000 per year and \$27,000 for a couple. Residents may not own real estate or must be in the process of selling it. Rents range from \$120 a month to \$320 a month. This is independent housing. Some improvements made include higher toilets, converted some bathtubs to showers, replaced a boiler, replaced appliances and added an ADA covered walkway. The 5-year plan is to install fire sprinklers, add a generator and expand services for assisted living.

Mr. Santagate said the key is the trustees that the Council appointed are doing a stellar job. Mr. Fennelly is doing a great job. The improvements are really great.

Ms. Messier thanked Mr. Fennelly for coming in and making the public aware.

Mayor Cutts supports the fire sprinklers. She suggested there may be grants available to help them to pursue assisted living. She commended Mr. Fennelly and the board for looking into that. Mr. Fennelly said the City needs 65 assisted living beds and there are only 10.

Motion to Authorize 2011 Computer Lease Program

Withdrawn

Yearly Council Update of ID (Identity) Theft Prevention Program

Mary Walter, Finance Director, said this is a yearly update of the "red flags" for ID theft prevention. Most changes have to do with the credit card update.

A motion was made by Mr. Raymond and seconded by Mr. Koloski that the Claremont City Council, pursuant to the "Fair and Accurate Credit Transactions Act of 2003," the "Red Flag Clarification Act of 2010" and Federal Regulation Title 16 Part 681, hereby adopts the revised City of Claremont Identity Theft Prevention Program and authorizes the City Manager or his designees to take such actions as may be necessary to implement said Identity Theft Prevention Program in accordance with applicable federal and state law and regulation.

Roll call vote: motion carried 9-0.

Resolution 2011-29 Encumbrance Budget – Public Hearing

Dept	Purpose	Amount
Encumbrance Budget - 2011		
Re-encumber from 2010		
416	Planning & Development	
	City Center Project	\$ 5,000
	Painting & Railings	\$ 2,500
417	General Services	
	Information Technology Server	\$ 20,000
441	Public Works	
	Drapers Corner - partial city share	\$ 201,200
	Bridge Work - Coy Paper	\$ 5,000
	Subtotal	\$ 233,700
2011 Encumbrances		
411	Policy	
	Office Repair work	\$ 2,000
421	Police	
	Balance due for repairs from wind storm	\$ 10,000
422	Fire	
	Match for Health & Welless Grant - Assistance to Firefighters (if awarded)	\$ 10,000
	On Board Laptop for MV accidents	\$ 5,000
	Household Hazardous Waste Day	\$ 10,000
441	Public Works	
	North & Main Project - partial city share	\$ 100,000
450	Library	
	Painting	\$ 13,000
	Windows	\$ 3,500
471	Cemetery	

Gravel - Pot Hole Repairs	\$	5,000
Trimmers & Saws	\$	1,200
Subtotal	\$	159,700
Total		\$ 393,400

Ms. Walter said this is for projects that we were not able to get done or for projects we want to do. \$233,000 is being re-encumbered from 2010 and Drapers Corner is a large part. Some 2011 projects were put on hold because of the downshifting. We have to re-encumber the 2010 money or else it will lapse into fund balance.

A motion was made by Mr. Bergeron and seconded by Mr. Burke to adopt Resolution 2011-29 Encumbrance Budget.

Mr. Bergeron read the resolution into the record.

Mayor Cutts opened the public hearing. No one spoke. She closed it.

Roll call vote: motion carried 9-0.

Motion to Adopt Fund Balance Policy

Ms. Walter said due to GASB 54, we need to have an officially written policy.

Mr. Santagate said we try to build fund balance and use it wisely. We will not bond in the foreseeable future because we have a number of projects we want to finish (New Community Center and North & Main which will take a couple of years). He talked about the TIFDs (tax increment finance district). There is a challenge with the Downtown TIFD because property values are leveling off. Growth in the TIFD will come when the property values increase. We think we are okay in the short run, but we are seeing problems throughout the country. He talked about property assessed values. The revaluation in 2003 was the first done in 20 years. Sometimes we take action that is revenue neutral (i.e. adjusting the value of properties will cause those tax bills to go down, but someone else's bill will go up). The good news is that people are finally paying attention to valuations. Property values fund the schools to a great degree. The property tax is the tax of choice by the state legislature. It is the worst tax.

A motion was made by Mr. Raymond and seconded by Mr. Bergeron that the Claremont City Council, in accordance with Governmental Accounting Standards Board Statement (GASB) 54, *Fund Balance Reporting and Governmental Fund Types Definitions*, hereby adopts the Fund Balance Policy and authorizes the City Manager or his designees to take

such actions as may be necessary to implement said Fund Balance Policy in accordance with applicable federal and state law, regulation and policy.

Roll call vote: motion carried 9-0.

Motion to Adopt Credit Card Policy

Withdrawn

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

None

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS AND DIRECTIVES

Mr. Burnham said in reference to an 18-month budget that he talked to Senator Odell. He asked for Mr. Santagate to put it on a future agenda. Mr. Burnham said Senator Odell will work with us and that it can be done. The first step is to do a 6-month budget (January to June) and then the next budget will be July 1 to June 30. It is to our benefit to get that done. He said it should not affect the Charter or elections. He asked for the information at the next month's Council meeting.

Mr. Austin asked about opening the Charter for changes, specifically changing having the entire Council up for election at the same time.

Mr. Bergeron asked about doing an efficiency study on all departments. Also, someone (Councilor or City Staff) should go on CCTV (Claremont Community Television) to tell people the positives about the City either monthly or bi-monthly.

Mr. Koloski said he had received a phone call from a citizen about the yellow marks put on the street. Public Works Director Bruce Temple said they locate catch basins and manholes on the edge of the road.

Mr. Burke asked the Councilors to look at the IT audit that was recently done.

Mr. Lewis said the last 3 years have been a lot of fun for him and there have been some challenges. It was most interesting getting to know residents. He thanked the citizens for allowing him to serve. He thanked City Staff and said they are tremendous. He asked to continue moving the City forward and to thank the employees for doing the best work for the City.

Mr. Burke thanked the residents, City Staff and all the Councilors he worked with.

Mayor Cutts talked about adding an item on the January agenda to set an 18-month budget. She supports it, but suggested waiting so the new people can get adjusted before having that discussion.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Claremont 250th Anniversary Committee

None

Claremont City Center Project – Steering Committee Report

Mr. Bergeron said the committee met and went over the streetscape survey. All streets were done. There will be an updated report. Part of the streetscape was the condition of the roads. People need to remember that for 9 years no work was done and we are still trying to catch up.

CONSULTATION WITH LEGAL COUNSEL

None

Mayor Cutts read her farewell speech thanking citizens for allowing her to serve. She has learned to really listen and hear people. She talked about the volunteer recognition; she thanked nearly 150 volunteers and all the City Staff. She specifically thanked Mr. Santagate for the lessons she has learned from him. She thanked her family for their support. She encouraged future Councils to remember who the customers are.

ADJOURNMENT

At 8:16 p.m., a motion was made by Mr. Burke and seconded by Mr. Lewis to adjourn.

Voice Vote: Motion carried 9-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dorée M. Russell
Clerk to the Council