

The Claremont City Council held a meeting on Thursday, February 5, 2015, in the Council Chambers of City Hall.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Neilsen at 5:30 p.m.

Members of the Council present were:

At-Large Councilor Keith Raymond  
Ward I Councilor Carolyn Towle  
Ward III Councilor Nicholas Koloski  
Assistant Mayor Victor Bergeron  
Mayor James Neilsen, IV  
At-Large Councilor James Reed  
Ward II Councilor Charlene Lovett

Absent:

At-Large Councilor Kyle Messier  
At-Large Councilor John Simonds

Also present were:

Guy Santagate, City Manager  
Jane Taylor, City Solicitor

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### Motion to Apply for Bus Shelter Grant

Mayor Neilsen said he was asked by Councilor Lovett to provide a letter of commitment for a bus shelter grant application by the Community Alliance for Health Services. He told Ms. Lovett that this was a Council decision, so in order to meet the grant deadline, a special meeting was required.

Ms. Lovett presented a grant overview - Community Alliance for Health Services, Interim Executive Director Liz Chipman has offered to apply for a grant for a bus shelter at the Claremont train stop as a result of meeting with the Amtrak Ad Hoc Committee. The grant accesses Federal Transit Funds which have been distributed to the NH DOT. It is a 2yr grant (FY 2016 and 2017) with funds distributed in the first year beginning July 1, 2015.

The grant is an 80/20 split, meaning that federal money pays for 80% of the project and the local government covers the remaining 20%. New this year in the grant application process is the requirement to include a Letter of Commitment from the local organization providing the 20%

funding. The grant works on an invoice for reimbursement basis. So, in this case, the Community Alliance Transportation Service (CATS) would present invoices for expenses incurred and show a local match of 20% for each invoiced amount.

Liz Chipman contacted a construction company that has built these shelters, and received an estimate of \$25K. This quote covered both the cost of the shelter and the work needed to prepare the ground and pad before installation. If the Council votes in favor of the Letter of Commitment, the City is obligated to fund 20% of the cost of the bus shelter. Based on the estimate, this would be \$5000.

Ms. Lovett said it is quite possible that the cost of building the shelter will be less given local businesses are receptive to donating materials/labor. Also, the Ad Hoc Committee is working on fundraising initiatives with the objective of using these funds to offset the 20% cost to the City. According to the grant, the City is not committed to a fixed price, and the 20% funding doesn't have to originate from the City. The State just needs a Letter of Commitment from the City signifying a local government organization is ultimately responsible for covering 20% of the cost.

As part of the grant application package, the Amtrak Government Services Rep for this area has offered to provide a Letter of Support. He has contacted corporate HQS in Washington D.C. with that request, and hopes to have the Letter of Support by the application deadline of Feb 9th.

Mayor Nielsen said this is to apply for the grant. This does not commit the City to spend the money until the grant is approved and it is accepted by the Council.

Mr. Santagate said that usually the administration has done a lot of the background work on grants before they are presented to the Council. This was done by Ms. Lovett so we don't know what the numbers are or have the background. In the future we want to have time to look at the grant beforehand. If this is going onto private property, we'll need to have easements for access.

Ms. Lovett said that Amtrak said it can provide an engineer to look at the area for the shelter. She said she talked to Mr. Lambert of Lambert Auto about using his land if needed and Mr. Lambert said yes.

Mr. Bergeron was concerned about making sure there was a written agreement if it is to go on private property.

Mr. Raymond said the school and a local timber framer may want to help build the structure, so we'll need someone to do the foundation. He believes the \$5,000 can be in-kind. Ms. Lovett said she was told we can have in-kind donations.

Bernie Folta, Ward 3, thinks this is important for current and future rail service and represents a commitment of the community to Amtrak.

Mr. Santagate said the state has not put any money in this and he thinks the legislative delegation should be made aware of that.

Mayor Neilsen said in this month's edition of Town & City magazine there is an article about a \$300,000 CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) housing grant through NH CDFA (Community Development Finance Authority) for the water system at the Pleasant Valley Estates Cooperative (PVE).

Mr. Santagate said that followed prior CDBG funding of \$1.6 million for extending City sewer and installing sewer lines at PVE.

Mr. Koloski said another movie may come to Claremont because of the railroad.

**A motion was made by Mr. Bergeron and seconded by Mr. Raymond to put together a letter of commitment for this grant application. If the grant is awarded, Council will address funding the City's 20% of the cost.**

**Voice vote: motion carried 7-0.**

#### **CONSULTATION WITH LEGAL COUNSEL**

None

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

**At 5:58 p.m., a motion was made by Ms. Lovett and seconded by Mr. Reed to adjourn.**

**Voice vote: motion carried 7-0.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Dorée M. Russell  
Clerk to the Council