

The Claremont City Council held a meeting on Wednesday, June 24, 2015, in the Council Chambers of City Hall.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Neilsen at 6:30 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 (On the Telephone)  
At-Large Councilor Kyle Messier  
At-Large Councilor John Simonds

Also present were:

Guy Santagate, City Manager

**NON-PUBLIC SESSION PURSUANT TO RSA 91-A:3,II(d) – REAL ESTATE**

**A motion was made by Mr. Bergeron and seconded by Ms. Towle to go into the Non-Public Session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3,II(d) – Real Estate and to invite Mr. Santagate, Planning and Development Director Nancy Merrill and Ms. Russell into the session.**

**Roll call vote: motion carried 9-0.**

At 6:49 p.m. Mr. Koloski recused himself and he left Council Chambers.

**A motion was made by Ms. Towle and seconded by Mr. Simonds to seal the minutes until such time that the City Manager deems they can be released.**

**Roll call vote: motion carried 8-0.**

**At 7:06 p.m., a motion was made by Mr. Raymond and seconded by Mr. Simonds to come out of the Non-Public session.**

**Roll call vote: motion carried 8-0.**

At 7:09 Mr. Koloski returned to the Council table.

Ms. Messier said the “ourhandsthenandnow” sculpture and the Mill District were featured at the New England Foundation for Arts Conference.

## **CITIZEN’S FORUM**

Patrick Adrian, Ward 1, talked about the No Burn Zone in the City and that residents would like to be able to have campfires at their homes.

Bernie Folta, Ward 3, talked about the CCTV video of the June 10<sup>th</sup> Council meeting being lost and unrecoverable. He said he received an audio recording of the meeting from the City and that CCTV will receive an audio recording and they will post it on their website.

AJ Maranville, Ward 2, passed out a handout giving his ideas for what to do with the bond money for the roads. He thinks some bond money should be used to address drainage issues throughout Claremont.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### Department Update – Fire

Fire Chief Rick Bergeron showed a PowerPoint presentation and gave an overview of what the Fire Department has done over the last year: fire suppression, fire prevention, emergency management planning, truck exhaust system, wireless fire alarm system, fire prevention through inspection and code enforcement, rental assistance inspection program, Emergency Operations Plan Update, working with the Greater Sullivan County Public Health Network, USDA Grant Award for building improvements (increased insulation to the roof and added solar panels to supplement the building’s hydronic system). In the future they want to have improvements in technology and code enforcement to reduce the number and severity of fires and he said that several buildings are now sprinklered.

Chief Bergeron said the Fire Department will look at requests for campfires on a case-by-case basis.

Councilor Bergeron asked for an update on the burned restaurant on Main Street. Chief Bergeron said the Fire Marshal’s office is still working on it. Chief Bergeron is waiting for a response from the insurance company.

Chief Bergeron said that he and the City Manager have been talking about creating an ordinance with requirements for permitted campfires in the community.

Bernie Folta, Ward 3, asked about Fire Department staff being trained in prevention versus suppression. Chief Bergeron said that all are crosstrained to do both.

Take Up Tabled Resolution 2015-28 Authorize Road Bond for \$3 Million – Public Hearing

Mayor Neilsen opened the public hearing.

Bernie Folta, Ward 3, suggested Council not rush into taking the bond and to make the best decision for the benefit of Claremont. He talked about the Public Works Director being a part-time employee and that concerns him when considering a \$3 million bond that he will supervise.

Mayor Neilsen closed the public hearing.

Mr. Reed said he can't say yes to the bond as it is only a bandaid fix. There is no action in place for maintenance and repair.

**A motion was made by Mr. Koloski and seconded by Ms. Towle to remove Resolution 2015-28 Authorize Road Bond for \$3 Million from the table.**

**Roll call vote: motion carried 9-0.**

There was discussion about how much money should be placed in Public Works' budget each year for road maintenance and how much that would be on the tax rate. Everyone agreed the roads need work. Also, currently interest rates are historically low.

Ms. Walter said the \$250,000 currently in Public Works' budget is for street paving. There was discussion about taking that money to pay the bond payment.

Ms. Lovett wanted to talk about a \$1.5 million bond.

Mr. Koloski said he is not in favor of a \$3 million bond. He would like to look at a \$1.5 million bond.

There was a discussion about a \$2 million bond for 15 years and the effect on the tax rate.

**A motion was made by Mr. Bergeron and seconded by Ms. Messier to adopt Resolution 2015-28 Authorize Road Bond for up to \$2 Million for 15 years.**

Mr. Bergeron read the resolution into the record

Ms. Lovett felt the resolution was too general.

There was discussion about which of the three options, that the Public Works Director had previously presented to the Council, that the Council would like to see completed.

Mr. Reed felt uncomfortable making a decision without the City Solicitor being present to give her opinion.

Mr. Koloski said he will vote no as he is more comfortable with \$1.5 million bond and we need to figure out how to pay for it first.

**Roll call vote: motion failed 5-4 with Ms. Towle, Mr. Koloski, Mr. Reed and Ms. Lovett voting no.**

It was the consensus of the Council to take the first year payment from fund balance and to leave Public Works' budget alone.

**A motion was made by Mr. Simonds and seconded by Ms. Messier to adopt Resolution 2015-28 Authorize Road Bond for up to \$1.5 Million for 15 years.**

Mr. Simonds read the resolution into the record.

Mr. Koloski asked if this is approved, how it will be paid for. Mayor Neilsen said there will be another resolution at a different meeting for the payment.

**Roll call vote: motion carried 8-1 with Mr. Reed voting no.**

Request Related to Bullpen Change in Use – Public Hearing

Ernest Montenegro, Ward 1, showed a PowerPoint proposal to make a temporary park in the “bullpen” on Opera House Square. It would be for one summer. He showed examples of parks in other cities in the U.S. (i.e. lawn chairs in Times Square, the High Line in New York, Bicentennial Square in Concord). He thinks this idea is the key to downtown revitalization. He said there a number of unused parking spaces within a 2-minute walk of the bullpen.

Mr. Koloski said the feedback he has received is that people don't want to do it at this time. He talked about doing the border around the area and not taking away parking spaces.

Mr. Bergeron said residents use the bullpen for nighttime parking.

Mayor Neilsen opened the public hearing.

Patrick Adrian, Ward 1, likes the idea, but doesn't like the timing. He does a lot of shopping in that area and will park in the bullpen to make a quick stop at the surrounding stores.

Bonita Miles, Ward 2, loves the idea, however, if more businesses come in, more parking will be needed.

Bernie Folta, Ward 3, thinks it is a wonderful idea, but said there may be a problem with vandalism.

Marty Davis, Ward 2, said in reference to vandalism, that he doesn't believe it to be the case. He thinks this is a great vision and the City would benefit by trying this experiment.

Mayor Neilsen closed the public hearing.

At 10:29 p.m. Mr. Raymond recused himself as his wife owns a wine shop in Opera House Square. He stepped down from the Council table.

Mr. Montenegro said that people will donate trees, bushes, flowers and a temporary fountain.

Mr. Bergeron talked about loitering. He said the current fountain needs to be fixed. There is a garden already there.

Mr. Reed said his survey showed people are concerned with the impact on businesses. He said Claremont has multiple green spaces/parks and we need to enhance what we have.

Mr. Koloski said he has heard people say no, so he can't say yes.

Ms. Messier has heard only negative comments about the idea. She suggested to stop calling it the "bullpen" and that may change how people think about it. She talked about making current spaces more beautiful.

Mayor Neilsen reopened the public hearing.

Patrick Adrian, Ward 1, said the Claremont Citizens Group would be interested in beautification and he thinks they would be interested in beautifying Broad Street Park.

Mayor Neilsen closed the public hearing.

Mayor Neilsen said there was a general consensus to not do anything now, but if Mr. Montenegro comes back with a change that does not affect all of the parking, Council may consider discussing it again.

#### Vendor License Process Discussion – Public Hearing

Mr. Koloski asked if the Traffic Advisory Committee would identify three locations within the historic downtown area to be used by vendors and that Council recommend to the City Manager to look at Lebanon's permitting process for vendors and to come back to the Council for a vote.

Mayor Neilsen opened the public hearing.

Bernie Folta, Ward 3, thinks Mr. Koloski's suggestion is excellent.

Mayor Neilsen closed the public hearing.

Set Date for Tour of GCC and Zotto Gym Buildings and Set Date for Tour of Police Dispatch Area

Council agreed to tour the GCC and the Zotto Gym buildings, and the Police Dispatch area on July 8 starting at 5:00 p.m. in Police Dispatch.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Multi-Year Agreement for Auditing Services

Ms. Walter said the City went out to bid for auditing services. This is to grant authority to enter into a multi-year agreement with Vachon Clukay & Co. The amount will be the same each year. The last year of the previous auditors' contract was \$48,000.

**A motion was made by Mr. Raymond and seconded by Mr. Simonds to authorize the City Manager to enter into a multi-year agreement with the firm of Vachon Clukay & Company, PC to provide annual audit services for the City pursuant to RSA 49-C:23, IV in the amount of \$31,540 for the FY 2015 audit. The agreement contains an annual non-renewal clause in the event of non-appropriation of sufficient funds for the second, third, fourth and fifth years of the agreement; such funds required to be expended in the first year of the agreement having been raised and appropriated in the current City Budget.**

**Roll call vote: motion carried 9-0.**

**FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS AND DIRECTIVES**

None

**At 10:50 a.m. a motion was made by Mr. Reed to adjourn. There was no second. Motion failed.**

**NON-PUBLIC SESSION PURSUANT TO RSA 91-A:3,II(a) – PERSONNEL**

Council agreed to move this item to Thursday, July 9, 7 p.m. It will be the only item on the agenda.

Ms. Lovett said the Army Band will be at Broad Street Park on June 29, 5-6 p.m. If the weather is bad, they will play in the Claremont Opera House.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**At 10:57 p.m., a motion was made by Ms. Lovett and seconded by Mr. Raymond to adjourn.**

**Roll call vote: motion carried 9-0.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Dorée M. Russell  
Clerk to the Council