

The Claremont City Council held a meeting on Wednesday, April 13, 2016, in the Council Chambers of City Hall.

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

Members of the Council present were:

Ward I Councilor Carolyn Towle
Ward II Councilor Scott Pope
At-Large Councilor Keith Raymond
Mayor Charlene Lovett
At-Large Councilor Allen Damren
At-Large Councilor Bruce Temple
Ward III Councilor Nicholas Koloski
At-Large Councilor John Simonds

Absent:

Assistant Mayor Victor Bergeron

Also present were:

Guy Santagate, City Manager
Jane Taylor, City Solicitor

AGENDA (CHANGES)

None

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY

A motion was made by Mr. Simonds and seconded by Mr. Damren to accept the minutes of the March 9, 2016, City Council meeting.

Voice vote: motion carried 8-0.

A motion was made by Ms. Towle and seconded by Mr. Simonds to accept the minutes of the March 16, 2016, City Council meeting as amended.

Mayor Lovett's changes: 2nd paragraph from the end of the 1st page, to add "that she couldn't answer." Change "and would give some answers" to "and would be able to answer those questions."

2nd page 1st paragraph change “Mayor Lovett said she had gotten information indicating the historic significance...” to “Mayor Lovett said she had gotten information from the state indicating the historic significance...”.

Voice vote: motion carried 8-0.

A motion was made by Mr. Raymond and seconded by Mr. Pope to accept the minutes of the March 23, 2016, City Council meeting.

Mr. Simonds abstained as he was not at the meeting.

Voice vote: motion carried 7-0 with 1 abstain (Mr. Simonds).

MAYOR’S NOTES

School Update

Mayor Lovett relayed information from the School Superintendent: The House passed SB 152 on April 6th and it is now going to the Governor; German Exchange Students returned to Germany after being in Claremont for two weeks; April 2nd one of the robotics teams took 2nd place at a regional competition and on May 21st they will compete on the national level in Baton Rouge; Earth Day is April 22nd and on April 23rd the Transfer Station will accept tires.

Mayor Lovett reminded everyone that the ATV Trails are closed until May 23rd.

CITY MANAGER’S REPORT

Energy

We continue searching for energy savings. The Master Plan rewrite will include a chapter on energy and maybe a permanent energy committee will be established.

Economic Development

There is, or will be, six new businesses opening in the downtown and one of the owners took the entrepreneurship class that was offered by River Valley Community College.

Sidewalk Sales

The City will work with the merchants for sidewalk sales (similar to the Taste of Claremont) in the summer.

Congratulations to DPW

Mr. Santagate congratulated Public Works for the major effort they put into repairing a sewer main break at Broad and Chestnut Streets that occurred at the beginning of Easter weekend.

Transportation Alternative Program (TAP)

The TAP Grant was awarded to the City by the NHDOT and is 80% / 20% (State/City) funded. Sidewalks will be installed on East Street between Pleasant and Broad Streets and significant improvements will be made to the Trail system.

Mr. Santagate said there will be a public hearing regarding Ernest Montenegro's proposed Fountain Project on May 3rd, 5:30 p.m. at the Claremont Savings Bank Community Center. Mr. Santagate and, hopefully, a member of the Council will be at the hearing and will report back to the Council.

Mr. Santagate read a letter to the Council from the Claremont Planning Board regarding the FY 2016-2017 Capital Improvements Plan. The Planning Board made the following recommendations: place emphasis on transportation infrastructure maintenance and improvements including streets and sidewalks; reasonable emphasis placed on capital improvements in the downtown area; and improve City communications with the School District regarding shared responsibilities in the care and maintenance of City parks used by the schools.

Ms. Towle liked the breakdown in the Welfare report and would like to see a comparison from month-to-month. She asked where the \$11,000 overtime shortfall will come from for the Fire Department. Fire Chief Rick Bergeron said it is a moving target and he will keep the Council informed. He hopes to balance that with other savings from the budget. Mr. Santagate said that at one point, five people were out with non-work related injuries. Also, they had an open position that wasn't filled right away.

Mr. Temple said according to the Fire Department's report, they responded to 99 emergencies. He asked for a report of what those emergencies entailed. Chief Bergeron said that can be done.

Mr. Koloski said the Planning and Development Department's report had 27 complaints abated for this year. He asked if Council could be told what those were.

Mr. Koloski talked about the Police Commission minutes and staffing levels. He asked about exit interviews. Ms. Taylor said other than general information, exit interviews are a part of the personnel file that is confidential.

Police Chief Alex Scott said the general attrition rate is 12% = 1-2 per year. There are retirements scheduled for 2017.

Mayor Lovett thanked Parks and Recreation Director Mark Brislin for sending letters to ascertain why members do not renew membership.

APPOINTMENT TO BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

Claremont Planning Board

A motion was made by Mr. Damren and seconded by Mr. Simonds to appoint Richard Wahrlich to seat #4 of the Claremont Planning Board.

Voice vote: motion carried 8-0.

Historic District Commission

A motion was made by Ms. Towle and seconded by Mr. Pope to appoint Richard Wahrlich to seat #5, Planning Board Representative, of the Historic District Commission.

Voice vote: motion carried 8-0.

Parks and Recreation Commission

A motion was made by Mr. Damren and seconded by Mr. Koloski to re-appoint Ernest Rehrig to seat #3 of the Parks and Recreation Commission.

Voice vote: motion carried 8-0.

Tax Increment Finance District Advisory Board - Downtown

A motion was made by Mr. Simonds and seconded by Mr. Raymond to appoint Eugene Lattuga, Jr., to seat #1 of the Tax Increment Finance District Advisory Board – Downtown.

Voice vote: motion carried 8-0.

A motion was made by Mr. Raymond and seconded by Mr. Koloski to appoint Robert Porter to seat #4 of the Tax Increment Finance District Advisory Board – Downtown.

Voice vote: motion carried 8-0.

Mayor Lovett said the TIFD – Downtown will be talked about in May. She said it is important for this board to be fully staffed. There are 3 other vacant seats.

Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission

A motion was made by Mr. Raymond and seconded by Mr. Simonds to re-appoint Thomas Rock to seat #2 of the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission.

Voice vote: motion carried 8-0.

Zoning Board of Adjustment

A motion was made by Ms. Towle and seconded by Mr. Simonds to appoint Tracy Pope to seat #A3 of the Zoning Board of Adjustment.

Mr. Pope abstained as Tracy is his wife.

Voice vote: motion carried 7-0, with 1 abstain (Mr. Pope).

Mr. Koloski asked about the Personnel Advisory Board status. Mr. Santagate said a meeting had been scheduled, but one of the members had to be out of town. The next meeting is scheduled for April 19th. Mayor Lovett asked Mr. Santagate to include an update in the City Manager's Report.

CITIZEN'S FORUM

Hannah Putnam, Ward 2, said Stevens High School will have a Community Service Day on April 15th, 9-1 p.m. Students and teachers will be in the parks and other areas in the City.

OLD BUSINESS

Property Tax Exemption Decision

Ms. Taylor said to make a change to the Tax Exemption income limits would require an ordinance. She asked what amounts Councilors wanted in the ordinance.

Marlene Jordan, Assessing Technician, had given Councilors a list of the age and dollar amount over the income limit for applicants who have been denied or removed from the list.

Ms. Taylor said the income limits were reviewed in 2013, but Council decided not to take action. The last change was in 2007.

Ms. Taylor said this will not be effective for the 2016 tax year. Ms. Jordan said the deadline to apply is April 15.

Ms. Taylor said the current income amounts to qualify are \$19,600 single; \$26,600 married; and less than \$50,000 asset limit.

Mr. Pope suggested \$27,500 single; \$37,600 married; and \$75,000 assets.

Ms. Jordan said the assets do not include the home.

Mr. Koloski said he was concerned that increased exemptions would shift the burden to other taxpayers.

After discussion, it was determined Ms. Jordan will do another report showing the impact using Mr. Pope's suggested amounts and age categories (65-74, 75-79, and 80+). Ms. Jordan will check the DRA website for statewide comparisons. This will come back at the first meeting in May.

NEW BUSINESS

License Agreement for Agricultural Use – Map 152-7

Nancy Merrill, Planning and Development Director, said this is an annual license agreement with Gary LeClair who plants corn on a City lot. The rent he pays is the tax bill for the acreage he plants. He also provides liability insurance to the City.

A motion was made by Mr. Damren and seconded by Mr. Raymond to authorize the City Manager or his designees to negotiate and enter into a License Agreement with Gary LeClair to use a portion of Parcel 152-7 for agricultural use for one (1) year, renewable annually upon approval by the City Council.

Voice vote: motion carried 8-0.

25 Chestnut Street Update

Police Chief Alex Scott said most times Sean Glasscock, Building Inspector/Code Enforcement Officer is able to gain compliance from property owners to take care of code issues on their properties. The first notice of violation was issued in April 2015. This is an out-of-state property owner. Chief Scott gave a history of the activities. The property owner has until June 1st to come into compliance. Chief Scott doesn't expect compliance and feels it is likely the property will be on this April's tax deeding list. He will request to lien the property to cover the costs of the corrective actions. He will update the Council in the future. The City can't enter the property until after June 1st. He will come back to the Council for funds for the cleanup.

Nancy Merrill, Planning and Development Director, said after the Court makes its decision, then abutters will be notified of that decision. The abutters have been notified that it is under Court order to be cleaned up by June 1st.

This will be placed on the May agenda.

Ordinance 547 Amend Chapter 6, Article IX Outdoor Wood Boilers – First Reading

The purpose of this proposal is to relax the siting restrictions for Phase II OWHHs in the Agriculture Residential (AR), Rural Residential (RR) and Rural Residential II (RR 2) zoning districts. This is being recommended because the majority of residential dwelling units in these zoning districts are located at an adequate distance from one another to minimize the risk of nuisance from the newer Phase II OWHH's operation.

Enactment of this proposed Ordinance will reduce the siting restrictions on OWHHs in the AR, RR and RR 2 zoning districts.

Fire Chief Rick Bergeron said this is for three zoning areas and will not impact the Compact Zone.

A motion was made by Mr. Raymond and seconded by Mr. Damren to adopt Ordinance 547 Amend Chapter 6, Article IX Outdoor Wood Boilers on first reading.

Mr. Raymond read the explanation of proposed action into the record.

There was discussion about the City requiring the stack height to be 5 feet higher than the structure and the state requiring only 2 feet. Ms. Taylor said that was based on the City's terrain and density and because of the particulate emissions.

Voice vote: motion carried 8-0.

Resolution 2016-31 Live Origination Drops – Public Hearing

The Claremont City Council wishes to be able to broadcast meetings and events live from the Claremont Savings Bank Community Center (CSBCC) and the Claremont Visitors Center. The installation of equipment by Comcast to enable live broadcast and Internet streaming through the Claremont Community Television system is not an expense included in the City's Franchise Agreement with Comcast. The cost to the City to install the equipment for live origination feeds at the CSBCC and the Visitors Center is estimated to be \$14,180.00, a sum which is not included in the City's current budget. The cost of the installation and equipment for two additional live origination feeds will be offset by unanticipated revenue from the City's Franchise Fee receipts. This is a request to raise and appropriate the sum of up to \$14,180.00, said sum to be taken from unanticipated revenue (with no impact on the tax rate) from the Comcast Franchise Fee, for the purpose of installing live origination feeds at the CSBCC and the Visitors Center.

A motion was made by Mr. Simonds and seconded by Mr. Koloski to adopt Resolution 2016-31 Live Origination Drops.

Mr. Simonds read the resolution into the record.

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

Roll call vote: motion carried 8-0.

Capital Improvements Plan

Mary Walter, Finance Director, said the Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) Committee met last fall. This plan went to the Claremont Planning Board in February or March. This is a working document and the Council will decide what gets done based on budget approval. Having this

document helps with grants. She gave an example that the City Hall roof repairs will cost \$750,000-\$800,000 and she sees no way clear to fund something like that.

Mayor Lovett asked Mr. Santagate to look into LCHIP (Land and Community Heritage Investment Program) grants for the roof repair.

Mr. Koloski asked if the paving of the parking lot across the street could be revisited. Mr. Santagate said there are a lot of different owners that have spaces in that parking lot and the last time this was discussed, the City couldn't get everyone to agree to allow the City to pave and mark it. Mayor Lovett and Mr. Santagate said they can talk about it.

Ms. Taylor said a majority of the portion of the lot that is owned by the City is on the south side of the American Legion building. The City owns strips on the north side and has cross easements with some of the building owners.

Mr. Damren said a number of projects will need to be bonded and he asked when the next bond will be paid off. Ms. Walter said she did not have bonding information in front of her, but believes in 2017 a small bond will be paid off and the next one after that will be in 2021.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mayor Lovett said the Policy Committee is meeting the third Thursday of each month. There has been discussion about meeting two times a month, but that won't happen until after June.

Mayor Lovett said the Amtrak Ad Hoc Committee had a planning session on April 5th to discuss the exhibit train coming to the station on June 18th.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS AND DIRECTIVES

Mayor Lovett suggested having a joint meeting between the Council and School Board on June 28th. She asked Councilors to check their schedules.

Mayor Lovett said the budget schedule will need to be finalized at the April 27th Council meeting. She said Ms. Walter is not available May 5th. She is trying to stay away from the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month as that is when the School Board meets. She and the City Manager agreed the meetings should be either Tuesdays or Thursdays and the public hearing for the budget should be June 22nd due to notice requirements.

Mayor Lovett asked Councilors to check their schedules and let her know when they are not available.

Mayor Lovett said Dave Scanlan, Deputy Secretary of State will be here April 27th for Charter amendment training. Ms. Taylor said the material Mayor Lovett put in the packet was not all up to date. The statute was rewritten in 2014, so Councilors should look to the statute for information.

Ms. Lovett said for the next meeting she will send in the packet examples of RFQs for executive searches.

Mayor Lovett said according to his contract, the City Manager is to be reviewed every 90 days, so that will be done at the next meeting.

Mayor Lovett said the City Administration will make a TIF District presentation in May.

Mayor Lovett said regarding the proposed logging at Arrowhead, Public Works will schedule a tour after mud season for the public to attend.

Mayor Lovett asked Councilors to send an email to Ms. Russell indicating their interest in touring any City department. The only Saturday tour would be for facilities (i.e. water system).

Mr. Santagate asked to have a member of the Council join him at the May 3rd public hearing for the proposed fountain. Also, May 3rd will be unavailable for a budget meeting.

Mr. Koloski asked about reviewing the Urban Compact. Ms. Taylor said Ms. Merrill can provide a map of the Compact Zone.

Mr. Santagate said there had been some discussion about whose responsibility it is to pick up the litter along the roadways and he would like to get a map that shows where the City's and state's responsibilities are.

Mr. Koloski said that Jim Feleen had talked about the land swap in the park. Mr. Santagate said that will have to be a future consultation with legal counsel.

Mr. Koloski said the 100 Year Anniversary of Moody Park is coming up and he asked about annexing an abutting City-owned parcel into Moody Park. Mayor Lovett asked if it can be done at the first Council meeting in June.

Mr. Koloski asked about the status of credit card acceptance in Planning.

Mr. Temple would like to look at the potential park on High Street, behind the fire station. Ms. Taylor said we have not been able to find the owner of that parcel. She's not sure there is money in the budget to do the deed research. She asked Mr. Temple to give the City Manager the map and lot number.

Mr. Temple talked about the lead water pipe issues in Flint, Michigan. Mr. Santagate said that was talked about at Staff Meeting and homeowners' pipes are not on the City's list to maintain. That will be part of the water/sewer update at the next meeting.

Mr. Temple talked about three on-shelf projects that are in the CIP and that when discussions begin, we need to make sure the engineering costs are updated. The projects are Summer Street

(neighborhood development), Schmitt Street and Charlestown Road/Buena Vista all need to be updated.

Ms. Towle asked about the 3-5 cars that park in the park next to the old Esersky's and asked why those cars are allowed to park there. Ms. Taylor will work with Planning on that.

CONSULTATION WITH LEGAL COUNSEL

None

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

None

ADJOURNMENT

At 8:53 p.m., a motion was made by Mr. Damren and seconded by Mr. Raymond to adjourn.

Voice vote: motion carried 8-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dorée M. Russell
Clerk to the Council