

Council Meeting

January 8, 2020

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The Claremont City Council held a meeting on Wednesday, January 8, 2020, 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 Andrew O’Hearne
At-Large Councilor Abigail Kier
At-Large Councilor Erica Sweetser
Assistant Mayor Allen Damren
Mayor Charlene Lovett
At-Large Councilor Debora Matteau
At-Large Councilor Nicholas Koloski
Ward II Councilor James Contois
Ward III Councilor Jonathan Stone

Also present:

Edward Morris, City Manager

AGENDA CHANGES

Move item 10F Discussion of Citizen Proposed Task Force on Climate to January 22nd meeting as the presenter had a scheduling conflict.

A motion was made by Mr. Stone and seconded by Mr. O’Hearne to suspend Council Rules.

Roll call vote:

O’Hearne - yes

Kier - yes

Sweetser - yes

Damren - yes

Matteau - yes

Koloski - yes

Contois - yes

Stone - yes

Lovett - yes

Motion carried 9-0.

A motion was made by Mr. Stone and seconded by Mr. O’Hearne to go into a Non-Public Session for Real Estate RSA 91-A:3 I(d) after Elderly Exemptions and Veterans Credit.

Voice vote: motion carried 9-0.

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY

A motion was made by Mr. Damren and seconded by Mr. O’Hearne to accept the minutes of the December 11, 2019, City Council meeting.

Mayor Lovett said she wanted to add on page 14 Goal Setting, it was both the City Manager and she that wanted input from outgoing Councilors.

Voice vote: motion carried 6-0, with 3 abstain: Ms. Matteau, Mr. Contois and Ms. Sweetser.

MAYOR’S NOTES

- Congratulations to Stevens High School students for outperforming average students on the ACTs
- Thanks to all for making Claremont’s First Night a success. Over 500 people participated at the Claremont Savings Bank Community Center.
- Thank you to those in the Fire Department who participated in rescuing a person whose car went into the Sugar River
- NH State Legislature 2020 session has started
- At the January 22 meeting, the Council will recognize several retirees
- Councilors have been approached to recognize volunteers who have served Claremont for a significant period of time
- Mr. Damren knows one who has served 50 years and another 35 years
- Mr. Koloski would like to acknowledge 10 years as a starting point
- Mayor Lovett asked the public to let Councilors know of volunteers they would like to have recognized

CITY MANAGER’S REPORT

- **Residency Requirement** – Has accepted an offer on his Weathersfield home and is in the process of closing on a home in Claremont.
- **HR Manager**- Conditional offer has been made for the HR Manager position. Start date is scheduled for January 27. He acknowledged the teamwork that it has taken to keep the HR office moving forward, and he gave a special thanks to Amanda Benoit for all the hard work she has done in the HR office with only two weeks training before Bette left.
- **Hydropower Turbine Project**- The water flow between the Whitewater and Dole Reservoirs has increased to 1.6 million gallons a day, which will make it possible to place

a hydroelectric turbine in the waterline between those two reservoirs, which would offset the power cost of the water plant.

- **DPW Retirements** – On January 31st, Daniel Benware (20 years) and Daniel Miller (22 years) will retire from Public Works.
- Also, Peter Fennessy (28 years) will retire from City Hall.
- Congratulations to Alan Benware for achieving Road Scholar 1; Ted Wadleigh for achieving Road Scholar 2; and Bill Willette for achieving Road Scholar 2

Mr. O’Hearne asked for an update on the Draper Corner lights. Mr. Morris said it is a computer program issue and we are waiting for the part to come back.

APPOINTMENT TO BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

Fiske Free Library Board of Trustees

A motion was made by Ms. Kier and seconded by Ms. Matteau to appoint Cindi Cleveland to seat 2 of the Fiske Free Library Board of Trustees.

Voice vote: motion carried 9-0.

A motion was made by Mr. O’Hearne and seconded by Ms. Kier to appoint Spencer Batchelder to seat 4 of the Fiske Free Library Board of Trustees.

Voice vote: motion carried 9-0.

Claremont Energy Advisory Committee

A motion was made by Ms. Matteau and seconded by Mr. Damren to re-appoint David Lucier to seat 2 of the Claremont Energy Advisory Committee.

Voice vote: motion carried 9-0.

Policy Committee

There was discussion about who should sit on the Policy Committee including a request to have at least one alternate, even if it’s a citizen alternate. Mayor Lovett will bring it up at the January 22nd Council meeting. There was a suggestion that Councilors not sit on both the Policy and the Finance Committees.

Mr. Stone nominated Ms. Sweetser to the Policy Committee, seconded by Mr. O’Hearne.

Voice vote: carried 7-2 with Ms. Kier and Ms. Matteau voting no. Ms. Sweetser accepted.

Mr. Koloski nominated Ms. Kier, seconded by Ms. Matteau. Ms. Kier accepted.

Voice vote: carried 9-0.

Mr. Damren nominated Mr. Stone, seconded by Mr. O’Hearne. Mr. Stone accepted.
Voice vote: carried 9-0.

There was a discussion about other Councilors attending the Policy Committee meetings and that Councilors not on the Committee should not engage in the discussions.

There was a discussion about a majority of the Councilors attending the Policy Committee meeting and creating a non-warned meeting of the Council. This was discussed at a meeting this summer with the City Attorney. Mr. Morris will look for those minutes.

Mayor Lovett said the next meeting of the Policy Committee will be January 16, 6:00 p.m., at the Visitors Center.

A motion was made by Ms. Matteau and seconded by Mr. Damren to appoint Lloyd Smrkovski to seat 4 of the Policy Committee

Voice vote: motion carried 9-0.

Finance Committee

There was a brief discussion about the purpose of the Finance Committee.

A motion was made by Mr. O’Hearne to table this until the next meeting and then former members can inform new members what it consists of. There was no second.

Ms. Kier nominated Mr. Damren to the Finance Committee, seconded by Ms. Matteau.
Voice vote: carried 9-0. Mr. Damren accepted hesitantly.

Mr. Damren nominated Ms. Matteau, seconded by Ms. Kier.
Voice vote: carried 9-0. Ms. Matteau accepted.

Ms. Matteau nominated Mayor Lovett, seconded by Ms. Kier.
Voice vote: carried 9-0. Mayor Lovett accepted.

Mr. Morris said there is still a seat available on the Board of Assessors, and there are abatements coming in.

Mr. Koloski said he would like to continue to serve as an Alternate on the Claremont Planning Board.

Ms. Matteau nominated Mr. Koloski, seconded by Ms. Kier.
Voice vote: carried 9-0. Mr. Koloski accepted.

Mr. Stone nominated Mr. Damren to Seat 9: City Councilor seat on the Claremont Planning Board, Ms. Matteau seconded.

Voice vote: motion carried 9-0. Mr. Damren accepted.

Ms. Matteau nominated Ms. Sweetser to seat 2: City Council Representative seat on the Historic District Commission, seconded by Mr. Damren.

Voice vote: carried 9-0. Ms. Sweetser accepted.

Mr. Koloski nominated Mr. Contois to seat 7: City Council Representative seat on the Conservation Commission, seconded by Ms. Kier.

Voice vote: carried 9-0. Mr. Contois accepted.

Ms. Matteau asked if the City Manager would double check to see if there is a conflict with Councilors (i.e. Jim Contois) continuing to sit on the Planning Board as an Alternate member. He joined the Planning Board before being elected to Council. The question is, can he sit as a resident, even though he is a Councilor?

CITIZEN'S FORUM

Patrick Adrian, Ward 1, said regarding the Policy Committee, that its purpose is to review City policies that are out-of-date/need updating. He is concerned about Councilors crossing the line into creating policy. From what he has seen, the Committee is not effective. He thinks the process would be done faster if it was done by the City Manager, because he is full time. Mr. Adrian has seen policies being done faster by full-time employees at the school and in other communities. He gave the example of the holiday display policy and the food truck policy taking a long time to process. He said to trust the employees and City Manager to do the work.

OLD BUSINESS

Elderly Exemptions and Veterans Credit

A motion was made by Mr. Damren and seconded by Ms. Kier to take the issue of Elderly Exemptions and Veterans Credit off the table.

Roll call vote:

O'Hearne - yes

Kier - yes

Sweetser - yes

Damren - yes

Matteau - yes

Koloski - yes

Contois - yes

Stone - yes

Lovett - yes

Motion carried 9-0.

Mayor Lovett said applicants need to apply no later than April 1st. There's not enough time to do a survey as had previously been suggested.

Mr. Koloski wants to move the Veterans tax credit to \$500, which is a 23-cent increase on the tax rate. He believes that can be found in the budget. Councilors agreed that the Veterans Credit had previously been approved to be increased to \$500 and now they needed to discuss the Elderly Exemptions.

Ms. Kier asked if there is an algorithm that can be used instead of just stagnant numbers. She believes this should go to the Finance Committee.

A motion was made by Mr. Damren and seconded by Ms. Kier to refer this to the Finance Committee for resolution at their next meeting.

Mr. Morris said the Council, at its October 23, 2019, meeting had voted to accept Interim Assessor Steve Hamilton's recommendations for the Elderly Exemptions, with the recommendation for this to go to the Policy and Finance Committees.

Mr. Morris said Council had also made a motion to accept Mr. Hamilton's recommendations for the Disabled Exemption, and the Veterans Credit was moved to \$500. He assured that Staff will be available to help develop these policies.

Mayor Lovett opened the discussion to the public.

Andy Austin, Ward 3, said he did some research into the limits allowed in Lebanon, Concord, and Manchester and they were higher than what Claremont is proposing. He said Claremont's figures are not realistic. People are not going to be able to maintain their homes without higher limits. He would like to know how many people are using the Elderly Exemption and how many more could use it if the limits were increased.

Steve Hamilton, Interim Assessor, said there are 50 households in the highest bracket. Income limits vary between communities. The median income limit in 2018 for the entire state is single \$25,000, married \$35,000. There is a wide variety of need and a wide variety of properties that these exemptions get applied against. In Claremont, the median assessed value of a single-family homes is a little less than \$120,000, but the median assessed value of a manufactured housing unit is closer to \$50,000. There is a program available for elderly who qualify by age; they can apply to the City to have their taxes deferred at 5% interest rate. The City will defer up to 85% interest in the home. He's hoping to have a single campaign to announce the amounts for all exemptions and credits.

Mr. Morris said you have to remember this is a tax shift. There is a increase this year, and he thinks it is a good idea to work on this.

There was a brief discussion about a survey and Mr. Morris asked the Council if he could work with Mr. Koloski on it.

Mayor Lovett said the Finance Committee will also discuss this.

Roll call vote:

O’Hearne - yes

Kier - yes

Sweetser - yes

Damren - yes

Matteau - yes

Koloski - yes

Contois - yes

Stone - yes

Lovett - yes

Motion carried 9-0.

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

A motion was made by Mr. Stone and seconded by Mr. O’Hearne to go into Non-Public Session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3 I(d) Real Estate and to invite Mr. Morris, Planning and Development Director Nancy Merrill, and Ms. Russell into the session.

Roll call vote:

O’Hearne - yes

Kier - yes

Sweetser - yes

Damren - yes

Matteau - yes

Koloski - yes

Contois - yes

Stone - yes

Lovett - yes

Motion carried 9-0.

Entered Non-Public session at 7:59 p.m.

At 8:26 p.m. a motion was made by Mr. Damren and seconded by Ms. Matteau to exit the Non-Public Session.

Roll call vote:

O’Hearne - yes

Kier - yes

Sweetser - yes

Damren - yes

Matteau - yes
Koloski - yes
Contois - yes
Stone - yes
Lovett - yes
Motion carried 9-0.

Public session reconvened at 8:27 p.m.

A motion was made by Mr. Damren and seconded by Mr. Stone to seal the minutes because it is determined that divulgence of this information likely would affect adversely the reputation of any person other than a member of this board; such minutes to remain sealed unless and until the purpose of which the information discussed has been requested to be sealed no longer applies.

Roll call vote:
O’Hearne - yes
Kier - yes
Sweetser - yes
Damren - yes
Matteau - yes
Koloski - yes
Contois - yes
Stone - yes
Lovett - yes
Motion carried 9-0.

NEW BUSINESS

CDBG Planning Study Grant Application

NOTE: Informational packets were available.

Mayor Lovett read from the script. Community Development Block Grant funds are available to municipalities through the NH Community Development Finance Authority. Up to \$500,000 annually is available on a competitive basis for public facility projects, up to \$500,000 for housing projects, up to \$500,000 for economic development projects and up to \$500,000 for emergency activities. All projects must directly benefit low and moderate income persons. Up to \$25,000 per study is available for Planning Grants.

This is a proposed Community Development Block Grant planning study application to the Community Development Finance Authority for up to \$25,000. The funds will be used to retain an engineer to assess the current state of the water and sewer systems and develop a preliminary plan and cost estimate to replace/upgrade the systems as needed at Sugar River Cooperative, a 30

unit manufactured housing park located, located at Upham Place in Claremont. The majority of the Park's households/residents are of low and moderate income.

This project conforms with Claremont's Housing and Community Development Plan's Goal of: Encourage the rehabilitation and improvement of existing manufactured housing parks, including improvements to the parks' infrastructure. (Long & Short Term Goal).

Ms. Merrill said the Sugar River Cooperative is having issues with water pipes and sewer.

The City proposes to submit an application for funding titled Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Planning Study Grant for up to \$25,000 from its application authority for 2020 to the NH Community Development Finance Authority for an assessment of the water and sewer systems, plans, and cost estimates to replace/upgrade the systems as needed at Sugar River Cooperative, a 30 unit manufactured housing park located at Upham Place in Claremont, NH.

- 1) Application for Grant – Public Hearing

Mayor Lovett opened the public hearing and asked if anyone wished to make any comments. No one did. She closed the public hearing.

A motion was made by Ms. Kier and seconded by Ms. Matteau to approve the submittal of the Sugar River Cooperative Infrastructure CDBG Planning Study Project application and votes to authorize the City Manager to sign and submit the application, and upon approval of the CDBG application, authorize the City Manager to execute any documents which may be necessary to effectuate the CDBG contract and any amendments thereto.

Voice vote: motion carried 9-0.

- 2) Review and Adopt or Re-adopt City's Residential Anti-Displacement and Relocation Assistance Plan – Public Hearing

Mayor Lovett read from the script: Although this project does not involve any displacement or relocation of persons (or businesses), if the City were to undertake a CDBG project which involved displacement or relocation they would follow this plan. The plan outlines the measures they would take to find comparable, suitable housing for persons (or businesses) displaced or relocated.

Mayor Lovett opened the public hearing and asked if anyone wished to make any comments. No one did. She closed the public hearing.

A motion was made by Mr. Damren and seconded by Ms. Kier to adopt the City's Residential Anti-Displacement and Relocation Assistance Plan for the Sugar River Cooperative Infrastructure CDBG Planning Study Project.

Voice vote: motion carried 9-0.

CDBG Emergency or Housing Grant Application

NOTE: Informational packets were available.

Mayor Lovett read from the script. This is a proposed application to the Community Development Finance Authority for up to \$500,000 in Community Development Block Grant Housing or Emergency funds for improvements, including wall shoring to 147 Main Street. The city will retain up to \$25,000 for administration costs and subgrant the remainder to New England Family Housing, or a related entity to be determined, to bring 7 units of low and moderate income housing back onto the market.

This project conforms with Claremont's Housing and Community Development Plan's Goal of: Encourage an increase in the supply of good quality housing for households at all income levels. Recognize the need for clean, decent and affordable housing for households of all ages. Improve existing housing stock. (Long & Short Term Goal).

Ms. Merrill said this is an emergency application for shoring 147 Main Street which abuts 139 Main Street; the City is under RSA 155-B action to demolish 139 Main. She introduced Kevin LaCasse, New England Family Housing.

Mr. LaCasse gave a brief history of the purchase and renovations to his building, saying that in the meantime, the owner next door has allowed his building to deteriorate. An engineer was hired to look at the shoring. Mr. LaCasse has a mortgage on the building; the renovations will cost more than \$300,000; there's no way to finance the shoring.

There was discussion about the purchase price of the building and the rents. Mr. LaCasse said cash flow is about \$10,000 a year. The apartments are not always 100% occupied; sometimes tenants trash the apartments and they have to be renovated.

Ms. Kier asked whether the CDBG action nullifies the previous agreement of the City providing \$6,000 toward shoring of the wall.

When asked what the plan is for the property if he is not successful in getting the grant, Mr. LaCasse said there is no Plan B.

Mr. Koloski asked about the timeline for the notification of the emergency grant being awarded. Ms. Merrill said it will be at the next board meeting and, if approved, will go to Governor and Executive Council in March. Ms. Merrill anticipated the NEPA study would be done while the grant application is going through the process.

Ms. Merrill said Mr. LaCasse anticipates doing the environmental study work while waiting to hear about the grant and then they can start work right away. Mr. LaCasse said he will pay for the environmental study to keep the ball rolling.

The City proposes to submit an application for funding titled Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Emergency or Housing Grant for up to \$500,000 from its application authority for 2020 to the NH Community Development Finance Authority for improvements at 147 Main Street. The city to retain up to \$25,000 for administration costs and subgrant the remainder to New England Family Housing, or a related entity to be determined, to bring 7 units of low-and moderate- income housing back onto the market.

1) Application for Grant – Public Hearing

Mayor Lovett opened the public hearing and asked if anyone wished to make any comments. No one did. She closed the public hearing.

Mr. Morris said the City is involved because the City has liability knowing that it is a dangerous building.

A motion was made by Ms. Kier and seconded by Mr. Damren to approve the submittal of the 147 Main Street Housing or Emergency Rehabilitation CDBG Project application and votes to authorize the City Manager to sign and submit the application, and upon approval of the CDBG application, authorize the City Manager to execute any documents which may be necessary to effectuate the CDBG contract and any amendments thereto.

Voice vote: motion carried 5-4 with Mr. O’Hearne, Ms. Sweetser, Mr. Contois, and Mr. Stone voting no.

2) Review and Adopt or Re-adopt City’s Residential Anti-Displacement and Relocation Assistance Plan – Public Hearing

Mayor Lovett read from the script: Although this project does not involve any displacement or relocation of persons (or businesses), if the City were to undertake a CDBG project which involved displacement or relocation they would follow this plan. The plan outlines the measures they would take to find comparable, suitable housing for persons (or businesses) displaced or relocated.

Mayor Lovett opened the public hearing and asked if anyone wished to make any comments. No one did. She closed the public hearing.

A motion was made by Mr. Damren and seconded by Ms. Kier to adopt the City’s Residential Anti-Displacement and Relocation Assistance Plan for the 147 Main Street Housing Rehabilitation CDBG Project.

Voice vote: motion carried 7-2 with Messrs. O’Hearne and Stone voting no.

CDBG Feasibility Study – Public Hearing

Update on the results of the feasibility study, as part of a 2019 Planning Study Grant from the NH Community Development Finance Authority, to assess the condition and suitability for long

term use of the building located at 169 Main Street, on behalf of the Claremont Learning Partnership.

Tom Krebs, Projects Manager, said the intent is to create a teen housing shelter. The study is to assess the building to see what work needs to be done to finish that portion of the building that will be used as a shelter and also other spaces in the building that are needed to bring the building up to code in order to lease other spaces in that building. Warrenstreet Architects did the feasibility study. The estimated cost to finish the teen shelter is about \$600,000. They also did an assessment to acquire the building and that is about \$311,000. The plan is to submit a CDBG housing grant to make the improvements next summer.

Mr. Stone asked if there are any DES (Department of Environmental Services) issues with the building. Ms. Merrill said there is an activity use restriction on the parking lot side (Elm Street side), but it is paved over.

Mayor Lovett read the script.

Mayor Lovett opened the public hearing and asked if anyone wished to make any comments. No one did. She closed the public hearing.

CDBG mid-Grant Hearing – Public Hearing

Mid-grant update to hear public comment on the Farwell Block Dental Center Expansion Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Housing and Public Facilities project. The project involves rehabilitation and construction of an elevator and stair tower to provide access for expansion of the Sullivan County Oral Health Center/Community Dental Center, to the third floor of the Farwell Block.

Mr. Krebs said this is a \$500,000 grant.

At 9:07 p.m. Mr. O’Hearne left Council Chambers.

Mr. Krebs reviewed the timeline. Demolition started in July. Demolition on the third floor is complete. They are working on the elevator tower now.

At 9:09 p.m., Mr. O’Hearne returned to the Council table.

Mr. Krebs said the elevator and stair tower are expected to be done in early March. The third floor build out will be ongoing until April or May.

Mayor Lovett read the script.

Mayor Lovett opened the public hearing and asked if anyone wished to make any comments. No one did. She closed the public hearing.

Discussion of Citizen Proposed Task Force on Climate

Moved to the January 22, 2020, meeting.

Discussion of Citizen Questions Regarding Refugees

Mayor Lovett reviewed the President's Executive Order requiring Governors and Mayors to give consent in order to accept refugees as outlined in her email to the Council. As an update to that, the neighboring communities of Lebanon and Hanover have taken additional action and Lebanon has adopted a resolution consenting to receiving refugees. This is symbolic in nature, as confirmed by the State Refugee Coordinator, as neither municipality has a Resettlement Agency. However, once resettled, refugees are free to move to other municipalities. All of this has spurred questions from the public about the process and what it would take to have a resettlement agency in Claremont. Mayor Lovett forwarded that question to the State Refugee Coordinator and will relay the response upon receipt.

Rebecca McKenzie, Ward 2, thanked the Council for looking at this for Claremont. That would be helpful in our workforce and would provide a safe refuge for people who are in desperate need.

Transfer of Funds for Non-Union Pay & Classification Study – Public Hearing

Mr. Morris sent the following information to the Councilors:

Compensation Study

The City has received two RFQ proposals back for the Merit Plan compensation study, one from Paypoint HR and one from MRI. After three staff members independently scored the qualifications and examples of previous work from each of these consulting firms, it was decided that Paypoint HR was the most qualified firm for the type of study we are looking for. As per the Purchasing Policy, after determining the most qualified firm, the City opened the sealed price proposal. The cost for the Merit Plan study will be \$36,500. I have taken the liberty to talk with the consultant and each of our four unions about a City wide compensation study, instead of just a Merit Plan Study. The Consultants gave me a price of \$8,000 to add all the union employees to this study, for a total cost of \$44,500. Each of the four Unions are in support of the City completing a compensation study including the positions represented by their members. I feel it will be a better use of City funds to complete a City wide study for \$44,500 compared to only completing half the City at a cost of \$36,500.

Mr. Morris said the City put out an RFQ (Request for Qualifications) for the study and Paypoint HR out of Maryland was chosen. There is \$19,000 available from Workers Comp, and with

Council approval, money can be moved to pay for this. He asked the Council for its support for reviewing all City positions.

Mr. Morris talked about the cost of employee turnover and gave as examples the costs of searches for a new City Manager and HR Manager.

Mr. Morris said that Paypoint HR will help with an implementation plan.

Mr. Koloski asked, since there were only two responses, if we would get more bids if the RFQ included all employees. Mr. Morris didn't think so.

After some discussion, there was consensus of the Council for Mr. Morris to go forward with this.

Mr. Morris said moving the money will be on the next agenda.

City Manager Goals

City Manager Goals

At the December 11, 2019 City Council meeting the Council started discussing City Manager goals for 2020. Near the end of the session Councilor Elect Contois mentioned the SMART goal concept.

Specific – state what you will do with action words

Measurable – provide a way to evaluate success

Attainable – Possible to accomplish (may need to be broken into smaller segment).

Relevant – within your functional ability and will make organization better

Time Bound – specific but realistic timeframe

I had planned on discussing this concept as well as making sure the Council works with City Staff to create action oriented and measurable goals. I have taken the liberty to document these goals and added some **strategic priorities** to help the conversation as we create measurable action items:

- Reducing blight by focusing on dilapidated properties and absentee landlords.
- Continue good Council communications and increase public communications by:
 - Completing new user friendly website.
 - **Creating and implementing a City social media program.**
 - **Creating a** Citizens Academy.
 - Creating a plan to transition to a digital records management system.
 - **Increasing transparency by:**
 - **Posting bid documents to the website.**
 - Work with Department Heads and Council to create:

- Strategic goals using the City's Master Plan, CIP, and Council Direction.
- Meaningful performance measures for each department.
 - Start the transition to a project based budgeting system.
- Continue fostering relationships with employees, council, businesses, and citizens.
- Analyze and properly structure staff:
 - Complete compensation study including an implementation plan.
 - Fill Assessing position, or complete a long term plan for the Assessing Department.
 - Assess all City Departments and work with Council to restructure where necessary.
- Create a long-term infrastructure replacement and maintenance program.

Ed Morris

Mr. Morris said the red writing is what he thought was important for the Council to see and that it is really important to have the action items, SMART. He would like Council to put together a 3-5 year strategic plan. The Master Plan is a good broad guide. He would like to get Council feedback.

Mr. Morris said Primex offers Strategic Planning classes. The City has been invited to have 3-7 people attend a more intense session on Wednesday, February 5, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., in Concord. He would like 2-3 Councilors to go and the rest would be department heads. Mayor Lovett, Ms. Kier and Ms. Sweetser volunteered to go. Ms. Matteau and Mr. Contois will be alternates.

Regarding the 3-5 year strategic plan, Mr. Morris said Councilors should revisit it annually.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mayor Lovett said the end of year Policy Committee report was in the Council packet.

Mr. Morris said he has charged the department heads with putting out annual reports for the next Council packet.

Mayor Lovett said the Policy Committee will meet January 16th.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS AND DIRECTIVES

Mr. Koloski proposed a change to Council Rules. He presented his written proposal to the Council. He read his proposal: "Upon placement of an item on the Council agenda, a notation must be added to each item to indicate who requested such item for background. Examples: City Manager, Councilor _____, Majority Council, Department Head, Mayor, Department." Mayor Lovett asked why Mr. Koloski was making this proposal. He said that sometimes people ask questions and he would like to know where to direct them and it would be nice to see whose items are making it to agenda. This will go on the January 22nd agenda.

Mr. Stone said in December that he suggested the City Clerk's office and the Assessing office should be their own departments. Mr. Morris said the Assessing office is on the next agenda and research is being done for the Clerk.

Mr. Koloski asked what credit cards can be used in each of the departments.

There was a discussion about a letter of support for the Sweetwater Hydroelectric Grant Proposal that Mayor Lovett had drafted and was waiting in Council Chambers for Councilors to sign. The discussion centered around the process.

A motion was made by Ms. Matteau and seconded by Ms. Kier to suspend Council Rules.

Roll call vote:

O'Hearne - no

Kier - yes

Sweetser - yes

Damren - yes

Matteau - yes

Koloski - yes

Contois - abstain

Stone - no

Lovett - yes

Motion carried 6-2, 1 abstain.

A motion was made by Ms. Kier and seconded by Mr. Damren to draft a letter of support for Sweetwater Hydroelectric's grant proposal.

Voice vote: motion carried 8-1 with Mr. O'Hearne voting no.

Process for Handling Requests for letters of Support by the Council.

Mayor Lovett referred to December 11 Council minutes where City Administration working with Policy Committee to update sidewalk appendix in preparation for the spring. Policy Committee should start working on that in conjunction with City Administration to be brought back to Council for first and second reading before spring arrives.

Mayor Lovett said at the last Council meeting, Councilors said they wanted to review the effectiveness of the \$45 fee for not having water meters replaced after the January quarterly water billing. Mr. Morris said the letter has not gone out, yet. He may bring it back to Council before sending it out; there may be new numbers then.

Because we are now in the legislative session, Mayor Lovett thinks it would be a good idea to have an ongoing agenda item, Legislative Updates, in order for the Council to keep current.

Mayor Lovett said the Purchasing Policy needs to be updated and that at some time it should be placed on the docket for the Policy Committee.

Mr. O’Hearne would like a discussion about establishing ad hoc committees of the Council to assess the budget. Mayor Lovett said that can be discussed in February.

CONSULTATION WITH LEGAL COUNSEL

None

ADJOURNMENT

At 10:12 p.m., a motion was made by Mr. Damren and seconded by Ms. Kier to adjourn.

Voice vote: motion carried 9-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dorée M. Russell
Clerk to the Council