

CITY COUNCIL E-MAILS

ADDENDUM (2)

Received: June 15, 2020 (after 2 p.m. – June 19, 2020 (9:00 a.m.))

June 15, 2020 Council Meeting - Continued June 22, 2020

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by James Eiffe ([j\\_eiffe@yahoo.com](mailto:j_eiffe@yahoo.com)) on Monday, June 15, 2020 at 14:14:31

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address: 40 SUNSET RD

comments: Dear City Council members,

Regarding the budget, I am advocating for the funds related to education be protected. Our kids are the future and with the current environment we need better training for our teachers on how to handle remote learning. We also need more one on one opportunities for our students in the current learning environment. Protect our educators and help them succeed.

If you are going to save some money, please take it from the police force. We have too many officers and too much military style equipment. Drones, really? What a waste. Cut the police budget if you are going to cut anywhere.

includeInRecords: on

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Karen Cooksey ([Kcooksey80@gmail.com](mailto:Kcooksey80@gmail.com)) on Monday, June 15, 2020 at 14:30:00

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address: 135 Union Street

comments: I can honestly say that the majority of our current council is a disappointment.

Aside from your response to restaurants and their ability to reopen (absolutely disgusting!), you're now attacking our school system.

Ms Kennedy, resilience is NOT a term that is applicable when you discuss defunding educational programs or the education system as a whole. This term should be reserved for times when they may have colds or sprain an ankle. NOT decisions that affect their futures!!

I am very concerned for our community and its future with the majority of this group to date. Election Day can not come soon enough.

includeInRecords: on

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Anne Rugg ([arugg362@gmail.com](mailto:arugg362@gmail.com)) on Monday, June 15, 2020 at 15:12:20

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address: 362 Goodwin rd.

comments: Dear Portsmouth City Council,

I strongly urge you to follow the recommendations of City Staff and the Traffic and Safety Committee regarding the bicycle lane on Middle St. Please put back the bollards. Please don't dump vulnerable users into the stream of traffic.

Thank you,  
Anne Rugg

includeInRecords: on

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Aubrey Gewehr ([agewehr@gmail.com](mailto:agewehr@gmail.com)) on Monday, June 15, 2020 at 16:32:29

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address: 255 Cass St

comments: Dear Mayor Becksted and members of the City Council,

I am writing to request that you all completely fund the Portsmouth School Department's budget. While as the father of a graduating senior from Portsmouth High School (who has attended Portsmouth's excellent schools since Kindergarten) I no longer have a direct benefit from fully funding the schools, as a citizen and taxpayer in Portsmouth I strongly support retaining excellence in schools for all students. My son benefited greatly from what some would call extra services in his tenure through the Portsmouth schools. Without the help of the special-ed services to help him negotiate the challenges of diagnosed ADHD he would not have made it to graduation I am sure. Without the unified arts he would not have developed his creative nature, and without the tech-ed program in welding he would not have had a reason to care about high school and keep him engaged. The hundreds of our city's children each come with their own unique set of skills, backgrounds, challenges, and learning styles. There needs to be multiple paths to gaining a K-12 education and strong support structures to guide them through. And having a well educated populous benefits all of us, not just those with children in the system. It is no accident that the most successful cities and states have strong education systems - it is critical for that success.

I realize that these are challenging and uncertain times for you as a council as you weigh budget priorities. Balancing a budget at the cost of our children's education is not an option to me though. Please support the Portsmouth School Department to continue the excellent work they do for us all.

Best regards,

Aubrey Gewehr

includeInRecords: on

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Colin Brewer ([colinbrewer02@gmail.com](mailto:colinbrewer02@gmail.com)) on Monday, June 15, 2020 at 16:40:55

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address: 520 Brackett rd

comments: Physical activity is a great way to reduce stress and depression. Schools cause a lot of stress inherently because of all the homework projects and standards a person must meet to goals. Taking away sports would increase the stress levels of making students perform worse making the school look bad. Unless an alternative is made to help reduce stress in schools and maintain the same level of learning I believe sports should stay.

includeInRecords: on

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Andrew Bagley ([acbagley@yahoo.com](mailto:acbagley@yahoo.com)) on Monday, June 15, 2020 at 22:20:19

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address: 40 Chauncey Street

comments: Watching the meeting now and understand the Mayors point that you may not get to evaluate all the plans before the city manager makes a decision. Regarding the Task Force and the plans for downtown. In fact, it could be none of you get elected again because of this.

However please put the city before yourself and understand the magnitude of the situation. We need to act quickly or we will lose all. Mistakes will be made, but let's make those mistakes acting boldly.

With bold action, you will have the full backing of the city of Portsmouth page.

Please give the city manager unprecedented power, even though you will deal with the complaints. It sucks but it is what it is.

Best regards, Andrew Bagley

includeInRecords: on

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Allison Elliott ([allisonelliott4@gmail.com](mailto:allisonelliott4@gmail.com)) on Monday, June 15, 2020 at 23:22:12

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address: 8 Debra Ln

comments: Dear Portsmouth City Council Members,

Hello, I hope this finds you well and safe.

My name is Allison Elliott and I'm a resident of Kittery, Maine, but spend quite a bit of time in Portsmouth and value the community. I'm writing in regards to the city budget, which I know was adopted tonight.

I'm urging you to please reconsider, and allow the community time to process new ideas during this time of political change and social action. Specifically, we as a community need to look at defunding the police and reinvesting the money into the community. It is time for change, it is time of looking at new modes of safety. I dissected the budget tonight, and my findings were disturbing. If you can get back to me, I'd love to send you the informational table I created, but I will list a few highlights below. These numbers reflect what percent social + community programs are receiving compared to the Portsmouth PD.

Public Library- 16.25%

Recreation- 7.65%

Senior Services-1.86%

Welfare- 3.96%

Outside Social Services- 1.63%

Prescott Park-2.79%

CDBG-0.96%

Economic Development-2.01%

I do plan to share this information publicly via community facebook pages and local media.

Again, I urge you to delay the adoption of the budget and allow the community time to discuss new ways forward.

Thank you for the time and I hope to hear back from you.

Respectfully,

Allison Elliott

603-339-2809

includeInRecords: on

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Mike Daigle ([mdaigle5@gmail.com](mailto:mdaigle5@gmail.com)) on Tuesday, June 16, 2020 at 07:30:47

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address: 77 State Street, unit 401, Portsmouth

comments: Hello. The lack of movement to help the restaurant owners in Portsmouth during the CV 19 outbreak has really been abysmal. Why hasn't the council closed a street, closed commercial alley to help Cava, put up jersey barriers to partially close a street and allow people to dine outside, creatively considered using a different Portsmouth owned facility to allow our local restaurants to survive? All u have to do is drive over the bridge into Kittery to see what can be done. It may be too late to do anything now, as restaurants are starting to open inside for dining, but it sure would have been nice if something out of the box was done for them. Creative solutions are needed during this unprecedented time.

includeInRecords: on

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Concerned citizen ([itsamepickleriick@gmail.com](mailto:itsamepickleriick@gmail.com)) on Tuesday, June 16, 2020 at 08:25:20

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address: Portsmouth NH

comments: The current covid case count in NH is in the thousands. Her information is incorrect and very concerning seeing her position as a health officer. Please the information is freely available online and in the cdc database along with allowing the council to be bullied and shamed into making actions based on the views and social media causes that weaponize the platform without allowing a non Biased viewpoint. You would be suprised how much hate the current council has from less then 30 people but those 30 people can sway the view of many by undermining your authority and not providing any pro-cons view. As a person with mobility disabilities closing down streets is terrifying as the though of not being able to have proper handicap accessible parking or sidewalks would cut off access to a large portion of downtown that i have come to fully enjoy and be damn sure a coalition will press a lawsuit if access to any part of the city is cut off or non accessible. You can do better then giving into social media threats.

includeInRecords: on

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Richard Smith ([Richard@cuzinrichard.com](mailto:Richard@cuzinrichard.com)) on Tuesday, June 16, 2020 at 12:31:40

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address: 93 HighStreet

comments: I would like to be involved in the planning and presenting music if The City signs off on this. I have been represent local regional snd national artists in our community for years . Iâ€™m a co founder of First Night Portsmouth, produced shows for Prescott Park, Portsmouth Jazz and Blues Festivals. I think this would be great for our Portsmouth restaurants, Portsmouth/ Local musicians, Portsmouth businesses : if the neighborhood surrounding the garage approves. . Also safety on the roof top. Approved by city . Tents to protect from sun & inclement weather . At the same time consideration and co operation of other Portsmouth events taking place for proposed dates do there is no conflicts for our constituents And event organizers.

includeInRecords: on

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Wilder Funk ([wilderdavidfunk@gmail.com](mailto:wilderdavidfunk@gmail.com)) on Tuesday, June 16, 2020 at 18:14:20

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address: 43 Boston Harbor Road, Dover Nh

comments: Hello Portsmouth City Councilors,  
I hope this finds you well and safe! My name is Wilder. I'm a resident of Dover, NH but I work in Portsmouth and spend most of my time there.  
I'm writing to hopefully speak with you about the upcoming city budget vote. As you know, there has been a nationwide call to defund the police. I know this idea can sound radical, but the meaning of it is more to reinvest these funds into community services. We are raised in the United States to understand that policing is the only way to maintain order and safety. However, defunding the police is actually an exciting opportunity to reimagine better and more equitable ways to keep everyone in our community safe and well cared for. This could look like creating a department for handling mental health, DV, or substance related situations. If we meaningfully reallocate police funds towards community programs that directly protect, educate and aid citizens, policing as we currently know it will become unnecessary and ultimately obsolete. Many of Portsmouth's community programs aren't even receiving 25% of what the Police Depart is. I want to see our communities transform and embrace change, and most importantly, invest in our success and learning rather than policing.

I appreciate you taking the time to read this. I hope we can talk soon as this is urgent- budgets are being voted on within the next coming weeks. I love Portsmouth and the tight-knit community I have found here. Defunding the police means that we can more equitably protect and uplift this community that we all cherish.

Respectfully,  
Wilder David Funk (he/him)  
(603) 531-9954  
includeInRecords: on

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Sam Borne ([sborne7830@gmail.com](mailto:sborne7830@gmail.com)) on Tuesday, June 16, 2020 at 20:52:39

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address: 431 Wallis Road

comments: I'm Sam, I'm a rising junior and I am speaking out against the cuts in the school budget. I just want to bring up the simple fact, that in plain and simple economic terms it is a lot cheaper to give someone an education then it is to imprison them. Point being if you are going invest in anything it should be the school. Yet the budget is being cut. The smartest economic decision to be made for the future of every single student in Portsmouth and the community as a whole is being cut. The benefits of a good education one that involves clubs and sports. Those are immeasurable, doing activities like those are things that can change a life. Yet those are being cut. Every single study out there proves a good education is the best thing you can have. And education isn't just about the classroom its about outside the classroom too. So to cut one part is to cut the value of an education. And education, well its a gift the best investment you can make and your cutting it. So I ask you for the good of all the students in SAU 52 don't cut the budget. Please don't in the long run, it isn't worth it. Protect education, protect our future.  
Thanks  
includeInRecords: on

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Barbara DeStefano ([barbarajdestefano@comcast.net](mailto:barbarajdestefano@comcast.net)) on Wednesday, June 17, 2020 at 14:42:30

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address: 90 Brewery Ln, #106

comments: I have lived at the Frank Jones Brewery for more than 2 1/2 years and frequently cross Islington to the White Heron and also from Plaza 800 to Gallagher Place. Both can be dangerous due to speeding cars. Please vote to accept the changes presented by the city. Just the Chinburg properties have 158 apartments with many residents walking in the area. Thanks!  
includeInRecords: on

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Janet L Polasky ([janet.polasky@gmail.com](mailto:janet.polasky@gmail.com)) on Wednesday, June 17, 2020 at 17:50:26

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address: 62 Mendum Ave

comments: Dear City Council,  
I am writing in support of the very thoughtful plans for safely opening the Outdoor Pool this summer. The pool plays such a significant part in a Portsmouth summer for so many of its residents. That is probably more true this year than ever in the past.  
Families with children rely on the pool for getting out of their houses and apartments, especially when it is hot. Many of us who used to bring our children and hang out at the shallow end, have watched our kids learn responsibility in their first job life guarding, and now count on the pool for exercise to get us

through injuries and sustain us as we age. I swim every day there isn't a thunder storm, biking over with neighbors in the late afternoon.

Portsmouth is so fortunate to have such an incredible facility. Where else would a city have a municipal pool right on the waterfront? Where else would such a diverse cross section of residents meet for recreation? Are you considering either requiring residency, given the need to restrict numbers?

As one of the founding members of SIPP, I would certainly be happy to contribute this summer toward the opening of the Outdoor Pool. Many of us donated annually to the indoor pool, and would be happy to contribute now to the Outdoor Pool. We swimmers are a dedicated lot. Funding could go towards subsidizing passes for families who would otherwise be excluded if you need to raise fees. They could also be used to purchase additional lane lines to allow more lap swimming at one person per lane.

Thank you for taking the time in the midst of discussions of the budget and of downtown businesses to consider opening the Outdoor Pool this summer. My neighbors and I are very appreciative. We will very happily comply with the regulations proposed to keep us safe.

Sincerely yours,  
Janet Polasky  
62 Mendum avenue  
Portsmouth  
includeInRecords: on

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Joe Mulqueen ([njmulqueen@msn.com](mailto:njmulqueen@msn.com)) on Wednesday, June 17, 2020 at 18:45:57

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address: 38 Fells Road

comments: I would like to thank the City Council for holding off on approving the budget until additional reductions can be examined. I want to especially thank Councilor Huda for her detailed examination of the budget and for showing where at least \$4 million can be saved. This level of analysis should be standard operating procedure and is especially necessary at this time.

The Federal Reserve is predicting an economic downturn for 2021 and we already see many cancellations and business closures. New Hampshire unemployment is at 14.5%, with 85,990 more people out of work than a year ago. UNH has a \$10 million current deficit and is projecting a \$30 million deficit for 2021. There are many reasons for the Council to be especially financially cautious now, particularly with the still uncertain COVID situation.

Because of the need to deal with COVID the Council has not yet had a chance to fully engage in the budget process. Holding off on approving the currently proposed budget allows time to implement some much needed revisions and sets the tone for the next budget cycle.

Again, thank you.  
includeInRecords: on

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**Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Marie and Tom Cowgill** ([mariecowgill@gmail.com](mailto:mariecowgill@gmail.com)) on Wednesday, June 17, 2020 at 19:02:44

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address: 88 Wibird Street, portsmouth

comments: Health Agent McNamara has a plan for safe opening. Pools are important for our community especially for those who don't have many recreational opportunities.

includeInRecords: on

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Amy-Mae Court ([amymaemassage@gmail.com](mailto:amymaemassage@gmail.com)) on Thursday, June 18, 2020 at 06:17:41

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address: 47 Taft Road

comments: I am writing in support of Councilor Lazenby's Racial Justice proposal. It is our responsibility as a community to acknowledge that racism is real, and to start real conversation about what we can do, community-wide, to become anti-racist. I am saddened and unfortunately not surprised by stories I have heard by black residents of the seacoast who experience racism daily. As a largely white community who may not have the experience to understand how real this issue is, it is even more important to educate the public. Councilor Lazenby's proposal is an amazing start down that road. We did a great thing with the African Burial Ground. Every time I walk through the memorial I am filled with emotion. We have a history here that is worth knowing about and coming to terms with. I am disappointed by Councilor Kennedy's obvious lack of understanding on this proposal. Saying yes to this proposal doesn't take deliberation, because we should all know by now that the injustices black and brown people experience in this country, in this city, are real, and if one is not clear about that, they are insulated in their white privilege. We need to say Black Lives Matter, clearly and with conviction, because the fact is, they haven't.

includeInRecords: on

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by David W. Mitchell ([dave@amaruq.com](mailto:dave@amaruq.com)) on Thursday, June 18, 2020 at 08:16:50

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address: 1179 Maplewood Avenue

comments: Folks,  
I object to the last minute introduction of further budget cuts, which as far as I can tell, have not been made public. This prevented anybody from commenting during the public comment period of the last meeting. Our DPW is awesome, and I fear for the downstream effects in this attempt to save an amount of money that will provide no real improvement for businesses or homeowners. Brian Porter's LTE in the Herald sums it up nicely. Please defeat these cuts, and in the future be more transparent - no last minute "secret" budget proposals.

regards,

Dave Mitchell

includeInRecords: on

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Gary Hatch ([garyhatch12@gmail.com](mailto:garyhatch12@gmail.com)) on Thursday, June 18, 2020 at 12:27:56

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address: 19 Ball St. - Portsmouth

comments: Dear Councilors, I am writing to express sincere appreciation and support for the current challenge to the proposed city budget. Petra Huda especially has done an exemplary job in trying to identify and eliminate waste or excesses in spending that in recent years have grown seemingly unchecked!!

In the twenty-three years we've owned our Portsmouth home, we have watched Portsmouth bow to extreme gentrification and commercial/condo development. We logically assumed that an exponentially expanded tax base would LOWER our overall rates, or at least keep them marginally stable. We all know such has NOT been the case and property taxes have continued their upward climb. I LOVE our city, but even to this casual observer, excesses in the form of "wants vs. needs" are visible everywhere!! Surely some things we can live without. I am convinced that the cuts suggested will cause negligible impact to actual services provided and the quality of life in Portsmouth.

I Voted for nearly every single councilor on the current board specifically in the hope you would enact change and bring some fiscal accountability back to our wonderful city. PLEASE KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK! Thank You

includeInRecords: on