

MINUTES
City Council Legislative Subcommittee
Monday, September 13, 2021 at 11:00 a.m.
Conference Room A
1 Junkins Ave.
Portsmouth, NH

- I. **Greeting:** Mayor Becksted. The meeting began at 11:19 a.m. Mayor Becksted, Councilor Kennedy and Councilor Trace attended in person. Councilor McEachern attended remotely. City Manager Karen Conard and Assistant City Attorney Jane Ferrini were present. Representative Cali-Pitts also attended the Meeting.

- II. **Approval of March 3, 2021 Minutes.** Councilor Kennedy moved and Councilor Trace seconded a motion to approve the March 3, 2021 Minutes. Roll call vote: Mayor Becksted, Councilor Kennedy and Councilor McEachern voted in favor, Council Trace abstained. Motion passed.

- III. **Discussion regarding working with our Legislative Delegation on future bills on legislative issues of interest. These issues include but are not limited to legislation on sound barriers, hotel occupancy fees and seeking other sources of revenue for municipalities.** The Mayor discussed three topics for legislation for introduction by the Mayors' Roundtable. The Mayor will be recommending to Mayors' Roundtable a \$3 daily hotel occupancy fee and legislation that would distribute 20% from fines for violations issued by the Police to municipalities with the remainder paid to the state. The third topic addressed was legislation regarding money raised through either tolls or vehicle registrations to fund Type II sound barriers. HB 1650 and SB 667 from last session were discussed by the Committee. Councilor Kennedy stated that Representative Somssich's bill did not get support from the North Country due to increased rates for increased mileage. She suggested Representative Somssich should reconsider that portion of the bill in order to garner support from the North Country.

The Committee members and Representative Cali Pitts discussed sound barriers generally. Councilor Kennedy suggested that bills for funding sound barriers be introduced in both the House and the Senate, along with advocating to fund these sound barriers for all affected neighborhoods in Portsmouth through citizen participation at hearings regarding the draft Ten Year Transportation Plan. Representative Cali-Pitts suggested legislative would be a challenging this session as the major focus of the legislature this session will be redistricting. Councilor Kennedy noted the there is a walk through for the Frank Jones neighborhood this evening to discuss sound barriers and noted the need

for updated studies from DOT on all affected neighborhoods. She asked that the draft schedule of meetings for the Ten Year Transportation Plan be distributed at tonight's meeting and the City Manager confirmed she would distribute copies. Mayor Becksted noted that there are failing sound barriers that the state erected in that neighborhood and that the state should be responsible for repairing them.

The Committee discussed having a Ten Year Transportation Plan meeting in Portsmouth. The City Manager stated that she had discussed this with Executive Councilor Stevens and was advised that due to COVID-19, these meetings will likely become remote meetings. The Committee discussed offering the City of Portsmouth to host a meeting given our ability to host large remote meetings. The City Manager said she would relay this to Executive Councilor Stevens. Councilor Trace added that if work is being done on the breakdown lane, the sound barrier could be changed from a Type II to a Type I and further noted the huge amount of money the Hampton tolls generate and the need for the funding and erection of these sound barriers to be resolved once and for all.

Mayor Becksted suggested scheduling a meeting for the Committee during the first week in October to discuss bills before the Senate deadline. Councilor McEachern agreed with supporting hotel occupancy, but wanted to ensure the money supported tourism projects. The Committee discussed that the school was not mentioned in the last evaluation on the sound barriers. Councilor Kennedy suggested that if the school is in the study, it could potentially move the project up the list. Councilor McEachern wanted to review the criteria of Type I and Type II sound barriers, and to have, if possible, the goal of categorizing the sound barriers as Type I due to better availability of funding.

- IV. **Update on Coalition Communities 2.0.** Assistant Attorney Ferrini reported that the Coalition Communities 2.0 had a lobbyist who was tracking retained bills and LSR's regarding school funding and that the website was going to go live soon.
- V. **Next meeting.** The Committee agreed to schedule the next meeting for the first week in October.
- VI. **Adjournment.** A unanimous motion to adjourn was passed at 11:58 a.m.