

CITY COUNCIL MEETING

MUNICIPAL COMPLEX
DATE: MONDAY, JANUARY 9, 2006

PORTSMOUTH, NH
TIME: 7:00PM

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Marchand called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Mayor Marchand, Assistant Mayor Ferrini, Councilors Grasso, Dwyer, Raynolds, Pantelakos, Whitehouse, Smith and Hynes

III. INVOCATION

Father Kelley of Immaculate Conception Church conducted the invocation. Members of the Portsmouth Fire and Police Departments Honor Guard held a procession and posted the colors.

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Police and Fire Honor Guards led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. Wendell Purrington sang the Star Spangled Banner.

OATH OF OFFICE

City Clerk Barnaby administered the Oath of Office to the following officials who were elected at the November 8, 2005 Municipal Election.

A. FIRE COMMISSION:

Commissioner Richard Gamester and Commissioner Paul Wentworth

B. POLICE COMMISSION:

Commissioner Gerald Howe and Commissioner John Russo

C. SCHOOL BOARD:

Sheri Garrity, Kent LaPage, Carson Smith (was unable to attend the ceremony);
Brendan Ristaino and Mitchell Shuldman

D. CITY COUNCIL:

Councilors Joanne M. Grasso, M. Christine Dwyer, Edward R. Raynolds, Laura C. Pantelakos, Harold Whitehouse, Jr., Kenneth E. Smith and John W. Hynes

1. Assistant Mayor Thomas Ferrini

2. Mayor Steve Marchand

V. ADDRESS BY MAYOR STEVE MARCHAND

Thank you very much, and it's great to see all of you here this evening. Assistant Mayor Ferrini, City Councilors, members of our School, Fire, and Police Commissions and Boards, department leaders, and fellow citizens:

It is with great pleasure, pride, gratitude, and respect that I stand here this evening as your Mayor. There is much to discuss in terms of where we must go as a city in 2006 and beyond, but let me start off by thanking a couple of people with whom I've worked with over the past two years. First, Bill St. Laurent. There are few people I've met who care more about their community than Bill, and regardless of where you stood on an issue, he's a straight shooter who's always respectful. Thank you for your service Bill, and I suspect you'll remain active in the community.

The other person I want to acknowledge is outgoing Mayor Evelyn Sirrell. There is a part of wisdom that comes only through experience, and few people in Portsmouth have experienced life – real-life experience – like Evelyn Sirrell. Her intuition, determination, and passion for our wonderful community are incomparable. Her personality and straight-talking, straight-ahead style are inimitable. And the advice and perspective I will continue to seek from her will be invaluable. Much of the success that we enjoy over the next two years will be due, in part, to your work over the past eight years as our Mayor.

Results matter. I believe the number one message sent by the voters of Portsmouth this past November was – that results matter. Knocking on well over 2,000 doors with my wife, I can't count the number of times I told a voter that government should ask three basic questions:

- What are departments' goals, and do they match the highest-priority goals of the community?
- What are the most efficient ways to reach those goals?
- How are we regularly keeping track of whether or not we're making progress?

What amazed me was the typical response: "Yes, that's exactly what government should ask! That's what I have to do in my household or business! But we all know government doesn't work like that."

And it's hard to blame people for feeling that way. From bribes in Congress, to the poor response of federal, state, and local government in dealing with Hurricane Katrina, to billions of dollars in pork barrel spending, our national leaders, from both parties, make it hard to believe in America and her leaders.

Even at the local level, it's easy to see why many don't believe government can be a force for good. I mentioned the over-2,000 doors my wife and I knocked on this fall. Let me take a moment to acknowledge my wife, Sandi Hennequin.

Something that came up often in those 2,000 knocks is that when I ask people what mattered most to them, they mentioned results. They want quality schools, safe communities, and reliable infrastructure. Most people are willing to spend money to achieve these results. But they hear the debates at budget time, and they hear a lot about the need for increases, which typically exceed their households' raises for the year. They don't hear much about specific indicators that measure progress, that measure value, that measure results.

The dialogues I heard often on front porches this fall are very different from the competing monologues I often hear from our elected officials – and most elected officials, for that matter. This is a disconnect, and when citizens feel disconnected, they tune out, and begin distrusting government. And, in our own microcosmic way, we contribute to the loss of belief in America, and in the belief that government can be a force for good.

So why am I so committed to the belief that results matter, and that government can be a force for good, so long as it is accountable, open, and fair? Why do I care about the people of Portsmouth believing in us, or for that matter, believing in America?

I'm not doing this for the money. You know, I tell people that the good news is, going from Councilor to Mayor got me a 33% increase in pay. The bad news is, I was making \$1,500.00 last year.

I care for two reasons. First, you need to know where I'm from. I'm originally from Manchester, specifically the very French-Canadian West Side of Manchester. My parents, who are here tonight, came to this country about 40 years ago from Quebec. They didn't have a high school education, English wasn't their native tongue, and they certainly didn't have a lot of money. But they did have a few things going for them. A strong work ethic, an entrepreneurial spirit, and a belief that America was the place to be. They still believe in America, and so do I. And it is my belief that we can do our part in Portsmouth to rebuild the belief that government – accountable, fair, open government – can be a force for good.

The other reason I care is because, frankly, changing the way we think about government and leadership is the only choice we have. Here's the reality: Health care costs are going up by double-digits annually. Retirement rates by 6%. Workers compensation by over 15%. County taxes are rapidly increasing. Energy costs have skyrocketed. This is happening in most communities around the country, and we're all feeling squeezed.

But dealing with these pressures by simply increasing taxes, or even worse, arbitrarily making across-the-board cuts does nothing to put our finite dollars into achieving the results that matter most. Like most communities, we focus more on the cuts than we do on the keeps. We focus on last year's programs, instead of next year's priorities and goals. And in the process, we fail to focus on the results that citizens want most. We have no choice – it is time to lead.

Over the next two years, how will we lead?

- Budget
 - We will ask departments to describe their goals and their plans for achieving those goals. Results matter, that's what this past election was about, and that's much of what these next two years will be about, as well.
 - The Joint Budget Committee was designed several years ago to help departments work together to create budgets, and in this regard, it has worked well. However, I will be asking the JBC to take on more responsibility later this year. Measuring performance – and increasing accountability for improving performance – will become a central part of the JBC's existence, and it is a role I am confident they can and will fulfill very well.
 - Finally, I'll ask that the Council consider the notice that you start building a budget by first figuring out how much you can afford, and then funding the city's highest priorities. I am sure that this Council will agree with me that this year's budget will be sufficient to support schools that produce quality graduates, public safety departments that prevent danger where they can, and respond quickly and professionally when they must, and an infrastructure improves and sustains our high quality of life.
 - If doing all this was easy, it would've already been done. But leadership is not doing what simply can be done – it is doing what must be done.

- Sustainability
 - Good environmental policy is good economic policy
 - Our first two work sessions will deal with the city's wastewater treatment system, and the Madbury water facility
 - Water quality and treatment is critical, and we will treat it as such
 - Replacing multiple narrow "environmental" committees with a broader sustainability committee – ask question of

- Affordable Housing
 - In 2005, you heard much about affordable housing, for good reason. The American dream includes the hope for most families that they can own their own home, but for folks making the median income, families with children, even many of Portsmouth public and private-sector employees, this is not possible.
 - Why? The pressure is on developers who pay large sums for property to maximize the return on those investments. Too often, this means high-priced townhouses and condos. Of course, because our current budget process, the pressure is on our city to maximize the taxable value of our property. It's the equivalent of trying to "grow our way" out of a seemingly permanent fiscal squeeze.
 - In doing so, we threaten everything from our future socioeconomic diversity, to our future economic growth, to our ability to recruit teachers, to our very ability to create a sense of community. This may be the seminal issue we face in this decade.
 - That's why I don't want to wait until neighboring communities do their part to change their zoning requirements to create regional housing. Instead, we should give our land use boards the tools they need to meet the wonderful goals laid out in our Master Plan. As long as our ordinances encourage condos, and townhouses, and buildings built as high as the tallest buildings already in town, there is little we can do but complain. That's why it is time to make sure our deeds match our words, and our ordinances match our vision.

My political role model, the late Paul Tsongas, often said that "I won't always tell you what you want to hear, but I'll always tell you what I think you need to hear." I've stated that my goal is for Portsmouth to be the model of political and municipal leadership in NH in the next five years, and that's an ambitious goal. But my adopted hometown of Portsmouth is a special place, and we are living in a special time. Leadership is doing what you think is right, regardless of the consequences, and when you buy into that concept, it is liberating. Let us take Portsmouth, this confluence of talent, and history, and energy, and let us resolve tonight, that if we focus on the results that matter most, and do what we need to do, then we will be what we want to be.

Thank you, God bless you, and God bless the great city of Portsmouth.

VI. REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITY OFFICIALS

A. CITY MANAGER

Informational Items

1. City Council Work Session – January 12, 2006

City Manager Bohenko advised the City Council that they have been provided a copy of the agenda for the City Council Work Session on Thursday, January 12, 2006 at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers regarding the Peirce Island Wastewater Treatment Plant.

B. MAYOR MARCHAND

1. Acceptance of Rules and Orders of the City Council

Mayor Marchand advised the City Council that they have before them recommended changes to the Rules and Orders of the City Council.

Councilor Hynes moved to accept City Attorney Sullivan's memorandum dated December 29, 2005 outlining the modification of three existing rules and the creation of a new rule. Seconded by Councilor Whitehouse. The amendments to the Rules shall read as follows:

Rule 1: Meeting Nights *(Rule Modified)*

The regular meetings of the City Council shall be on the first and third Mondays of each month at some time between 7:00 o'clock and 8:30 o'clock in the evening to be set by the Council. Work sessions may commence at any time after 6:00 p.m. and the regular council meeting may commence at any time after 7:00 p.m.

Rule 7: Order of Business *(Rule Modified)*

The business of all regular meetings of the Council shall be transacted in the following order, unless the Council by vote of at least two-thirds of the members present, shall suspend the rules and change the order:

- I. Work Session

- II. Call to Order [7:00 p.m. or thereafter]
- III. Roll Call
- IV. Invocation
- V. Pledge of Allegiance
- VI. Volunteer Committee Reports
- VII. Acceptance of Minutes
- VIII. Public Comment Session
- IX. Public Hearings on Ordinances and/or Resolutions
- X. Approval of Grants/Donations
- XI. Consideration of Resolutions and Ordinances
- XII. Consent Agenda
- XIII. Presentation and Consideration of Written Communications and Petitions
- XIV. Reports and Communications from City Officials
 - A. CITY MANAGER
Items Which Require Action Under Other Sections of the Agenda
City Manager's Items Which Require Action
 - B. MAYOR
 - C. CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS
- XV. Miscellaneous Business Including Business Remaining Unfinished at Previous Meeting
- XVI. Adjournment [at 10:00 p.m. or earlier]

Rule 37: Hour City Council Meetings to Conclude *(Rule Modified)*

City Council meetings shall conclude no later than 10:00 P.M. or at such time as any agenda item being discussed at 10:00 P.M. is acted upon. If because of this rule any agenda items remain to be taken up, the Council shall recess the meeting to a time certain at which recessed meeting the remainder of the agenda shall be acted upon unless a majority of the Council wishes to suspend in order to continue.

Rule 46: Consent Agenda *(Creation of New Rule)*

The agenda for any regular meeting of the City Council may include a section entitled "Consent Agenda". The Consent Agenda shall consist of items of City Council business, which the Mayor, the City Manager and the City Clerk have previously determined to be routine in nature. All Consent Agenda items shall identify the action which it is anticipated will be taken by the City Council on it. Any item of business shall be removed from the Consent Agenda and placed elsewhere on the Council agenda for the same meeting at the request of any member of the City Council. All recommended actions on Consent Agenda items shall be deemed to have been taken by the City Council on the passage of a motion, "to adopt the Consent Agenda".

Councilor Grasso requested that the City Councilor making the motion to adopt the Consent Agenda read the items listed under the Consent Agenda for the public to be aware of what the City Council is acting on.

Mayor Marchand indicated that if a City Councilor wishes to remove an item from the Consent Agenda they may do so and action of that item will take place under another portion of the City Council Agenda.

Councilor Pantelakos said she agrees with Councilor Grasso on the need to advise the public on the items listed under the Consent Agenda.

Councilor Whitehouse asked if an item is removed from the Consent Agenda where would action of the item take place in the City Council Agenda.

City Manager Bohenko responded that items that are removed from the Consent Agenda may be acted upon under miscellaneous/unfinished business of the City Council Agenda.

Motion passed.

2. Committee Assignments for City Councilors

Mayor Marchand announced that Committee Assignments for the City Council have been submitted and no action is necessary from the City Council. He advised the City Council if they have questions or concerns regarding their assignments to contact him to discuss the matter.

Committee Assignments:

Assistant Mayor Ferrini – Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Commission, Pease Development Authority Liaison

Councilor Grasso – Audit and Joint Budget Committee, Joint Building Committee (Schools), New Library Building Committee

Councilor Dwyer – Audit and Joint Budget Committee, Planning Board

Councilor Raynolds – Audit and Joint Budget Committee, Economic Development Commission, Historic District Commission, Rockingham Planning Commission

Councilor Pantelakos – Blue Ribbon Committee on Dogs, Legislative Delegation

Councilor Whitehouse – Audit and Joint Budget Committee, Peirce Island Study Committee, Taxi Commission, Veterans' Affairs Organization Liaison

Councilor Smith – Recreation Board, Traffic & Safety Committee, Parking Committee

Councilor Hynes – Fees Schedule Study Committee, New Library Building Committee, Vendors' Committee, Veterans' Affairs Organization Liaison

Mayor Marchand announced that Councilor Raynolds' wife Petra gave birth to their third child over the weekend.

VII. BENEDICTION BY FATHER KELLEY, IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CHURCH

Father Kelley performed the benediction.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

At 7:50 p.m., Councilor Whitehouse moved to adjourn. Seconded and voted.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kelli L. Barnaby". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kelli L. Barnaby, CMC
City Clerk