

SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING

MUNICIPAL COMPLEX
DATE: WEDNESDAY, APRIL 18, 2012

PORTSMOUTH, NH
TIME: 7:00PM [or thereafter]

I. CALL TO ORDER [7:00PM or thereafter]

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

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Mayor Spear, Assistant Mayor Lister, Councilors Coviello, Novelline Clayburgh, Kennedy, Lown and Thorsen

Absent: Councilors Dwyer and Smith

III. PUBLIC HEARING

A. PROPOSED FY JULY 1, 2012 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2013 BUDGET

Mayor Spear announced that the City Manager and various staff will be making presentations on a number of budgets.

IV. PRESENTATIONS

- Budget Summary – City Manager Bohenko

City Manager Bohenko provided a PowerPoint Presentation regarding the FY13 Budget Summary. He stated that the budget was submitted to the City Council on April 9, 2012. He reported that 77% of the budget represents Operating with 23% represent Non-Operating. City Manager Bohenko announced that the FY13 Proposed Operating and Non-Operating Proposed Budget is \$91,488,833.00. He spoke to the \$172,000.00 for Collective Bargaining Contingency and \$150,000.00 for Indoor Pool. He addressed the various challenges faced by the departments over the last couple of years. City Manager Bohenko outlined the Proposed Non-Operating Budget which includes the following:

• Debt Service/TANS	\$11,958,196.00
• Overlay	1,200,000.00
• Property & Liability	414,000.00
• County Tax	4,297,188.00
• Contingency	250,000.00
• Rolling Stock	773,993.00
• IT Equip Replacement	232,000.00
• Capital Outlay	1,550,000.00
• Other Non-Operating	290,017.00

City Manager Bohenko advised the City Council that the County Tax is estimated to be \$4,297,188.00 which represents an additional \$1.00 to the tax rate. He addressed the estimated revenues for FY13 to be \$91,488,833.00. He also spoke to the decrease in motor vehicle revenues and a \$1,000,000.00 loss in interest on our investments. City Manager Bohenko discussed our use of Fund Balance and our history of bond rating relative to Fund Balance. He announced that the tax rate for FY13 is proposed to be an increase of \$.57.

- ***Library – Mary Ann List, Director***

Library Director List reviewed the Library Mission and Goals:

- Library established by ordinance May 1881 as a free public library “for the use of all of our citizens”
- Gateway to reading, information, culture, community activities, and cultural heritage
- Shared resource for the Community
- A place to learn together, to relax together, to enjoy the community of others, to discuss topics of importance locally and globally

Library Director List addressed Goals and Objectives:

- Assessment of current goals
- Demographics. Community assessment
- Note Census 2010 / OCLC Environmental Scan 2010 / Involvement in community activity / 2012 State of America’s Libraries
- Trends in library use in Portsmouth
 - National trends in library service
 - Trends and developments in publishing and production
 - Developments in technology – both for consumers and for library operations

Library Director List spoke to influencing factors in planning for Library service in FY13. She addressed the economy, mobile devices, E-publishing, an increase in membership and the Library’s role in the community. She reported to the Council that 68% of Americans reported to have library cards and 80% of residents in the City of Portsmouth have a library card.

Library Director List then reviewed stats for performance as follows:

- 295,682 visits were made to the Library
- 469 meeting room uses by community, municipal and school groups
- 1,113 Library programs were presented
- 2,400 unique computer users per month

- 1,900 unique wifi users per month
- 129,000 books are available to Portsmouth library card holders. 8,000 audios, 10,000 videos, 430 magazine titles, 58 online databases, 6,000 downloadable audios and eBooks
- 476,711 items were checked out for use by the community
- 32,511 there were reference questions

Library Director List said the total Library budget being requested is \$1,521,392.00. Salaries and benefits encompass \$1,095,103.00; materials and materials support \$221,275.00; building operations \$103,000.00 and other items \$102,014.00.

- ***Public Works Department – Steve Parkinson, Director***

Public Works Director Parkinson outlined services that makeup the Public Works Department. He said the FY13 budget request for the department is \$5,743,971.00 which is a 2.87% increase with 58% of which are salaries and benefits. He spoke to the major budget increases that are snow operations, gas and diesel, repairs, vehicles, facilities, equipment, etc. He reported that salt prices have affected the budget extensively in the last 10 years.

- ***Recreation Department – Rus Wilson, Director***

Director Wilson reported that the Recreation Department is requesting an increase of 2.8% over last year. He spoke to the 4 facilities operated in the department and that all outdoor activities are handled by the department. He also addressed his services as Athletic Director for the Portsmouth High School and this year Barry Foley will serve as Athletic Director for the Portsmouth Middle School. Director Wilson reported on the various programs provided by the department and addressed the new Connie Bean Recreational Center being located at the Portsmouth Middle School with the expansion. He addressed the City's relationship with SIPP for the indoor pool. He also advised the City Council that 15 playgrounds have been rebuilt in the City over the last 15 years.

- ***General Administration – Judie Belanger, Finance Director***

Finance Director Belanger reported that General Government Departments make up \$15,905,044.00 of the budget. She outlined the various departments that encompass the General Government and that 22% of the budget is represented by the General Government Departments. She spoke to the services provided under the various departments and said the City continues to seek ways for efficiencies.

- ***School Department – Superintendent of Schools McDonough***

Superintendent McDonough read the District Mission:

Educating all students by challenging them to become thinking, responsible, contributing citizens who continue to learn throughout their lives.

He reviewed the data which make up the School Department. He announced various Points of Pride for Students.

Academic Achievement

Isabelle Halle, Jack Durkin, Juang Li received Academic Achievement

Arts

Beauty & the Beast
Percussion World Champs
Clipper Band – Gold Medalists

Athletics

Womens Lacrosse
Mens Baseball
Mens Football
Mens Basketball

Other Achievements

1. John Stokel 2012 Role Model of the Year
2. Laura Barone Scholastic Science Magazine
3. Family, Careers, Community Leaders of American (FCCLA) Competition
4. 7th Grade Middle School Students Winners of S.W. Cole Engineering Video Contest
5. Clipper News Report airing on Portsmouth Public Media TV (Channel 98)
6. Landscape Makeover Project by PHS Underclassmen
7. Work of Joint Building Committee and all involved in the Middle School Project.
Phase I opens in the Fall

Superintendent McDonough said that there is a need to strengthen math performances and addressed the focus in reading. He also spoke to the appropriate class size for Portsmouth and teacher effectiveness. He reviewed the budget process and priorities. He spoke to the Central Office relocating to the Municipal Complex. In closing, he advised the City Council that the School Department is seeking \$38,302,260.00 which is a 2.9% increase.

• ***Police Department – Police Chief Ferland***

Chief Ferland reported that the Police Department protects over 21,000 residents. He addressed how crime comes to the City. He stated that the goal of the department is public safety in the form of crime protection, early intervention, and a criminal response. Chief Ferland reported that downtown overall crime statistics have increase by 300% and assaults have increased 26%. He said that the department is tracking under the CPI and the department is seeking a 2.9% increase. He spoke to the residents wanting the department to be a community service department.

Further, they want the department more involved in neighborhoods. Chief Ferland reviewed a Youth Risk Behavior Survey that was conducted and the challenges the department faces with an increase in the abuse of prescription and synthetic drugs. In closing, Chief Ferland said the department continues to serve the community with commitment and compassion.

- ***Fire Department – Fire Chief LeClaire***

Fire Chief LeClaire reviewed the Organizational Chart for the Fire Department and the 3 fire stations. He outlined the resources and staffing for each of the three stations and the fire districts. He reported that in 2011 there were 2,615 fire calls and 3,130 EMS calls of that 70% of those individuals are transported to the hospital and are billable calls. Chief LeClaire advised the City Council that the ambulance gross revenues for 2011 were \$731,847.01 and the department continues to show an increase in the collecting of the ambulance fees. In addition, he outlined the services performed by the Fire Prevention Bureau and the departments' responsibilities with the Emergency Management Operations. In closing, the department is seeking \$7,155,250.00 in funding which is a 2.6% increase. Chief LeClaire said the budget includes all approved positions filled (14 personnel per shift) and all three fire stations operational.

- ***Conclusion – City Manager Bohenko***

City Manager Bohenko thanked all Department Heads for their work in preparing the budget and turned the meeting back to Mayor Spear to open the public comment/input for the budget.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT/INPUT

Al Romano spoke in support of the Coakley Road/Cottage Street improvements. He said it is an important project that needs to be done as soon as possible.

Scott McKee said he is speaking on behalf of WAVE and supports the School Department budget as requested. He said the system is strained as a result of reductions in the last several years. He stated there needs to be a reduction in class sizes.

Colleen Romano spoke in support of the project for Cottage Street/Coakley Road and the installation of sidewalks. She said the traffic volume is dangerous and the project needs to move forward as soon as possible.

Corinne Norris spoke in support of the School Department funding. She expressed the need for art services in the School Department. She also spoke to the needed improvements at Little Harbour School and support of that project moving forward.

Roy Helsel spoke against the increase in the budget and feels that salaries and benefits of employees need to be reviewed.

Sage Clark spoke in support of the School Department budget and that the increases they're seeking are needed. She said that there are 515 students at Little Harbour and it is not an instructional learning environment for a building that was constructed for 375 students. Ms. Clark addressed the age of the Little Harbour School and the need for improvements.

Teri Weidner Dahlen spoke in support of the School Department budget and expressed concerns with the increasing number of students attending Little Harbour School. She said that class size is an issue and there should not be over 18 students.

Mark Brighton, President of the Association of Portsmouth Taxpayers, spoke to inflation and its impact on the budget. He stated the budget is 63% greater than the rate of inflation. He further stated that the School Department is over staffed and class size does not matter to a child's ability to learn.

David Kish spoke to the proposed 4.73% increase and said it is not necessary. He stated that the City budget is double the rate of inflation and that the middle class is being wiped out of the City. He also spoke opposed to the benefits employees receive and that the City Council needs to start thinking ahead.

Cliff Lazenby spoke in support of the School Department budget and that their request is fiscally modest. He also stated that the requested increase is imperative for the operation of the School Department at its current levels. He further stated that we need to invest in education.

Zelita Morgan spoke in support of the School Department budget and stated that education is essential and a fundamental pillar of the community.

Janet Groat spoke in support of the School Department budget and said it is a modest budget. She also spoke to the importance of public safety.

Jim Lamont said he is incredibly proud of the services in the community and its employees. He spoke in support of the School Department budget and encouraged the City Council to adopt the budget as presented.

John Shea said he is proud to live in the City and spoke in support of the School Department budget and feels they should be provided additional funding. He stated that education needs to be a priority and urged the City Council to support the School budget and their request for funding.

Norm Olsen thanked the departments for their hard work and expressed his sympathies to the Police Department in the Town of Greenland and the tragic events. He stated there needs to be a flat budget and does not feel there would be dramatic reductions in services to meet a flat budget. He spoke to the need for more innovation by the departments with the preparation of the budget. He asked the City Council to oppose the budget and request a flat budget from the departments.

Jill Capablanco spoke in support of the School Department budget and said it is a thoughtful budget request.

Jim Heath said that we need to work back towards the 2004 levels of funding for the Police Department. He said there needs to be more funding for School Resource Officers and supports the School Department budget.

Saunte Gray said that funding for the Schools is important and there is a tremendous difference in the education her 10th grade daughter received to what her Little Harbour aged child is currently receiving. She requested that more funding be provided to the School Department.

Megan Wineman spoke in support of funding the School Department budget.

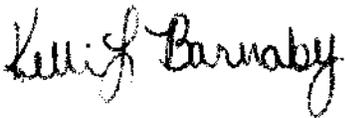
Sage Clark addressed changes in education over the last five to six years. She said her son's classroom has 23 students and it was 14 students five to six years ago. She expressed her support of the services and programs provided in the City and feels it is necessary for quality of life.

Janet Groat said that she is middle class and struggles to pay her bills but does not resent paying her taxes. She said she does see middle class families leaving the City. She urged the City Council to think broadly with their decisions on the budget.

VI. RECESS PUBLIC HEARING UNTIL MAY 14, 2012 AT 7:00PM

At 9:10 p.m., Mayor Spear recessed the public hearing on the budget until May 14, 2012 at 7:00 p.m.

VII. ADJOURNMENT



KELLI L. BARNABY, CMC/CNHMC
CITY CLERK