

CITY COUNCIL E-MAILS

Received: June 3, 2022 (after 9:00 a.m.) – June 6, 2022 (before 4:30 p.m.)

June 6, 2022 Council Meeting

ADDENDUM

New content:

Submitted on Thu, 06/02/2022 - 19:34

Full Name

Jason Stringer

Email

jstringer20@gmail.com

Subject

brick sidewalk preservation

Address

145 CABOT ST # 1

Message

Hi - please do not destroy our historical brick sidewalks on Cabot Street or any other street nearby. This would be like paving over a park and putting in a strip mall. From talking to my neighbors, nobody wants concrete sidewalks. Sincerely, Jason

Please indicate if you would like your comment to be part of the public record for the upcoming City Council meeting. Yes

Submitted on Sat, 06/04/2022 - 05:33

Full Name

Marcia MacCormack

Email

marciamaccormack@gmail.com

Subject

Edward and Margot Thompson request for Urban Shoreline Exemption 57 Salter Street

Address

53 Salter St

Message

I am in opposition to this request

I am a direct abutter to this property

There is a complex history associated with this and a lot of blaming as to who is responsible for the current situation

Please be careful bringing this forward and examine the original request for a variance based on hardship to the evolution of the Point of View Condominium Association

Please indicate if you would like your comment to be part of the public record for the upcoming City Council meeting. Yes

Submitted on Sat, 06/04/2022 - 13:02

Full Name

Nancy Novelline Clayburgh

Email

nancyclayburgh@comcast.net

Subject

School Department Budget 2023

Address

405 F. W. Hartford Drive

Message

I know how hard you are all struggling with the upcoming vote regarding the 2023 budget. My best wishes as you ponder some serious decisions. It's not an easy task. As Chair of the School Board, I would like to highlight two items in our budget, that I feel must stay. Because of the devastating effects to many of our students as a result of Covid, these positions are critical to the well-being of our students. It has been suggested that we could move them to being funded by ESSER. We could. However, these two positions need to be permanent in our district for the long term health and wellness of our students. It's important to insure that these positions will be there forever. We know that ESSR funds are one time only. We are grateful to have ESSER, but in this situation, it would only be a quick fix. The positions are the Portsmouth Middle School guidance counselor and the Portsmouth Middle School math tutor. A reduction in our budget has been presented to the Council. If these two positions could be retained, the journey to get our students back to pre-Covid health and wellness could happen. Of course, we have other positions in our budget to help achieve this goal, as well. Those will remain. The total amount of these two positions is \$139,723. The Board has not taken a formal vote on this message I am sending you. However, based on the discussion at our last meeting, it appears that everyone agrees. Thank you for your time. And than you for serving our City so well.

Please indicate if you would like your comment to be part of the public record for the upcoming City Council meeting. Yes

Submitted on Sun, 06/05/2022 - 20:08

Full Name

charlie griffin

Email

charlesgriffinesq@gmail.com

Subject

Four percent salary increases for Police and Fire Department Employees

Address

210 Hillside Drive

Message

I understand that included in the proposed FY2023 budget which you will vote on tomorrow night is a proposed four percent salary increase for Police and Fire Department employees which the City Manager deems necessary in order to attract and retain qualified employees. In today's Herald, the City Manager purports to make the case for paying high salaries to current employees arguing that it is necessary to do so in order to prevent them from leaving and going elsewhere where they can make more money.

I have done some research which I would like to share with you.

As you know ,Portsmouth with a population of 22,191 paid 70 city and 22 school department employees over \$100,000 each in 2021. Dover with a population of 33,598 only paid a combination of 77 city and school department employees in excess of \$100,000 each in 2021.

Rochester with a population of 32,057 only paid 24 city employees each in excess of \$100,000 in 2021(I could not find any figures for school department employees). Keene with a population of 22,972 only paid 50 city employees each in excess of \$100,000,(once again I could not find any figures for school department employees) and finally Derry with a population of 21,817 only paid 55 city employees each in excess of \$100,000 each (again I could not find any figures for school department employees)

While the City Manager maintains that Portsmouth needs staff like a city of 40,000 or 45,000, the fact is that Concord with a population of 44,215 only paid 78 city employees in excess of \$100,000 each in 2020(no figures were available for2021)

If as the City Manager maintains , city employees are leaving for greener pastures and we need to increase salaries to prevent the exodus, my question is where are those greener pastures. Certainly not in New Hampshire .If the claim is that Manchester or Nashua constitute a greener pasture, I maintain that Portsmouth cannot and should not compete salary wise with cites whose population is four to five times greater than ours.

While some communities in Massachusetts or Maine might pay more, those states also have income taxes and at the end of he day I wonder if the increased salary amounts to that much.

I submit that the same rationale that applies to those at the higher . end of the pay scale not leaving Portsmouth for greener pastures applies across the board to other employees. The reason we have as many employees at the higher end of the pay scale is because they enjoy working in Portsmouth and have justifiably earned their salary increases over the years through the negotiation of their collective bargaining agreements.

That being the case I do not support the unbargained for proposed four percent salary increase for Police and Fire Department employees .The facts I have cited show it is not necessary to prevent an exodus and I urge you to cut this item before you vote on the budget.

As always, thank you for your consideration.

Please indicate if you would like your comment to be part of the public record for the upcoming City Council meeting. Yes

Submitted on Mon, 06/06/2022 - 08:50

Full Name

Mary Lou McElwain

Email

ml259@comcast.net

Subject

Budget, of course!

Address

259 South Street

Message

Thank you all for the hard work and time you are spending on the budget.

I have a couple of questions; how did you reach the median assessment price for residential property. It certainly isn't reflected in the sales of the past two years in most neighborhoods, and was mentioned in a Herald article a couple weeks ago quoting real estate guy John Rice. Are mobile homes and manufactured homes included in this calculation.

Granted the tax rate is reasonable but for many property owners our assessment could go up by several hundred thousand dollars reflecting neighborhood sales. This means several hundred dollars increase in property taxes.; second item, city vehicles excluding the yellow DPW trucks. I see Ford Focus and Ford SUVs in the Junkins and Connor Cottage lot every day. Who are these vehicles assigned to, what is the cost of fuel, insurance and maintenance ?

Do employees pay for "city" shirts, sweatshirts and jackets (referring to rec crew and city hall employees). Can we cut back on some non essentials (as most of us are doing in this time of inflation) such as water bottles at city hall, city logos on every vehicle, clothing with city logo on each item. Sounds trivial but it all adds up.

We support the police, fire and school budgets as amended.

Again, thanks to all of you.
Mary Lou and Bob McElwain

Please indicate if you would like your comment to be part of the public record for the upcoming City Council meeting. Yes

Submitted on Mon, 06/06/2022 - 13:10

Full Name

Erin Delaney

Email

edelaney@sau52.org

Subject

Come be a Guest Reader to LHS 1st Graders!?

Address

50 Clough Dr.

Message

Hi City Counselors!

Here at Little Harbour we are winding down our year in 1st grade by having a themed celebration on each of the final 10 days of school. This Friday, June 10th, we are celebrating Book Day by sharing some of our favorites with our classes, and by inviting guest readers to share a picture book that they love. If any of you are available, we know our students would love to meet you and hear a story that you love. (A short and sweet picture book is best, whether you add fun voices is totally up to you!). If you're able to come in, the times we are welcoming readers are between 9:30-12:30, or between 1:45-2:15. Let us know if you can make it, we'd love to share some of their joy with you.

All our best,

LHS 1st Grade Team - Erin Delaney, Heidi White, Nicole Hopley and Michelle Fijalkowski-Santy

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