

A special meeting of the Board of Aldermen was held Thursday, July 1, 2021, at 7:55 p.m. in the aldermanic chamber as well as via Zoom teleconference.

President Lori Wilshire presided; City Clerk Susan Lovering recorded.

Prayer was offered by City Clerk Susan Lovering; Alderman Linda Harriott-Gathright led in the Pledge to the Flag.

To join by Zoom – please refer to the agenda or the website for the meeting link and telephone number.

Let's start the meeting by taking a roll call attendance. When each member states their presence, please indicate if participating via Zoom state why you are not meeting in person and whether there is anyone in the room with you during this meeting which is required under the Right-To-Know Law.

City Clerk Lovering called the roll and asked them to state the reason he or she could not attend, confirmed that they could hear the proceedings, and stated who was present with him or her.

The roll call was taken with 11 members of the Board of Aldermen present: Alderman Michael B. O'Brien, Sr., Alderman Patricia Klee, Alderman Richard A. Dowd, Alderman June M. Caron, Alderman Thomas Lopez, Alderman David C. Tencza (via Zoom), Alderman Ernest Jette, Alderman Jan Schmidt, Alderman Skip Cleaver, Alderman Linda Harriott-Gathright, Alderman Wilshire.

Alderwoman Kelly, Alderman Clemons, Alderwoman Lu, and Alderman Laws were recorded absent.

Mayor James W. Donchess, Corporation Counsel Steven A. Bolton were also in attendance.

President Wilshire

Mayor did you wish to say a few words before we get started?

Mayor Donchess

Yes thank you Madam President. Well first I wanted to thank everybody in the city, our employees, and everyone else for helping us achieve the award of the fourth best run city in the United States. This is an award we've received in the past. We've never been this high. If you go through the ranking, a very predominate factor is the efficiency of city services. In other words, the quality of services versus the cost. On that score, Nashua has been scoring very high and it's been due to the efforts of all of our citizens who work hard to pitch in and of course the Board of Aldermen and all of our city employees.

Now going into this budget year was, of course, a very tough year because of the actions taken by the State of New Hampshire and we have discussed this at some length. The State raised our pension costs unrelated to current wages by \$4 million, \$4.4 million actually and cut school aid. So what do we do with that? I mean the citizens, the homeowners, the taxpayers of Nashua expect us to set priorities, make some difficult decisions. Even though we are being used as a cash register by the State of New Hampshire and we should offset as much as we can and I think that's what our residents would expect but we can't offset an entire \$12 million hit.

So what I did going into the budget was I asked departments to exercise frugality and consider the interest of our taxpayers and our residents. We've just come off the pandemic and certainly many people ordinary Nashuans, everyday people are struggling to pay many of their bills. So I asked City Hall for frugality and they definitely came through. City Hall reduced the budget for the fiscal year that begins today by \$2.9 percent. Meaning the budget for this building and all of the associated departments – Public Health and everything else, is 2.9 percent lower today than it was yesterday. Public Works down 1.3 percent. Same thing. That budget is lower today that it was yesterday. The Library also 1.9 percent. So those things helped and it also helped that we have a new healthcare plan which has been adopted by a number of employee groups which helped us save money there.

So with some of the other departments, I asked them also not to make the kind of sacrifices that we've made in City Hall here but to exercise frugality and to come in, and this what I proposed in the budget, come in at the cost of living. Note not below the cost of living but at the cost of living. I know the Fire and Police Department have taken issue with this but those departments have gone up significantly more than the cost of living for year after year for a whole number of years. So this year for one year given what we're facing, I asked for cost of living.

I think if the budget is passed as I proposed it, we would see about a 3.5 or 3.6 percent tax increase. Now this is more than we would like no question about it. But give what the State has done, it seems about the best we can do. We've offset a lot of what the State has done but certainly we can't devastate quality services. I think what citizens are looking for, what they want and deserve, is for us to balance the need for quality services which I think we have, balance the need for fairly paid employees which I believe we have with the needs to keep tax increases to at least as low as we can reasonably make them and I think 3.5 percent in this case, at least in my judgement, is about where the limit of what people can afford. So that's how I got to this budget and those are the circumstances that we're all dealing with.

Now Madam President there is one issue that I know Attorney Bolton and CFO Griffin are going to raise related to the Senate Bill 52 which was passed by the Legislature affecting the cap. They can give you the details but they are going to propose that there be an increase in the budget to take into account the grants that we get and an offsetting revenue amount to offset the grant amounts. This has no effect on the tax rate because it's grant money coming in and being recorded as revenue and also being recorded as expenditures but they can explain in more detail the rationale behind this and I'm sure I'll expect that you Madam President are going to at some point have them offer that explanation. So that is all that I have Madam President and unless people have questions, thank you for the opportunity.

President Wilshire

You're welcome. At this point I'm going to call for anyone to give public comment who signed up on items expected to be acted upon this evening. The first speaker is Fred Teeboom. Just to set the stage here, it's a 3 minute comment period and we need your name and address for the record.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Fred Teeboom

My name is Fred Teeboom. I reside at 24 Cheyenne Drive. I like the new setup. I don't see any portraits. What happened to all the portraits? I'm missing the portraits.

I'd like to say the cap is back. SB52 that was just mentioned the cap is back. If you hold this Resolution til August 20th I think, you're going to have to meet the override conditions of the cap because the budget exceeds the cost of living limits on the cap.

Now what I'd like to address is the R-21-142 first of all. In the back of R-21-142 there's an analysis. The analysis deals with the fact that the increase or addition to the budget opposed by the Mayor requires a 2/3 vote of the members of the Board. There's a wishy washy statement – faulty City Attorney opinion – that suggests that a court may find this provision, etc., etc. that's about as wishy washy as you can get. The fact is the opinion ignores the 22,000 (inaudible) laws which came following the mentions to case 2010 cited and that took care of the 2/3 vote. So 2/3 vote to override the budget in adding line items that the Mayor did not proposed is perfectly legitimate. If there's a question on this Mayor vote, then I suggest you contact the Mayor and have the Mayor sue the city because it's Charter provision.

The other thing you should have on your desk, I hope, Donna told me that she would send a copy of my Memo that I dated June the 30th. First of all I mentioned in there that the Mayor had on pages I think 8 and 9 given the presentation about the comparison of the increase. He's ignored the pension, FICA, and Medicare but the fact is that we the taxpayers have to pay the bill for the pensions. So you can't ignore

that. If you take that into account that's on the table on page 1 of my Memorandum – hopefully you all have a copy – you'll see that it says 1.7 increase. For the Police, it's 6.6 percent increase in the budget. For Fire – the Fire people are here, the Police is here looking to get their raises...

Alderman O'Brien

30 second.

Fred Teeboom

9.1 percent. Completely unacceptable. If you look why, you'll find that there's a 23 ½ percent increase in the pension costs. Besides the fact that the pension fund was mismanaged by over a billion dollars, it's well documented, and the fact that the insanity of asking for 100 percent funding, you can take a look at my example of a Deputy Fire Chief – now an Alderman – and the kind of money he makes as a pension.

Alderman O'Brien

Madam Chairman President the time.

President Wilshire

Time is up Sir.

Fred Teeboom

Well I hope you put the same gag rule on these aldermen when they make the comments that you put on the public when they make comments about what affects their taxes.

Lou Juris

Good evening. Lou Juris here from 56 Haines Street. This is the result of the downshifting and as a result, these cuts had to be made. A higher than normal tax increase is probably going to happen but what this budget will do is guarantee that when the alarms up, bells go off the Fire Department shows up within a reasonable time within the time specifications. That goes with the same with the cops. If something happens, they're going to be there under this budget. The ambulance, educating our students, public health in this past year and a half where we've had a pandemic, and in addition to the continued upgrades of our roads and the maintenance of our roads, and our sewer system, and of course keeping the water flowing, this is what this budget is going to continue to do. If there are those who are speaking and making comments against it, then they should have tried to reach out to those in the Legislature and the State Senate who voted to push these downshifting costs especially in regards to the pension costs. This is where the rubber meets the road and I think the city has done its best to try to mitigate that. It's my opinion that this full Board should pass the budget. Thank you.

President Wilshire

There is no one else signed up for public comment.

Laura Colquhoun

Laura Colquhoun

President Wilshire

Oh I'm sorry. Ms. Colquhoun.

Laura Colquhoun

Laura Colquhoun at 30 Greenwood Road. I find it funny that the Mayor keeps telling the taxpayers that his budget is \$290 million. However, the Telegraph reported the budget to be \$290 million on June 22nd and \$346 million on June 26th. That's on page 28 of the budget. I guess the Nashua Mayor does not like to tell the whole truth or he just likes to think that the Nashua taxpayers are stupid. There are other expenses that the taxpayers have to pay but the Mayor just drops them off the budget.

The budget is simple. We take the revenues and we minus the appropriations. That balance has to be paid by the Nashua taxpayers – both the residential and commercial property owners. Our Mayor has not told the truth to the Nashua resident taxpayers because they will be hit hard by the fact that the Nashua Assessing Department is dropping the valuations on commercial properties. So far the valuation on commercial properties have gone down by \$65 million and that number is continuing to climb. This means the residential properties will have to pick up the difference. This is not something the Mayor can blame the State on, however, residential property taxes will go up because of this valuation change. The Board of Aldermen knows this fact and has completely looked away. This Board should have cut more expenses, however, this Board is following the Mayor's lead in keep spending, spending, spending. I hope all Nashua residents remember this the next election and vote all of you out of office. Thank you.

President Wilshire

Is there anyone else wishing to give public comment via Zoom?

Laurie Ortolano

Laurie Ortolano, 41 Berkeley Street. First of all I'd like to correct the attendance that was read into the record. It was stated that there were 11 in attendance and 2 via Zoom. There are actually 9 in attendance. Kelly, Clemons, Lu and Laws were not recorded as being on the record. I'm interested in seeing how the 2/3 votes go with regard to passing the increases that the Board proposed on Tuesday in their budget meeting.

I'm opposed to the additional money being added per Police and Fire. I think they're funded adequately. I feel the response time issue from the Fire Department is you know difficult to quantify to a certain extent. When we put all the barriers up downtown, I didn't hear anyone from the Fire Department and couldn't really get any response on what happened to response times when we cut the road down to a single lane on each side? We did that without any problem or concerns that we were impacting our fire safety issues.

So I feel like we need to be careful how often we point to those situations and use those to justify positions. I think we have a lot of positions that ought to be looked at closely and I'm going to go back and tell you. I'm sure you didn't your cut your Assessing office but I don't know why we're funding 2 commercial assessors in there because you all know how hot under the collar I am about what's happened with abatements and what's gone in there and what gets done in the commercial area. We pay for it endlessly. You know I just found out I didn't realize the Chief we hired is only here for a year on a 12-month contract. So basically he's almost a consultant. So you know we're going to be back in a Chief position. You have a new assessment level coming up next year.

I'm concerned about the IT Department. I've been calling around getting some good information. What are we doing about third party sourcing for our e-mails and what's going on in that area? I am not at all interested in seeing the Administrative Services Director run an IT Department. I'm not at all interested in seeing that position continue or a Right-to-Know Coordinator, or some of these upper management positions. They don't belong in the city budget and they're not doing what they should do.

Alderman O'Brien

30 seconds.

Laurie Ortolano

I object to Attorney Bolton sitting in this chamber. There should be somebody else sitting in this chamber representing the Legal office. Thank you.

President Wilshire

Anyone else – public comment?

Sherry Dutzy

Sherry Dutzy 18 Swart Terrace. I am also a State Rep. for Ward 3 and I can verify what Mayor Donchess is saying. Six months sitting in sessions in the House and I have seen over and over again where Representatives from the rural parts of the State not only have no interest in supporting the cities but actively work to downshift and pass bills that will make the spending more difficult and delivering services more difficult for our cities and for our towns. I support this budget.

I am also the Chair of the Nashua Conservation Commission. We work very closely with the Community Development. They do a great job. I believe they are understaffed. I see the hours that many of them work to be able to support us. We are a small part of what they do. They support the Zoning Board and they support the Planning Board and it takes enormous amounts of time because of the detail that's involved. So I appreciate the effort that is made by everybody. I have said this again and again that New Hampshire wouldn't exist without the volunteers and without underpaid, overworked government employees. Thank you.

President Wilshire

Thank you. Anyone else wishing to give public comment? Seeing no one, I'm going to move on to Reports of Committees.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEE

There being no objection, President Wilshire suspended the rules to allow for the oral report of the Budget Review Committee meeting held Monday, June 28, 2021, regarding proposed Resolution R-21-142.

Alderman Dowd

Yes thank you. The Budget Committee went through all of the Departments over the last month and half, two months listening to all of their requirements. We heard that they all tried to meet the requirements that were put forth by the Mayor. I know the Mayor has said he allowed cost of living increases to Police & Fire but I think we determined that the cost of living increase doesn't protect our public safety. The lack of money coming down from the State or the amount of money that we are having to send to the State to cover their expenses is costing the citizens of Nashua a public safety issue. And we don't think that's correct. So the motions that were made or the first motion that was made was to add to the bottom line of the Police Department – Department 150, Account 90120 the amount of \$241,338.00. The next motion that was made was to take the Police Command Van Vehicle that was going to be bought this year out of cash in the CERF Special Revenue Fund to the bond line because of the cost of the vehicle and the amount of years that it would be on-line, the current one is at 16 years. It needs to be upgraded because the equipment on it is antiquated and it is, again, a public safety issue. That's the command vehicle that they use on all major events in the City. So that amount \$495,745.00 was moved from the cash line in the CERF acquisition to the bond line. That will allow us to keep \$500,000.00 in the CERF Capital Reserve which has not been funded this year as part of the budget and all of our finance people will tell you it is woefully underfunded. So this will help that.

And then the third motion was to add to the bottom line Fire Department – Department 152 Fire, Account 90120 the amount of \$418,771.00. That would allow the Fire Department to retain the Fire Company that they predicted they would have to lose with the Mayor's cut and would add 6 months to a new employee in the Fire Marshall's Office. That person is our inspector that needs to be doing, by State statute, two inspections of each school in the City twice a year and that has not been being done and with the safety of children I think that is a critical item. Also this is the same person that checks the occupancy requirements in restaurants and meetings and other things and that's only been done on a spotty basis based on the staffing. So it adds \$660,109.00 to the budget and changes the Mayor's Budget from \$290,366,852.00 to \$291,028,961.00. I have another motion to make.

MOTION BY ALDERMAN DOWD TO CHANGE THE AMOUNT (ON PAGE 34) ACCOUNT #48320 TO \$77,411,477.00 AND (ON PAGE 271) ACCOUNT #70160 CONTINENCY GRANTS TO THE AMOUNT OF \$77,411,477.00. IN ADDITION R-21-042 CHANGE THE NUMBERS OF LINE 7 FROM \$291,026,961.00 TO \$368,438,438.00 AND ON LINE 8 CHANGE THE \$64,979,022.00 TO \$142,390,499.00.

ON THE QUESTION

Chairman Dowd

I would like those to be taken together. I will also try to explain what those changes are. Those changes are if we don't take this action on the budget and those numbers – and by the way those numbers do not impact the tax rate. It's for grants that we would accept during the year. Under the new Legislation coming out of Concord, we would not be able to accept any grants. And we get grants for the Public Health Department, the Fire Department, the Police Department, School Department; several of our Departments rely on grants. Like I say, it doesn't impact the tax rate because money comes in by grant and it gets spent. So there's no additional monies collected from the individual taxpayers. And we've been getting those types of grants for years. But if we don't do this tonight, if we get a grant to put these grants in we won't be able to accept it. And if we need further explanation on it, I think Mr. Griffin is here. But that's the motion and I'd like us to act on the motion.

Alderman Klee

Thank you Madam President. I want to add, I know that my little grant that is coming in for Ward 3 out of the million dollars is nothing compared to this. But the truth of the matter is, with the spending cap put in place, etc., we would not even be able to accept that grant if we don't budget for it, if we don't put this money in. And the monies that Alderman Dowd has spoken about literally are monies into one account as possible spending and monies in as a revenue account. So it is a zero balance at the very end and it does not affect the tax dollars. It is extremely important that we do this. Ward 3 has been waiting a long time to get that grant money and it is coming in this fall. So thank you so much.

President Wilshire

Thank you. Mr. Griffin, would you mind giving us an overview of this motion.

John Griffin, CFO

Certainly. John Griffin, Chief Financial Officer. Subsequent to the passing of the Senate Bill it reinstates the spending cap. We touched on it a little bit the other night. A lot of the interpretations of the former spending cap which allowed us to not include appropriations for grants is eliminated. So essentially what we are left with is a spending cap that looks at any and all appropriations as a base and the only two exclusions that you may consider during any particular year is the debt service associated with bonded capital and capital projects in that given year. And I do have an exhibit that I can distribute but those particular items would not be able to be accepted and appropriated even with exclusion. Because the exclusion, if you think about, it is about \$17 million dollars of debt service and about \$1 million dollars'

worth of capital projects. What Budget Chairman Dowd indicated is to put in, and we can discuss it, we would be happy to discuss it, we are going to put in the \$77 million and that includes and maybe I could hand this out. So what we have, what you will be receiving is what I refer to as – what Budget Committee Chairman Dowd indicated is typical grants for the City and typical grants for the School.

Lines #1 through 18 identify most of the grants that were received this past year along with an estimated Fiscal22 number. And those typical grants total about \$10 million dollars for the cityside and \$16 million for the schools – so there's \$26 million. However, we know that through the hard work of everyone we are going to get about \$16 million dollars of American Rescue Plan Act Funding for the City. That's going to need to be accepted and appropriated. And then we have, as Mr. Donovan indicated at your Budget Review Committee, he had a nice slide that illustrated about \$35.5 million dollars of CARES Act funding and the companion ESRA Funding coming from the American Rescue Plan Act. So the thought for discussion was to start off appropriating the funds in this particular budget and doing a companion off-set of the appropriations that you are going to need in this particular budget. I know this budget is time sensitive.

We probably will need some clear transfer legislation because as you know, the various reports that we have for the DRA and on the school side the reports that they make to the Department of Education, they need to be in sync. So there will be another analysis that will take place, but I wanted you to consider this particular funding. With the Federal Government and the acceptance of some of these grants through the Department of Education in New Hampshire, you never know when you are going to be able to pull those funds. As Mr. Donovan said his grants are reimbursement grants, so they spend the money, get it approved and then get reimbursed. So the thought was that we would combine the typical grants along with what I would consider one-time grants which total \$51.546 million and put them in this budget. So I'd be happy to answer any questions at this time and Attorney Bolton will be able to help on some of the nuances of the Senate Bill that was passed. Thank you.

President Wilshire

Questions? Alderman Jette?

Alderman Jette

Thank you Madam President. So all of this grant money this \$51,546,000.00 this is not in this budget that we have been looking at, this budget book?

Mr. Griffin

Madam President, I'd be happy to answer that. It is not included in this budget book.

Alderman Jette

And where – I'm sorry when Alderman Dowd explained it, I didn't catch where it was going to go.

Mr. Griffin

Right. Yes I can recap that. Given the time sensitivity of the budget passing and knowing that you all would like to pass it with due consideration, we put the revenue on page 34, I actually gave it a new account number 48320 Grant Revenue. So that's in the financial services area. And as far as the appropriations, page 271 – 194 Department Contingency and new account 70160 Contingency – Grants. So that's the offset, as Alderman Dowd indicated and the Mayor indicated, there's no increase in local tax dollars, it is simply accepting the revenue, budgeting for it and budgeting for the appropriations. So those two numbers are designed to be the same.

With regard to the revenue side, it is an estimate in this budget book anyway. So to the extent grants don't come in as timely as we would like or want, that revenue would be offset by the grant, the amount of grants that come in. So at the end there would not be surplus with that nor would there be appropriations in excess of revenue.

Alderman Jette

OK could I follow up?

President Wilshire

Alderman Jette?

Alderman Jette

So I don't know if you or Attorney Bolton would be more appropriate to explain, why would we, as this grant money why would not be able to accept it without doing what you are suggesting tonight? What prevents us from accepting that money.

Mr. Griffin

Well kind of the tactical accounting side of it is you are going to be outside the limitations of the cap, that's a potential. Attorney Bolton might have a more legal answer than that.

President Wilshire

Attorney Bolton?

Steve Bolton, Corporation Counsel

The issue is two-fold; the State Law currently with the passage of Senate Bill 52 and it is being signed by the Governor takes effect 60 days after it was adopted by the House – that is mid-August. Supplemental appropriations that are made to this budget will after that date in August have to conform to the budget limitations, the so-called Spending Cap Provisions of the City Charter which means that you cannot exceed last year's total budget by more than a percentage of a 3 year rolling average of this certain government index. Just estimating that perhaps that amount would be approximately \$3 million dollars that increase - \$3 million dollars. But we have never in the past included grants as being part of that whole spending cap calculation. So it wasn't in last year's budget. But if you look at the law as it currently exists or will exist come that date in mid-August, it says that a Charter can provide for exceptions for grants, Enterprise funds, gifts, and other revenues from sources other than property taxes. And those can be exempted in the Charter. Our Charter doesn't exempt them. So if we can only raise the budget that we passed last year by \$3 million dollars well we would not be able to accept and appropriate grants. And we are expecting grants of approximately \$77 million. This is money that we get from other sources, not from property taxes.

So it makes sense to say, OK let's put in the budget, just like you do with other things, put in the budget the amount you expect to receive in revenue from grants and the amount you expect to spend of those grant monies, typically you'd have to spend them all, they are not giving you money just to hang around, there are things you are supposed to do with it. And that's in light of what one of the public commenters said earlier, you take the revenue you subtract the appropriations and the amount left is what has to be raised in taxes and that's exactly correct. And that is what this proposes to do, it proposes to treat these grant revenues just like any other revenues and expenditures from those grant revenues just like other expenditures. And the reason we want to do that now is because of the way the law now reads with the recent legislative changes. And we are dealing with sort of shifting sands situation, trying to react to

something that basically happened less than a month ago with the passage of Senate Bill 52 and its approval by the Governor. So yes it does seem last minute but as has been repeated many times, this has no effect on the amount of money we are going to raise from taxes. It's just a more accurate reflection of the fact that we are getting revenue and spending that revenue from a source other than taxation. It is what has been done for many years but the proper way to account for it, given the current state of the law, is to include both sides; the revenue side and the expenditure side in the budget.

Alderman Jette

Obviously you think that by doing this that this will work, this will allow us to accept the grant money? I understand how putting it in this year's budget assuming that everything else stays the same, putting it in this year's budget will give us more room to expand next year because it will be putting in this year's budget these appropriations that when we spend this grant money it will give us a higher starting point. I guess I am not sure why we wouldn't be able to accept the grant money. I understand with all apologies to Mr. Teeboom I think the spending cap, I think a lot of people understand but I think a lot of people don't understand that the spending cap is not a tax cap, it is a spending cap. And in its worse effect, it prevents us from spending money even though that money might not come from the taxpayers at all and that's the problem that you are trying to solve here at least in part that this money that we are getting from the Federal Government or State Grants or gifts, count in the limit on the appropriation also it doesn't take into consideration if the tax base increases as property values go up or new businesses come in, new apartment buildings are built and the tax base increases, which would allow us to reduce taxes because of the increased share of the burden. We are still limited on what we can spend and I think that's a flaw in the current law and if we have to live with that, it is going to make it difficult.

It doesn't necessarily reduce the tax rate, it reduces the amount that we can spend - whatever the source of that money might be. I understand that part of it, I didn't realize that we wouldn't be able to even accept this money during the next fiscal year without making these changes.

Attorney Bolton

Shall I respond? The issue is that grants were not included in the budget last year. So if you just look at what was in the budget last year and then say that the total appropriations in this year including any supplemental appropriations in the course of the year have to stay beneath this cap, you would be looking at last year's budget which did not have the grants in it. Today you can appropriate this money as it is being called "Contingency Grants". So you can do the appropriation now, this resurrection of the spending cap does not go into effect until sometime in August. But to accept and appropriate grant money after this, after that August date, that's an appropriate. So if we don't appropriate before that date, we are going to run up against this limit. This limit is going to enable something like \$3 million dollars in excess of last year's total budgeted expenditures which didn't consider grants.

The reason for that is they hadn't been considered in many years after the original passage of the spending cap charter provisions, the Board of Aldermen adopted an Ordinance intended to explain and define things in the spending cap provisions and so they defined combined annual municipal budget as excluding expenditures from grants. I believe the current state of the State Law which governs us would render those Ordinances null and void. Now if you want to exclude things like grants and other monies that aren't raised from taxes, it has to be a provision in the Charter itself. Our Charter doesn't have those provisions. So if we are going to make a change in the accounting, now is the time to do it.

President Wilshire

All set Alderman Jette?

Alderman Jette

I guess, if I may, I was looking at the – this might be appropriate to bring this up now. I looked at the total appropriations which are found on page 18 which is the amount that we talked about earlier was the General Fund appropriation. But the total appropriations which I think, I understand the current spending cap, the court had said it is not enforceable and this new law is going to make it enforceable once again. Right now we are not, as I understand it, we are not under that. But if we were under it, it limits the total appropriations to, as you pointed out, what the total appropriations were in Fiscal Year '21 and we can only increase that by the 3 year average, gross domestic product implicit price deflater for State and Local Government which I had trouble trying to figure out what this is current. CFO Griffin says he thinks it is around 2% or maybe slightly less than 2% but around 2%.

When I looked at the law, the law allows us, as you pointed out, one of you pointed out, the law allows by 10 votes to exempt principal and interest on bonds and capital investments which this year we budgeted \$18,152,055.00. If we subtract that, if we voted to subtract that principal and interest and capital expenditures of \$18 million plus, that would lower the total appropriations in the budget to – before this change that we are talking about right now – that would lower the total appropriations to less than what it was last year. So it would be, you know, if we adopted the Mayor's Budget it would be .7700's of a per cent, you know, less than 1% less than last year's budget. And if we adopted the amendments suggested by the Budget Review Committee it would be about a half a per cent less. In either case, it would certainly be less than the 2% that we would be allowed if the spending cap were currently in effect. So I bring that up now because I am wondering whether you would recommend that we consider whether it is necessary to make a motion to see whether 10 people vote to exempt the principal and interest and capital expenditures as provided in the Charter from that spending cap.

Attorney Bolton

You can only do that once a year. So if you wanted to take that full total I guess you are giving yourself as much flexibility as possible. But if you don't want to exempt the full total, you are narrowing your options. You can't go back and change it later. So there's no need to do it if this motion that is currently pending were to pass. If you do do that, exempt the full amount of capital expenditures and service on bonded debt, you still have not created enough space for the amount of grant money that is anticipated. So I would not recommend doing that. I would keep all of your options open and if you run into difficulties, you can decide whether that's an appropriate action to take. But the pending motion doesn't change the amount of taxes people will pay. I think any time you can solve a problem without increasing the amount of money that you have to have people pay, you are probably best off. We are talking about just the ability to spend money that we can obtain from other sources, other than our taxpayers. So I would think you would want to take full advantage of those opportunities. That's the import of the proposed amendment.

Alderman Jette

Thank you.

President Wilshire

Thank you. Alderman Klee?

Alderman Klee

Thank you Madam President. One of the statements I kind of want to make, the thing I hear up in Concord is be careful of unintended consequences. When this was proposed and it went through my Committee, Municipal & County Government, we talked about the unintended consequences of something as a grant. And we got feedback, well no, we put it into the Bill, you can exempt grants and you can exempt this. And when I tried to explain to them the reason why I felt strongly that this Bill was going after Nashua was

Nashua did not have that built into the Charter. Grants are not built into the Charter, just those two items that we have talked about, the principal and interest and so on. It seems to go on deaf ears. I tried to get them to change it to say, if it's not in a Charter it can be added or can be just automatically exempted and so on. And I got, No you've got to let your voters decide on that and we fought back and forth. The bottom line is this passed. And it passed with these, as far as I am concerned, these intended consequences, not unintended consequences. I feel very strongly that they were intended consequences. And I keep making a joke about my Ward 3 \$1 million dollar grant. When I first got elected, we put in for this grant for Locke Street to change this to make it safer, to make it better walking. We got the grant for \$1 million dollars. That was back in 2017. The monies are just going to come through, hopefully this fall. Now we are looking at 4 years to get this money and so on.

And I would hate to have to go to my Ward and say all this work that we did, we can't accept that \$1 million dollars. I would rather put it in as an appropriation and as a revenue so that it literally is a balanced budget. We cannot spend more than we get, but we can accept it. If I remember correctly at the public hearing for the budget there was ex-Alderman who stood up and was quite upset that he felt that we did not fund two organizations – one I believe was the Girl Scouts and another was Salvation Army I think it was and he was quite irate. He did not seem to understand that they didn't put in for those monies. But when you look at all the lists that we work at for the Human Resources Committee, the HUD grant and so on, we would not be able to give those out if we don't put those here ahead of time. And I would hate to have to say to all of those companies such as The Front Door Agency and so on, we can't help you, we can't fund you. Or the HOME Loan Program, goodness, or the renter's loan program. I would hate to say, we can't do that this year because we didn't have the foresight to think of this.

And where this is being zero and is not affecting the taxpayers, I don't think we will get pushback from the taxpayers. I keep referring to these things as "paper chasers". And I make a joke but I am very serious about it. If Ward 3 loses out \$1 million dollars, I am not going to be happy and I am going to have a lot of unhappy campers over our \$1 million dollars. So I would like to see this go through as it was recommended. But I do appreciate everything that Alderman Jette had brought up, those were really good points as to does it mean that we can't – I think it just helps clarify the situation. So thank you very much.

President Wilshire

Alderman Lopez.

Alderman Lopez

I think Alderman Klee is being a little bit kind about saying she'll be unhappy. If a mother is pushing a baby stroller down the street and gets hit by a car because we didn't fix that, people would be very unhappy. So these aren't just appropriations that are done on a whim, the CDBG money and the Review & Comment money for example support things like the expansion of the Nashua Soup Kitchen's Homeless Shelter because our City Welfare doesn't have the capacity to put up all of the homeless people in Nashua into motels; we don't even have the motel capacity for that. Those are things we rely on non-profit organizations to do in partnership with the City. And the City as a municipality is able to apply for those grants and all taxpayers benefit from that.

A project I am concerned about is the Rail Trail Extension which the bike path along West Hollis is very popular for people using it recreationally. It is also essential for kids traveling to and from school and traveling on the afternoons when there's a tremendous amount of traffic along West Hollis. It lets them move up and down the Rail Trail safely. It lets elderly people who are living in outer neighborhoods travel downtown to get to the hospital, to get to the pharmacy, to do things they need to do. So the extension on the other side to the East Hollis side, it's a big deal. And these are projects that Community Development Program has done based on need, based on a considerable amount of work that the State doesn't care about, didn't take into account. The State governs this way and at best it can be said to be incompetent. They are not getting high marks as the State of New Hampshire for governing any of these municipalities. We are, we are the ones who are working with our constituents and with our non-profit organizations to

solve problems including the problems that the State drops on us because partisan politics, people may be trying to create a certain narrative about our performance as Aldermen. Regardless of how well we do with our budget, the narrative is definitely going to be, we raised taxes, we spent more money.

And the culprits for are not the ones who are responsible for it. The State Representatives who are not our elected State Representatives, we are already hearing people trying to blame the Fire Department for wanting raises when they are trying to maintain a level of service, likely knowing that this budget doesn't actually account for their contract negotiations or that kind of stuff specifically. They are trying to make sure the response time is effective. We just had a fire yesterday on Prescott Street, if a house burns down that's not going to be a – oh let's elect a new person next year. That's a tragedy and that's potential lives lost. The response time for Nashua Fire was criticized in public comment earlier. I know last week they managed to catch a mattress that was on fire in a very heavily populated building with a lot of disabled people in it before it caused more damage than just to that unit, coming right through downtown, right through Main Street. The building is located on West Pearl.

So Nashua Fire does a lot of work. They have been responding to a lot of calls, even in the middle of a hurricane or whatever you want to call yesterday's flash storm. And we need to keep that service intact because lives depend on it, that's not where you want to cut. The Nashua Police from the State perspective, they may be saying, OH well let's fully fund the pension program even though we don't need 20% of the total program to keep it sustainable by any measure, let's do that because we feel like doing it but the impact on the ground is now Nashua PD is supposed to not upgrade their command center, not continue to make sure that they have compatible equipment with other parts of emergency response systems? They just made some major arrests yesterday of people who are involved in cocaine trafficking, felons that owned multiple firearms, they have been managing a number of increasing domestic terror threats in the City including white supremacy actions and intimidating behaviors that have actually started to penetrate even into our own public meetings.

This is not a good idea to cut resources from them because somebody on a sub-committee decided that they wanted to play games and maybe make a point. These are services we need for our Nashua residents that result in tragedy or catastrophe when we aren't able to provide them. I have made many, many comments about how we need more resources for people who are homeless and we need more resources for people who are struggling to make their rent or facing homelessness eviction. Alderman Klee mentioned the HOME funds. Those are important programs and that's not just our score on a wallet hub survey. That's what our residents and what our taxpayers deserve. And if the intention of expanding our budget so that we can accept tax money that these taxpayers already paid to the Federal Government that we are returning in exchange for services into specific areas, that benefits them and I think it is something we need to do. I don't think we should hamstring our own budget because somebody in Concord decided to take away the rights of Nashua taxpayers to repair or manage their own spending cap and just imposed it on us in what I think is a pretty unusual manner.

So I think the motions that are made are reasonable and I think the costs that are associated are essential and has been stated multiple times, this is grant money that is not going to increase the taxpayer's bill.

President Wilshire

Alderman Dowd?

Alderman Dowd

Yes, I would just like to reiterate so it doesn't get lost in the shuffle here. We had a goldenrod copy of R-21-142 and the motion I made to change the items in the budget book as was pointed out by Mr. Griffin allowed to change the numbers in the golden rod copy and I think the motion is to accept the motion that was made and accept the golden rod copy with the new numbers in it before finally vote on the budget.

President Wilshire

Anyone else? Alderman Jette?

Alderman Jette

Perhaps I missed it, but I know you made a report about what the Budget Committee did, I am not sure that you made a motion.

Alderman Dowd

Yeah I did make a motion. I can repeat it.

President Wilshire

Would you Alderman Dowd?

MOTION BY ALDERMAN DOWD TO AMEND R-21-142 TO CHANGE PAGE 34, ACCOUNT NUMBER 48320 TO THE AMOUNT OF \$77,411,477.00 AND ON PAGE 271 ACCOUNT NUMBER 70160 CONTINGENCY GRANTS TO THE AMOUNT OF \$77,411,477.00 AND THEREFORE IN MAKING THOSE CHANGES TO THE BUDGET BOOK IT CHANGES THE GOLDEN ROD COPY ON LINE 7 IT CHANGES THE NUMBER \$291,026,961.00 TO \$368,438,438.00. AND ON LINE 8 IN THE GOLDEN ROD COPY IT CHANGES THE \$64,979,022.00 TO \$142,390,499.00

ON THE QUESTION

Alderman Dowd

So that would be the new Golden Rod Copy to accept under R-21-142.

Alderman Jette

I'm sorry to be so dense about this but did you include increasing the Police Budget?

Alderman Dowd

That was in the original golden rod copy the \$291,026,961.00 included the 3 motions made that we voted on in the Budget Committee. That's already in there.

Alderman Jette

OK. Thank you.

President Wilshire

So Madam Clerk, I believe the motion before us is to amend Resolution.

Alderman Dowd

To accept the golden rod copy as amended.

President Wilshire

With the golden rod copy. Is that correct?

Alderman Dowd

Yes.

President Wilshire

Is there any further discussion on that motion? Alderman Jette?

Alderman Jette

So are we voting, it's all one package?

Alderman Dowd

Yes we are just voting for the changes to the golden copy and then the golden rod copy after we approve it will be the final budget that we will then try to adopt of R-21-142.

Alderman Jette

Having it all together like this makes it difficult because there are parts of this I don't agree with. I agree with adding the grant revenue and the grant appropriations, I agree with that. I agree with taking the \$495,745.00 for the Command Vehicle out of CERF, that's going to be bonded.

Alderman Dowd

Alderman Jette, perhaps I can clarify. After we pass the – so we have the clean golden rod copy, then there will be a second reading of R-21-142 that you can make other motions then.

Alderman Jette.

OK is that correct, am I jumping the gun here?

President Wilshire

No, I think what we could do to address that is to take this piece by piece, the Police, the Fire and then the grants.

Alderman Dowd

Attorney Bolton? Do we need to do that or can we just, could those be addressed under the final motion on the Budget?

Attorney Bolton

Well you can do what most pleases the majority of the Board. But the question posed or the indication was that it was to separate these things out when it was all packaged together. So it may be an appropriate way to approach is to do one motion about the changes in the Police Budget which I understand is two pieces; a second motion that deals with the Fire Department and a third motion that deals with the grants. And then maybe people will have a better understanding on how they wish to vote in each separate area.

President Wilshire

OK so the motion on the floor is to amend Resolution 21-142 by replacing it with the golden copy. What is the Board's pleasure? Alderman Jette?

Alderman Jette

I would like us to take it to separate it but I am not sure how to approach that. Can I just make a motion that we separate it?

President Wilshire

Yes. Sure.

Alderman Jette

And it either passes or not and we can go from there.

Alderman Dowd

Point of order, I think you'd have to amend the motion that is on the floor currently.

President Wilshire

I am not sure we do. We are moving to amend the Budget Resolution with the golden rod copy.

Alderman Dowd

There are pieces of the numbers that are in the motion that I made that he wants to change. So if he wants a piece of that out, I would suggest he make a motion to amend to eliminate, reduce, add whatever he wants to do to that particular item that's in there.

President Wilshire

OK we can do that route. Alderman Jette did you want to make a motion on the Police Department's budget?

Alderman Jette

Maybe someone could help me locate where it is in this golden rod copy?

Alderman Dowd

It would be the motion on the floor, the total budget including what we talked about for the grants is \$368,438,438.00. The motion on the Police Budget a portion of that is \$241,338.00.

Alderman Jette

I am having trouble following you.

Alderman Dowd

It's that sheet that you got that had the motions on it from the Budget Committee. And if you want to eliminate the adjustment to the Police Department that would be \$241,338.00.

Alderman Jette

Yes I would like to amend the golden rod copy by eliminating \$241,338.00 from the Police Department line item 90120 which would restore it back to what the Mayor had proposed and I would like to speak to that.

MOTION TO AMEND BY ALDERMEN JETTE TO ELMINATE \$241,338.00 FROM THE POLICE DEPARTMENT LINE 90120ON THE QUESTION

President Wilshire

Alderman Jette?

Alderman Jette

So we have heard the Mayor explain his position how he started from being a given difficult task based upon the consequences of what the State Pension Fund, the amount that they are asking us to pay plus the legislature's not funding schools as much, not funding or giving us our full share of the Rooms & Meals tax. There were several things that the State Budget is doing that is reducing the support that the City is getting from the State which has put us in a difficult situation. And he explained how he asked the various departments to either maintain a zero budget or reduce it and how he tried to get the Police Department to go with, I think it was a 1.7% cost of living increase. And the Police came back and said that they want – that they don't want to do that. So the effect of the Mayor holding them to the 1.7% cost of living increase if I understood it correctly was that it would reduce their proposed budget by about \$241,338.00.

Now their entire budget is according to page 144, their entire budget is \$35,320,858.00. That is a 6.7% increase over last year's budget and the Mayor asking them to reduce that by \$241,338.00 seemed fairly reasonable to me. I think that in a \$35 million dollar budget they would be able to find that amount and I think during the budget hearing, the Police Chief told us that he could meet the Mayor's request that whatever amount of money we provided to the Police Department he would live with that but he pointed to us that that there would be a reduction in services in some way. And he pointed out that he would have to eliminate 4 police officers. I questioned him about that because I think when I divide the \$240 or whatever amount that the Mayor is asking him to reduce the budget by 4 I end up with around \$60,000.00. I know Police Officers make more than that and when you add in their benefits it is a lot more than that. And I think, you know, I have a lot of respect for the Police Department and the Chief and the Deputies and all of the Police Officers, I think he does a great job, it is an extremely well run Department.

But when we are asking other Departments to reduce their budgets or limit their budgets to under 2% and the Police are asking us for 6.7% I think it's not fair. I think that and I am not going to pretend to be able to look at their budget and come up with items that I would say they can reduce. The Chief and there's a Commission that can do that, they have an excellent budget person. So I am not going to tell them how to reduce their budget by \$241,000.00 but I certainly believe that they can. We are talking about \$35 million, \$241,000.00 out of \$35 million, it seems to me that that's a reasonable request. The Mayor is trying to deal with a difficult situation and he's asked the Departments to cooperate in that regard and I think it is reasonable. You know, we've just been awarded or this Wallet Hub has said that we are the 4th Best Run City in the Nation and that's certainly not because of anything I've done. I think it is largely due to the Mayor and his management of the City Departments including the Police Department. And I support him in his trying to lessen the impact on the taxpayers as much as possible. So that's why I make that motion.

President Wilshire

Alderman Dowd?

Alderman Dowd

Yes I am the liaison of the Police Commissioners and yes they will operate with any amount of money we give them. But you can't expect the same amount of service. And when they put their budget together they didn't add anything, they just kept the same services and the same manning and everything that they

had last year. And then it was cut so there are going to be losses. If you take that into consideration when the fentanyl traffic is growing, and I am sure you get the same reports I do on the arrests that are being made and during this last year the Police Officers that were physically harmed and/or out of work because of arrests that were made, it's not an easy job. It is protecting the people of Nashua. It is a safety issue. I for one am not going to have the State drive the safety of our citizens in Nashua.

That amount of money will allow them to maintain the same levels of service that they had last year and provide the services. There are a lot of things that they won't be able to do, believe it or not, with that cut. And the people of Nashua are going to – you know right now they are not at the full complement of officers that they could have and should have by their analysis. I don't know how many times I've heard people say, OH it takes a police officer 10 minutes to get here. That's because each sector has one car, three each shift. We are not over policed, we are adequately policed and they do a great job with the staff they have. And I, for one, am not going to cut one penny from their request to maintain the services that they have provided over the past year which were exemplary.

Last year they were commended as one of the best, if not the best, Police Accredited Agency in the United States. That is something to be proud of. And, I for one, will not cut them to save a couple buck on the tax rate. You know, if you are somebody out there and your home is being burglarized because drug dealers need money to buy their drugs, you want a police officer to be able to respond and you don't want them 10 minutes later, you want them as soon as he can get there. If you follow the amount of arrests and things that have gone on in the City and the lack of development of drug dealers because we have two POP units, which we may lose one if this cut does in, I for one, would not ever try to save that much money and lose that kind of protection.

President Wilshire

Alderman Lopez.

Alderman Lopez

Echoing a lot of what Alderman Dowd said, I find it extremely inconsistent to claim that you have high respect for the budgetary prowess of the Police Department and respect for the good work that they do on the job while literally telling them that you are just going to drop their budget done, despite their objections and despite their concerns with the assumption that they can make it work based on what you are looking for. I can't follow that logic. I would say that there's a big difference between cocaine and methamphetamine which are two of the more prevalent drugs on the street than fentanyl and carfentanil. Carfentanil is definitely dangerous because it is an area infector so it is a danger to First Responders. But someone who is cocaine or somebody who is using methamphetamines is typically much more agitated, aroused, animated, violent. One of the areas that we scored very highly on in order to get our good governance was low incidents of violent crime.

So if we decide to ignore the police and what they report as their level of need a time when we are seeing an increase in the substances that contribute to violent crime, we are going to see a rise in violent crime. That doesn't just translate to Wallet Hub rankings that translates to death, injuries, our own people being put in a greater level of harms way. The best way to respond to those types of situations is to intervene before they start to become widespread. We did not collectively, as a State, do a very good job with the opioid crisis when it first presented itself, we responded after it was very evident in low income situations or in areas of poverty, we really only responded to it when it was impossible to ignore.

Our response was extremely effective thanks to a pretty healthy amount of leadership and vision from the Fire Department and from Mayor Donchess in arranging the Safe Station Program which the State took over, realigned and redesigned into a model that is not as effective is not anywhere near as responsive. They awarded contracts to partners that basically resulted in our Fire Department not being able to take 24 hour walk ups or calls because there would be nowhere to send them to. Apparently the crisis is now just a 9:00 to 5:00 bureaucratic exercise, it is not the same situation. So we don't have the same protections

that we had even two years ago against the opioid crisis which was people getting high, people being sedentary, not people getting animated and attacking each other and using weapons on each other. We are in a very different risk phase right now.

I don't know if anybody was not paying attention last year, but tensions got a little bit with the pandemic. There was a little bit of political friction that was taking place; you guys may have noticed it. And that hasn't exactly gone away. There are organized groups that are, as a result of that, operating in Nashua that Nashua PD is concerned about, Nashua PD is intervening in. Some Wards get a little bit more of it than others. So I will grant that probably Ward 4 and maybe Ward 3 and maybe Alderman Caron's Ward see a little bit more Police activity and need than other Aldermen who feel comfortable cutting the Police. I don't, I think it is a very important Department to fund and we can't look at it being fair to expect them to take the exact same cut in budget on a numerical basis as like the GIS Department or any of the services that are really nice for us to have and do contribute overall to the City's services to constituents but are more amenities, not requirements. It doesn't matter how quick with respect to City Clerk Lovering, how quickly our City Clerk's Office is able to process your motor vehicle if your car gets stolen.

So I think it is important that we recognize the importance of the Police Department with more than rhetoric and not cut them any further. And finally I would remind my fellow Aldermen that the Police Department were the ones who found the solution to their overages and figured out the CERF strategy in the first place. It's not like they are not trying to work on this and they are not making recommendations. I think we should listen to the recommendations instead of accepting them and pushing for more despite what they are telling us.

President Wilshire

All set Alderman Lopez?

Alderman Lopez

Yes.

President Wilshire

Alderman Tencza.

Alderman Tencza

Thank you Madam President. I just wanted to make a couple of points on Alderman Jette's motion, just generally. I think when we speak about percentage increases I think it is important to look at what those percentages mean really for the tax rate because we throw out numbers like 3% or 4% and none of us like to raise people's taxes and we all, I think, understand that any tax increase some members of our community more than others. But just as an example I want to use my house at 10 Monica Drive about what a 4% or 3% tax increase would be for me and my family. So if I do the math at 3.5% tax increase would amount to about an additional \$250.00 for us next year added on to our tax bill or about \$21.00 a month extra that we would pay. And then a 4% increase in the tax bill would be about \$280.00 or \$23.00 per month that we would pay in additional taxes.

And so when we say we think of 4% as being an outrageous number, you know, I can confidently speak for myself, for many of my neighbors when I say that we are fortunate and we gladly would pay the extra \$23.00 a month to keep our City services where they are. Not just Police and Fire but School, DPW, City Hall, everyone who does a fantastic job to make Nashua such an attractive place to live. One of the things that we forget about when we are having this discussion is not only what the tax increases are but the values of property have increased in the City and how that affects folks as well. There are certainly people who are benefiting because Nashua is an attractive place to live and more and more people want to move here and be part of our community.

Certainly like many people have talked about a lot of that is the quality of our services – Schools, Police and Firefighters. So I think these additional funds that the Budget Committee has included for Police and Fire are worth the investment. The next thing I just want to point out is if you look at the cities and towns surrounding Nashua, our tax rate is right in line with what many of the other towns are charging their residents. Per thousand the Hudson tax rate is \$21.37 for 2020; Salem is \$22.02 per thousand; Merrimack is \$24.06 per thousand; Hollis \$23.18 per thousand. Now those towns don't offer the same services that we do; they certainly don't have the same number of employees. So our tax rate I feel, again, at \$22.61 per thousand or even as an increase it still is very much in line with those towns and again a great deal for our residents.

If you look at cities, the cities in New Hampshire, Manchester's tax rate is \$24.66 per thousand and Concord's is \$26.76 per thousand. So the residents of Nashua, again, are coming out ahead as opposed to what other cities are able to do for or the cost to live in those other cities. So I would hope that this Board and if Aldermen Jette makes a second motion as it relates to the Fire Department I may have some other comments. But I would hope that the Board takes all of that into consideration. Certainly if there are people that are affected by any tax increases, I would hope that the Legal Department and Assessing will work with them to be able to come up with a way that is not a detriment to them, especially our elderly population or people who are maybe more low income. But given the work and the consideration that the Budget Committee has done and these Departments have done, I hope that we can come together and support the Budget as it came out of the Budget Committee. Thank you.

President Wilshire

Thank you. Alderman Klee?

Alderman Klee

Thank you Madam President. I am going to be honest, when I came here I thought why should we increase Police and Fire the additional amount over the 1.7% cost of living that the Mayor had put in, especially considering that so many Departments had either gone a flat line or they went negative, they decreased their budget. But as I have been sitting here listening, I think Alderman Jette made some very good comments and remarks but then I look to my other colleagues and one of the things that Alderman Lopez had brought was the number of hate groups coming in. We are seeing them openly doing this and I can tell you in my Ward I have witnessed it as well. I have witnessed people being threatened. I know we have had more FBI interaction and so on and knowing that, I would have anxiety of not giving them what they say they need. I do hear year after year, and I will be honest, if we don't get this we are going to have to cut this, we are going to our POP unit, we are going to cut this or we are going to cut that. It does eventually become noise and that's kind of the way I walked in here, I heard this last year, I heard this next year.

And Chief Carignan always makes the comment, we will make do with what we have and I believe even Chief Rhodes has made the same comment, we will make do with whatever we have. And I feel confident that they would. But then looking at this of \$241,338.00 I do agree with what Alderman Jette said, I believe they could find it. But to what cost and to what end. And I can't sit back and allow these hate groups to just keep getting bigger and bigger. And as much as I agree with the increase in opioids and all the other drugs that are coming through here, the hate groups are the things that scare me the most right now. And I am seeing them all over social media, I am seeing them in pictures that people are proudly standing by them, those that are running for office and so on. It is becoming the acceptable norm and I think we have to fight that on all levels and I think even our Fire Department will be fighting those as well. So at this point, I have kind of been won over to passing this as it has been proposed. So thank you for giving me the time.

President Wilshire

You're welcome. Anyone else? The motion is to restore the \$241,338.00 bottom line cut – no to eliminate that. Seeing no further discussion, would the Clerk please call the roll?

Alderman Klee

So this is not give them the \$241?

City Clerk Lovering

The motion by Alderman Jette was to subtract \$241,338.00 from the golden rod copy by reducing Department 150 – Police 90120 bottom line by that amount - \$241,338.00.

A viva voce roll call was taken which resulted as follows:

Yea: Alderman Jette	1
Nay: Alderman O'Brien, Alderman Klee, Alderman Dowd, Alderman Caron, Alderman Lopez, Alderman Tencza, Alderman Schmidt, Alderman Cleaver, Alderman Harriott-Gathright, Alderman Wilshire	10

MOTION FAILED

President Wilshire

Do I have another motion? Alderman Jette?

Alderman Jette

I am sorry to waste everyone's time but I would like to make a similar motion to eliminate \$418,771.00 from the Fire Department's bottom line – Account Number 90120.

MOTION BY ALDERMEN JETTE TO REDUCE THE FIRE DEPARTMENT'S BOTTOM LINE BY ELIMINATING \$418,771.00 BY ROLL CALL

ON THE QUESTION

President Wilshire

You've heard the motion? Alderman Dowd?

Alderman Dowd

Yes, we are still keeping part of the Mayor's cut of \$80,000.00. What we are keeping in the firemen's budget is the ability to keep an entire company of firemen on line. And it is not as simple as that amount of money would pay for 16 people, it is not the way it is set up. Also it is allowing for a half-time, starting in January for a safety officer in the Marshall's Office which will be doing the twice a year, required State inspections of schools that hasn't been done. And from the discussions we have had in this construction project, they are finding a lot of things that should be found by this Fire Marshall. We have 18 schools, that is 36 different inspections plus this person is also going to be the person that manages capacity at different places, you know? We don't want to have some place burn down because nobody checked it and they couldn't have that many people in it.

And also they do the training for the firemen that have been filled in by other people who aren't doing the full job that they should be doing because they have to do the training; training is pretty essential. So it is something that existed before, it was cut from the Fire Department by the previous Mayor for a budget to stay under the spending cap. And it is something that is required. Let's hypothetically say if they take a Fire Company off line, they take a truck off line. We are spending between \$800,000.00 and \$1.5 million dollars on trucks. Are we going to have that truck sitting somewhere that it can't be used. To me that is physically irresponsible. And also, who is the first person to arrive if you have a medical emergency, a fire or some type of other activity? It is always the Fire Department. They are all paramedics and some of them are even more highly trained medically. If you are having a heart attack, do you want to wait a few extra minutes for the ambulance to get there instead of the fire truck? I don't think so. I don't.

We didn't give them all the money back that they had requested but it makes sense to give them this amount of money to retain the fire company and hire this person that is critical, I think, to school safety and the safety of many of our businesses in town.

President Wilshire

Alderman Jette?

Alderman Jette

I won't repeat everything I said previously about trying to support the Mayor and what I said about the Police Department pretty much applies to the Fire Department. I haven't been around as long as you have, but when Alderman Klee mentioned that every budget season any cut is going to be the end of the world. I don't think so. A lot of these problems that you mention are problems that have existed for year. I agree with you that they should be fixed but picking this year under the financial restraints that we have to remedy those situations, I just think that it could be postponed and I think that cooperating with the Mayor's efforts to try to deal with this budget, is the right thing to do. I would have expected the Fire Commissioners and the Fire Department to help out as well not try to solve problems that have existed. The Fire Department, I've heard the Fire Commissioners say "it's never a good year" and the Chief say, "it's never a good year for the Fire Department". But since I've been here the Fire Department always needs something. Every Department needs something.

I am sure there are projects that the Department of Public Works would like to tackle this year. A 6% increase would enable them to do that. And I understand about the critical role that they play and they may not believe me when I say this, but I appreciate the firefighters and I am trying to support them but there's only so much money and so I am sorry I can't fully support them to the degree that they would like on this issue. But that's why I made the motion.

President Wilshire

Alderman Lopez.

Alderman Lopez

So my impression is that these aren't these are like "to do projects" or like on the same level as repainting a park or trying to re do a pool. Making sure that we have our schools inspected for fire safety is more leveraging assets against a large unmet need. So the fact that we've gone this far or we have had this many years without being able to address that issue doesn't speak particularly highly of the governance that we were ranked with. It probably speaks more to the Fire Department compensation for their lack of resources by working overtime and I am pretty sure that was part of the Chief's reference as well that they are being spread increasingly thin. We have expressed a lot of pride in ourselves at growing the tax base and investing in new opportunities to build and grow our City; that comes with dangers, that comes with liabilities. There's a huge building that collapsed in Miami that speaks to the need to do regular inspections, when you don't do that the human cost is high, a tragedy is enormous.

But more specifically the actions and the reputation and the performance of the Fire Department does specifically benefit people's insurance premiums and that is a financial value. I think they've been asking for another fire station for years and we have not been able to even approach finding the resources for that. But being able to make sure that they are keeping up with the training of the fire department that they have without overextending their existing staff as it expands to respond to calls with taller and more complex buildings that we are authorizing – that's being frugal, that's being efficient and that's being responsible. This year of all years, doesn't mean that there is going to be less fire just because Concord decided that they were going to play a little fast and loose with our ability to self-govern Nashua. There have been more fires I believe, there have been more incidents, we just got through a major heat wave. And again, yesterday we had a fire in the middle of a rain storm.

So I don't think that the bottom line of the Fire Department is going to be contingent to politics. I think we need to be looking at the needs that they present and what they are actually going to do with the money. I don't think they are asking for anything ridiculous, if we have events and people are coming out of COVID-19 and restaurants are trying to recover from economic damage and they want to bring in as many people as possible, we should probably have somebody there to manage that occupancy so that we don't have to call all of the fire companies to deal with a major first aid disaster or a major event. Recently the Fire Department has been called for mutual aid calls in some pretty big situations in other cities too when those cities found that they didn't have the capability to respond themselves and that's not something we should be entertaining.

I think, again, some neighborhoods are different. Mine has a lot of older buildings, has a lot of older citizens in those buildings who may not have the same access to using stairs quickly or mobility or that kind of thing. So using the example from a couple of weeks ago, what was stopped immediately as a mattress fire could have been a devastating event which as a City, would have cost the taxpayers a lot more to respond to and would have cost the families and the associates of the people involved even more. So I support their request and I don't think that the minimal impact that it would have on the individual tax bill is equivalent to the services that they offer. I think it is important that we actually make difficult decisions in terms of governance. And that doesn't just mean figuring out what we can cut and tell ourselves we made a good decision, it also means having the courage to say there are some services that are very important. Their services are important and we are going to match all the rhetoric we give in support of them with actual action supporting them.

President Wilshire

Alderman Klee?

Alderman Klee

Thank you again Madam President. I just want to make a comment. When we talk about the possibility of having to close a fire station and knowing that all the reports of recent time are telling us we should increase by 2 fire stations, I get a little anxious. I know I had someone kind of joke to me and said "how would you like it if the Amherst Fire Department was one of those that had closed". And I said, "no it is the most historic one, it's got to stay there and I will fight for that". But then I look back at recent times within the past month there was in one 24 hour period there were two (inaudible – audio interference) in Ward 3. One on Concord Street where the entire home is gone. That family has been displaced and luckily we had no damage to the buildings that were very close to it and that was because we had fast response from the Amherst Street Fire Department. They are right there, right around the corner and no other homes were lost; that one was sadly lost. And it is part of the historic district and it brings a tear every time I drive by it. And then Leighton Street. We had a fire there that ended up with a lot of water damage and those people had to be displaced and so on.

That was within a 24 hour period; one happened very early in the morning and one happened in the afternoon, I think it was. If that Fire Department had not been there, would we have lost more, would we

have lost lives? Luckily those on Concord Street were not home at the time so there were no lost lives. But there were houses that were houses that were right next to it. And I shudder to think of what would have happened (inaudible – audio interference) the homes on Concord Street are basically wood-based and they go up like a matchbox. And we have a lot of old homes as Alderman Lopez had brought up throughout our entire City that are made of just wood base and so again I came with the idea that nope, we are not going to do this. I was of the same mindset that Alderman Jette was. We are not going to increase this and listening to the others speak and so on, I think we do need to give them the \$418,000.00. So thank you.

President Wilshire

Alderman Schmidt?

Alderman Schmidt

Thank you Madam President. The economy is cyclical. There are times when you really have to tighten your belt and everybody suffers. There were, what 10 years ago, 2010 – the State also decided to tighten belts and hurt the City. And we had to tighten our belts. I wasn't part of this Chamber at that time but I still remember it. I don't think this is the time to tighten the belt of the Fire or the Police, I really don't. I think that they are the boots on the ground, they are the people who save lives, they are the ones that show up every single time. And if somebody has to wait an extra 10 minutes to get their registration done on their car so be it, we can live with that for a little while. But we cannot have somebody with a heart attack waiting 10 minutes, that's just not the City we are. We have to be proud of the service we receive and I personally am.

Also I don't think there's any fat in any of these budgets. We see to the penny where they plan on spending. We see to the penny what the State is demanding from us, what the requirements are that we have to live within. And there's no question in my mind that there is nothing that we can really cut without hurting ourselves. Now the study that was done on the Fire Department really surprised me in a couple of ways. Now we know that there's buildings in tough shape for the Fire Department, we know they need updating. We know there's many things that we could do to improve – something that really surprised me was the morale, I remember that being an issue. And it is easy to see why it is hard for the Police or Fire to feel that they are not important in the City. It's very easy when you sit and you listen to people say well you can cut out another \$200,000.00 without really hurting anything. It's not the truth, you can't. This is important money for important service.

And I really feel that taking this money out away from you is an embarrassment to the City if we do that. I really feel that very strongly about it. And frankly, I pay taxes here too so I am not interested in raising my taxes any more than anybody else is. But I am really grateful that you are here and listening to this. And thank you very much. Thank you.

President Wilshire

Alderman Dowd?

Alderman Dowd

Just two quick things. One there are a number of things that the Fire Department could have asked for, especially as a result of that report. They are not asking for us to build another station right now anyway which would add at least one fire company; and now we are talking about cutting one? And the number of developments that have gone on in this past year and are continuing to go on, with the same number of people they've had, unless we cut their budget and they have less people. You know, we have got a new high rise going on School Street. On West Hollis Street we have that wooden condo structure, the Hangar Building is being renovated and that's a whole building. And I don't know how many new houses have been built. I know when I was still in real estate I sold a bunch of them. And there are a lot of them, I wouldn't venture to guess – it's in the 100's – in the last year. And more importantly, we are building a 4-story new

school down south, I want a fire truck there if we have a problem. Now granted, we are going to build it so it is anti-fire, but you never know.

Alderman Lopez

Especially if it doesn't have a road.

Alderman Dowd

That would be difficult.

President Wilshire

All set Alderman Dowd?

Alderman Dowd

Yes.

President Wilshire

Alderman Tencza?

Alderman Tencza

Thank you Madam President. Again just briefly, I think that the difference in the money restored by the Budget Committee in the Mayor's Budget is really minimal to include it for the Fire Department. I just also wanted to point out similar to what Alderman Schmidt was saying, I think we should look at this a little differently and be proud of the money we are funding for these Departments. Again, Police and Fire are a source of pride for the Board of Aldermen, the City; certainly we tout all of their accomplishments and everything they have done over the last – throughout their histories. And so again it is a good investment.

But I know that there were some concerns about how their budgets have increased over the last 6 years. I went back and I looked at the numbers and if you take out the fringe benefits which the Departments really have no control over and you look back at the Fire Department's budget over the last 10 years, yes it has increased over the last 5 or 6 years, but over the last 10 years it has only increased at a pace of 1.5% per year. So again, I think we should be proud that we are making the decisions to kind of restore their budget to where it should be or it should have been all of the last years and I hope that going forward, I think that the Fire Department, as a liaison, I can say that I think that they know that going forward their budget and these increases are not always going to be able to be what we have been – the 3% and 4% that we have been able to give in the last several years. But really what we have been doing is playing catch up for the 4 years previous when their budget only went up about 1.0% a year. So again I hope that we can support this and keep the firefighters on the road and in their fire houses. Thanks.

President Wilshire

Thank you. Alderman Cleaver?

Alderman Cleaver

Thank you Madam President. I am very impressed with the Budget Committee's work with all the Departments and their work and I think we have done extremely well, especially Fire and Police. And I think we have the duty to pass this budget as is, without any cuts. It is already bare bones if you will and I think it is outstanding as it is, and we are very fortunate that we have been able to get it under control and keep it

as low as it is. So I am in favor of the budget as is, very strongly in favor of no cuts and passing our budget as it has been prepared. Thank you very much.

President Wilshire

Thank you. Anyone else? The motion is to reduce the Fire Department Line 90120 by \$418,771.00. Seeing no further discussion, would the Clerk please call the roll?

A viva voce roll call was taken which resulted as follows:

Yea: Alderman Jette 1

Nay: Alderman O'Brien, Alderman Klee, Alderman Dowd,
Alderman Caron, Alderman Lopez, Alderman Tencza,
Alderman Schmidt, Alderman Cleaver,
Alderman Harriott-Gathright, Alderman Wilshire 10

MOTION FAILED

President Wilshire

Are there any further motions on the budget? OK the motion before us is to amend by adopting Resolution 21-142.

Alderman Dowd

To the golden rod copy.

President Wilshire

The golden rod copy, yes – by Roll Call. Would the Clerk please call the roll?

Alderman Klee

Just one clarification, I'm sorry. We are approving the \$368,438,438.00 for the General Fund Appropriation and the \$142,390,499.00 to the General Fund Revenues, correct?

Alderman Dowd

Yes.

A viva voce roll call was taken which resulted as follows:

Yea: Alderman O'Brien, Alderman Klee, Alderman Dowd,
Alderman Caron, Alderman Lopez, Alderman Tencza,
Alderman Jette, Alderman Schmidt, Alderman Cleaver,
Alderman Harriott-Gathright, Alderman Wilshire 11

Nay:

MOTION CARRIED

Alderman Dowd

Madam President, I think we are ready for the final reading on R-21-142.

President Wilshire

Yes, I am.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS – RESOLUTIONS

R-21-142

Endorsers: Mayor Jim Donchess
Alderman Linda Harriott-Gathright

RELATIVE TO THE ADOPTION OF THE FISCAL YEAR 2022 PROPOSED BUDGET FOR THE CITY OF NASHUA GENERAL, ENTERPRISE, AND SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS

Given its second reading;

A viva voce roll call was taken which resulted as follows:

Yea: Alderman O'Brien, Alderman Klee, Alderman Dowd,
Alderman Caron, Alderman Lopez, Alderman Tencza,
Alderman Jette, Alderman Schmidt, Alderman Cleaver,
Alderman Harriott-Gathright, Alderman Wilshire

11

Nay:

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MOTION CARRIED

Resolution R-21-142 declared duly adopted as amended.

PERIOD FOR GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Jim Tolner Yes I just want to thank the Mayor and the Board for their hard work on this budget and I am sure you are very happy that this is resolved. And I appreciate the support. Thank you.

Laurie Ortolano 41 Berkeley Street. Just a couple of things. You know I want to remind you that when Alderman Tencza talks about the impact of a 4% increase on property valuations, you are failing to recognize that next year is a reassessment year and we are going to get a new 2022 tax rate once Vision reassesses all the property. And we have not had really any information from the City that I know of that has talked about the impact and the balancing between the Commercial and Residential properties. I can tell you looking at the abatements right now, there's a lot of big commercial abatements, I think the valuation is for assessment reduction is somewhere around \$68 million and I know the commercial properties during KRT's update were valued around \$3.7 million and residential was around \$6.3. We were able to balance that off 50/50 but you are seeing the commercial drops substantially more with potentially a higher vacancy rate.

I know what the economy is doing when it comes to home prices and I will tell you something, you've got a big issue coming your way with senior citizens and I addressed this to you already but the Board ignored in this budget. Your exemption program for senior citizens based on hardship for 75 and older is \$224,000.00 is your max exemption. Well when that was set, KRT in 2018 the average home price was \$260,000.00 that means seniors could get a pretty good exemption at \$224,000.00 and at 80 years or older it was \$280,000.00. But look at what has happened now, the average home price in Nashua this year, it is not even finalized is probably closing in on \$430,000.00 to \$450,000.00. Your seniors are not going to get an exemption at all like they got. They are going to be paying \$224,000.00 of taxable income. And you had, according to your MS1 you are giving \$160 million dollars in tax exemptions to senior citizens on your MS1. That is primarily out of your residential total assessment of \$6.3 billion. That's a substantial amount. So you have just swung a whole bunch of seniors out there and that 4% increase on top of a Vision

reassessment update is going to be a pretty difficult pill to swallow and I wouldn't be surprised if you don't see ...

Alderman O'Brien

30 seconds.

Ms. Ortolano... the need higher. So I think the tax impact assessment was too superficial and I think that the increase to this budget was unacceptable. Thank you.

President Wilshire

Anyone else from the public wishing to give public comment? Seeing no one. Remarks by Members of the Board.

REMARKS BY THE MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF ALDERMEN

Alderman Dowd

I want to thank the Budget Committee for all their nights out and their hard work on the budget. It is, of course, a tough year, but I have been dealing with the budgets in the City for 40 years. I don't remember one when we came in and said, "man this is a great year for the budget". I know there are ups and downs but they are never above that line it says, "hey we got a great budget". I think that we have done a very good job protecting our Police and Fire Departments and in doing so, protecting the citizens and the tax payers of the City of Nashua where these services are critical. Other services aren't critical. I have full respect for everybody that works for the City and support them wholeheartedly and I applaud them for coming in at the numbers they came in at. But Police and Fire are extremely important. And it's not like these two groups were asking for all kinds of new things. No. They were trying to keep things pretty much as they've had them in providing a great job to the City of Nashua.

As far as salaries, firemen – how many people do you know that run into burning buildings? How many people do you know that go under the concrete of a caved in building to try and save people? You know? That fire down in Massachusetts, 100 and some odd degrees out there and the firemen are running into the building and coming out with heat exhaustion and ending up in the hospital. Firemen do a great job; Police do a great job. And we can't shortchange them. And nobody likes to pay taxes, I think that goes without saying. And this year if we had any cooperation from the State of New Hampshire, we wouldn't have had an increase. We may have even had a decrease even with the additions we made. So that's what needs to be fixed and I still want to see those people that run the State Pension Plan come down and talk to us.

Alderman Klee

Thank you Madam President. And I want to echo the words that Alderman Dowd said. I really would like to get the people from the Pension Plan, the retirement group here to try to explain to us and the taxpayers here of Nashua why these numbers keep going up and so on. And I'd like to also thank the Budget Committee, you did a thankless job. Truly it is and I wasn't able to attend all of them for various health reasons, but I have watched them all. And I don't want to you fought amongst yourselves but you discussed amongst yourselves...

Alderman Lopez

Robust.

Alderman Klee

Robustly, yes. And everybody on both sides made very good points and I think you did come up with a good budget and I thank you for that. You made our job here a little easier because you ferreted it out during the meetings. I'd also like to just kind of comment again on the fire on Concord Street. When the fire happened it was called in by the local ice-cream truck gentleman who was going by and saw the smoke and called the fire. And as a result of that, he got stuck there. He could not leave because there were hoses all around him and he made a bad situation good by giving the children who were being displaced as they got out of school, he gave them popsicles and different things to try to soothe them. He also gave popsicles and I believe water to the firefighters that were there. So instead of sitting there and being grump and so on he reached out. I don't this gentleman's name, but I'd like to publicly thank him.

Alderman Lopez

Hazy ice. He lives in Ward 4.

Alderman Klee

Hazy Ice, who lives in Ward 4 but he helped out those in Ward 3 so I would like to publicly thank him for that. And I want to make a reminder that 4th of July is coming up this weekend. We are having a firework display at Holman Stadium and I pray that that's where it stays. I know it won't, but I know there will be some private ones. Let's not put our firefighters and our police to any extra work, keep them at home and where they belong. And please stay safe this weekend. Thank you.

Alderman Lopez

Ironically Hazy Ice could not join us for the Tree Street Block Party because the Fire Department was helping us with the road closure and he kind of got deflected a little bit. But we appreciate you, both of you. Nashua Fire actually helped us with our road closure and had to go respond to a fire so the Nashua PD and their Command Center were surprisingly well positioned as well. We had a really good event. I want to thank all the City Departments that participated too in the Touch a Truck event because there's a lot of City services that they don't really get a chance to meet the bus driver when they are not like hurrying on and off of it. They don't get a chance to talk about the Token (inaudible) which is a really helpful way to be able to pay for transportation to and from things. Even the Solid Waste Department was there and demystifying sidewalk pickups and solid waste pickups and all that kind of stuff for residents is really, really helpful.

I want to thank the organizers that worked with me, a lot of residents were contributing their time really as a labor of love. One couple that has been volunteering regularly for years the wife was in and out of the emergency room like 3 different times and they still found time to help. One of our food providers lost two close relatives in a week and was pretty close to Reverend Perkins as well and still made time to help. And just the amount of problem solving and overcoming adversity that I saw just in organizing a simple street party was very inspiring. And we need it because we are coming out of COVID-19, we were originally planning this thing when we were still unsure of whether vaccines were going to be effective and all of that kind of stuff and people stuck to it. So I want to thank everybody that helped organize the Tree Streets Block Party.

I do also want to comment a little bit on some of the public comment that has been made and the opinions that have been offered. I am concerned about the ratio of private properties to commercial properties – residential properties to commercial properties as well. But I would point out that there was probably some role in how the residential properties were more intrusively and thoroughly assessed because of tireless advocacy on the part of a small group of people who are now going to present as though that had nothing to do with this sudden shift of ratios and how people's property taxes are going to be going up because their houses were assessed at a higher value. People try to take on political positions and they are not necessarily taking on any position of responsibility for the results of those actions. It is frustrating to see.

When people who are serving in the State Legislature and do not live in Nashua take it upon themselves to modify our spending cap against the opposition of all of our elected officials that were sent to the house and using parliamentary tricks and maneuvers in order to achieve it, that is discouraging. It speaks to their moral character, it speaks to their credibility of their ideals and it is definitely not going to reflect in how effective their overall government is. If your platform politically has to be, I am going to sabotage other people to make them look bad so that I can look good by comparison, you are not doing anything other than tearing things down. So I applaud my fellow aldermen who have been focused during their terms here on building the City of Nashua up, being an inclusive place, being a welcoming City, working on development and forward thinking and creative ways to be economically responsible to be fiscally responsible to build the tax base and to grow a City that I think we are all proud of. So thank you everybody.

Alderman Jette

Thank you Madam President. So I want to thank my fellow aldermen for pointing out various areas in my way of thinking about trying to support the Mayor in reducing the Police and Fire budgets. I hope that with 4th of July coming, you know, I hope the Police still respond to complaints from Ward 5 about fireworks in spite of what I said tonight. And if there are any fires, I hope the Fire Department comes and doesn't cross our Ward off the list. We don't have a Fire Station in Ward 5 so I hope that doesn't deter them from responding if necessary.

We all do what we think is best in the interest of the City and even though we disagreed on these issues, I appreciated your statements and your sentiments and in the end we all voted for the budget. So thank you.

Alderman Schmidt

Thank you Madam President. I'd like to thank the Mayor for the budget. I think he helped produce a nice tight budget and it was pretty amazing to see what happened. Thank you very much. I also wanted to thank the leadership of Alderman Dowd on our Committee. The work he has done on this, nobody understands how much he does to help create a terrific budget. Thank you very much. One more point I wanted to make, I was watching the Board of Education the other day and at the end of it, Sandra Ziehm took a moment to talk about the people who had come to complain about various things. That day it was just about masks and she said, when we sit up here, we do a lot more than you would ever know. We pay attention to every aspect that we need to. You may come here just to talk about masks but that's a tiny part and we'd really like you to understand if you want to be part of what happens, you need more than just one issue. You really need to think about the entire job that we do. I thanked her for that because I don't think a lot of people realize that it is a big issue to talk about the budget but golly, you know, making sure somebody's stop sign gets put in place is really important to a lot of people too. And it is a terrific job that we get to do to protect the citizens that we serve. We are public servants after all, this is a terrific job and when I hear complaints about how we are doing so poorly I just have to shake my head and think about Sandra Ziehm and thank her very much for making the point. Just one more thing, the people who were at the meeting that day, there was a lot of anger and there was a gentleman there who was standing up in the back with his arms crossed and you could feel that it was unpleasant and that shouldn't happen, that's a business meeting. If there are comments that you need to make, you make a comment, we do that here. And when your comments are done, the business goes on. And I am really very grateful for how this Board manages that. And I think the Board of Education is under a little stress right now and we need to support people who are working on it. Thank you very much.

Alderman Cleaver

Thank you Madam President. Alderman Schmidt took one of my words but I want to express my appreciation to the Mayor and all the Department Heads for an outstanding job in the budget process and especially also to Chairman Dowd and the Budget Committee for an outstanding job; very, very well done, many, many hours of work to do that and to get to where we are right now. And also lastly I would like to wish everybody a very safe and happy 4th of July.

Alderman Harriott-Gathright

Thank you Madam President. I too would like to echo that, the Mayor's Budget as well as Alderman Dowd, thank you. And I too like Alderman Klee came here not sure how I wanted to truly vote on this but after hearing all the testimonies and realizing that everything that was being said truly was true, you know, you couldn't deny that we do have the best in both our Fire Department and our Police Department. So I too changed and I voted yes. I am happy I did. And I have two announcements. Saturday with the Black Heritage Trail of New Hampshire, Southern NH Outreach of Black Unity and the Greater Nashua Area Branch of the NAACP, we will be celebrating the reading of Frederick Douglas' speech Saturday, July 3rd at 12:00, it will probably go to about 1:30 at the Library on the Commons. And last but not least for those that don't know Reverend Dr. Bertha Perkins passed last Tuesday, the founding pastor of New Fellowship Baptist Church at 50 Ash Street. And we will be celebrating her wake on Friday, July 9th at 5:30 until 8:00 at 50 Ash Street. However, the funeral service will be Saturday morning at 12:00 P.M. at the First Church at the top of the hill in Nashua. I think that's Concord and Main Street at 12:00 P.M. And we will be having a repass and that will be announced later as to where that might be. Thank you.

Alderman O'Brien

Thank you Madam Chair. I think Alderman Dowd, excuse me, Madam President, Alderman Dowd did bring up a good point. Some of the emails that I have gotten have come up and said, OH the pension system, I don't believe in the rollbacks that the State of New Hampshire has done. Folks, the current delegation from the City of Nashua that represent and I am proud to be with them up at the State House fought hard this year to represent Nashua against a pretty difficult tide. The current wasn't with us. But it seems like there's been a lot of emails not really believing that. So I think in defense of the Mayor, what the Mayor says is 100% true. So I think we need to make the people aware that we are not claiming the boogey man is in the room, he is there. And I agree with Alderman Dowd, so I would like to make a formal request, it is summertime, that we contact NH Retirement System, see if we can have a representative, perhaps maybe Marty Carlen could come down and give a presentation to this Board, advertise it so that the citizens can see that we are not being Chicken Little saying the sky is falling. That you can hear it right from the horse's mouth and I think it's high tide and Madam President I am willing to work on that if you so wish.

President Wilshire

Thank you Alderman O'Brien. I would just like to congratulate the City on being the fourth best run city in the United States. However, I think Alderman Jette sells himself and the rest of us in this room short when he doesn't include all of us in that process. We help shape and form the policy decisions that go on in this City. So the Mayor does a great job, his staff does a great job but we do too.

Alderman Lopez

Don't be lazy, keep doing a good job.

President Wilshire

That's all I have. Committee Announcements.

COMMITTEE ANNOUNCEMENTSAlderman Caron

Next Tuesday the 6th at 7:00 Personnel / Administration has two public hearings; one on the gambling and the other one increasing the members of the Health Department Board. Then we will take up the Legislation concerning the Police Commissioners. So thank you.

President Wilshire

Any other Committee Announcements? Seeing none, do I have a motion?

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION BY ALDERMAN O'BRIEN THAT THE JULY 1, 2021, SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF ALDERMEN BE ADJOURNED, BY ROLL CALL

A viva voce roll call was taken to adjourn the Board of Aldermen meeting which resulted as follows:

Yea: Alderman O'Brien, Alderman Klee, Alderman Dowd,
Alderman Caron, Alderman Lopez, Alderman Tencza,
Alderman Jette, Alderman Schmidt, Alderman Cleaver,
Alderman Harriott-Gathright, Alderman Wilshire

11

Nay:

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MOTION CARRIED

The meeting was declared adjourned at 10:50 p.m.

Attest: Susan Lovering, City Clerk