

A special meeting of the Board of Aldermen was held Tuesday, January 28, 2020, at 7:00 p.m. in the Aldermanic Chamber.

President Lori Wilshire presided; City Clerk Susan K. Lovering recorded.

Prayer was offered by City Clerk Susan K. Lovering; Alderman Ernest Jette led in the Pledge to the Flag.

The roll call was taken with members of the Board of Aldermen present: Alderman Dowd, Alderman Clemons, and Alderman Jette were recorded absent.

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

President Wilshire

Thank you. Alderman Dowd and Alderman Jette will not be joining us this evening. I haven't heard from Alderman Clemons, I expect he will be here.

COMMUNICATIONS

From: Lori Wilshire, President, Board of Aldermen

Re: Special Board of Aldermen Meeting

There being no objection, President Wilshire accepted the communication, placed it on file.

PRESENTATION

Nashua Police Athletic League - "Building on Hope" – presented by Shaun Nelson, Executive Director of the Nashua Police Athletic League. Video Presentation.

Shaun Nelson Executive Director of the Nashua Police Athletic League

We would love to show the video first, it is a longish video, 7 or 8 minutes but it is going to save us time on talking about Building on Hope and all the things that they've done. And then we'd love to open it up and talk about what the impact of PAL and the impact to Nashua is going to be.

John Halley Can I just give you a little context before we play this video? My name is John Halley, I'm an architect from Concord and I coach there a group called Building on Hope. We are not an incorporated 501(c) or anything like that. We are truly a barn-raising group of New Hampshire residents that for the last 12 years have raised more than \$5 million dollars and have completed five projects in Amherst, Manchester, Concord, and what we do is we come and do an extreme makeover but not for profit.

We went through an application process about nine months ago and chose Nashua PAL for their Mission for their impact and for the fact that they have great programs, but had a capital facility that was in need of renovations. So what we plan to do is come in for 10 days in May and completely renovate this building. We expect to raise over \$800,000.00. I can tell you that we bought an elevator today, I have a contractor that has committed to build a shaft on the outside of the building that I haven't even told Shaun, that construction is going to start in about a month. So there are some things that happen ahead of time. We will muster probably 100 different general contractors; I have a personal relationship with just about every contractor in the State, so the cringe when I call. But I have every contractor that you can imagine, commercial contractor, will donate a couple of people for a couple of days over a ten day period.

We literally put about 200 people on-site a day for 10 days. We partner with an interior designer, in this particular case we have 15 interior designers, each one owns a room and they own designing the room, the own putting a team together. They come in a build it and completely furnish it.

So that all being said, you are going to see the context of what we do in the video which I think is great. I am just going to throw it out there because that's what I usually do. We are here to ask the Board tonight for some help. We would like, because everything is done pro bono, I'm asking lumber yards for free donations, I'm asking across the board. I have been working with Mark Collins here, your Building Inspector in terms of coordinating what we are doing here so he understands that this organized chaos. But we've done a set of plans so he knows that it's being done right. But we are looking to ask this Board to waive permit fees. We are asking the Board to help us manage the street in front of this building. We would like to close it down, at least during the day, eight hours a day to allow; I need parking for about 50 vehicles that will be a flood on this building every day.

Part of my conundrum is I get these businesses that say, "I'm going to donate, I'm going to send three trucks and six guys" but they drive around the block and they get frustrated and they go home. I need a place to park and what we would like to do is close down the street; leave it accessible so a fire truck can come through, but manage it in a way where there's not through traffic, that I could double park cars. We have a number of tractor trailers that we are going to park across the street to store materials ahead of time. But I need some help because it is an urban site, there's no place to do any sort of laydown. I know Shaun has some other things to talk about as well. We can watch the video and that will give you a good idea of what we expect to do here in May.

President Wilshire

OK thank you.

Video Presentation Played

Mr. Nelson

And the next project is in Nashua. So Jonathan is essentially looking for some help in the world of the fees, to make some of these things happen and as described, there are hundreds of volunteers that have already committed to this project. PAL has major plans already, put in the plans of what we are going to do once the renovation is complete. We are going to have a state-of-the-art facility in the toughest area of our City. We are looking forward to what we are going to do with that with our kids. I've been with PAL for 12 years and this is something we have dreamed about and talked about and to see it actually coming to reality, we essentially are going to get a building that's worth a million bucks and like John just said we are adding an elevator to solve accessibility issues. We are talking about state-of-the-art education, computers, robots, all the things that are beyond our dreams is what the center is going to be. Our plan is to transform the tree streets from the inside out essentially after this project is done.

For the folks that don't know, I apologize, I missed the introduction, I am Shaun Nelson from Nashua PAL. I've worked with PAL for about a dozen years now and PAL has gotten stronger over the 30 years we've been here in Nashua and this is quite an opportunity. So essentially we would like to open it up to questions, see what people. Hopefully the video has solved some of the resistance that folks have, this concept of how heck does this work. The Building on Hope have proven that it works. We will be bringing this energy to Nashua hopefully for the first of many times. But luckily the Nashua PAL is the champion for this first go-round.

President Wilshire

Some amazing work that they have done so I am looking forward to seeing what they are going to do for the PAL building. That's great. Questions.

Alderman Lopez

Are you guys going to be adding a kitchen?

Mr. Nelson

Yes sir.

Alderman Lopez

In the low income neighborhoods you need to learn how to cook, prepare food and handle the stove.

Mr. Nelson

So we are crossing off all the possible barriers that will exist in this project. There are a lot of volunteers doing these projects, so it makes sense for us to get ahead of the curve. We talked to Nick Caggiano about getting creative with some of our parks that are in that area, during that short window of time. We are trying to eliminate all the barriers that would exist.

Alderman Laws

First of all I think this is wonderful, this is fantastic and thank you so much for doing things like this. It makes me so happy to hear. That being said, how long is this project going to take? You said that earlier.

Mr. Halley The project is actually going to start quietly probably in mid-March, in that there are long lead items like the elevator that was ordered today. We have a contractor that is going to come in and do the excavation, put a foundation in. Set the foundation for the porch that will go on the front of the building. The elevator will probably start mid-April. The build occurs in 9 or 10 days and finishes right about May 16th, Mother's Day. So we will have a formal ground breaking, but we will have already broken ground. We will invite everybody in this room to participate and to stay for the week. That's the honest to God truth.

Then we wrap up and we typically have a party on the Sunday right around Mother's Day; they will have a band, they will food, we feed all the contractors two meals a day and when we did in NPAL we fed the neighborhood for the time that we were there. Kids were coming out of tenement blocks not having supper. You would cry; it was just an extremely emotional thing. This is going to be transformational for them. I just want to share a couple of quick things just to set the stage.

When we did the Crisis Center in Concord last year, they were chosen but we made it conditional. So they asked us to come in and renovate the shelter. When we were doing the interview they shared with us their 10-year vision. I am going to cry. What we said to them is, "make your 10-year vision a 10-month vision and we'll do it". Out of that process, a doctor from Concord Hospital stepped up and bought them a \$300,000.00 building down the street. They now had an administrative office building and cleared the shelter, they now serve over 25 people in the shelter, where they were serving maybe 8. Yesterday I had a conversation with the executive director; they have gone from a staff of 6, they are going to go to staff of 20. The fact that they have the infrastructure to support their mission, which is not all about a shelter, there's a lot of outreach, they are in the schools, they are talking about women and children and abuse and all those kinds of things. They are going to go to 20 people; their panic now is to renovate the third floor of the building that was given to them to accommodate that staff. That's what is going to happen here in PAL.

When we did Manchester Police Athletic League, it was a crazy scope, it was over \$1 million. Quite honestly three months in we were all questioning "how are we going to do this". We had a contractor walk in on a Friday morning, and literally said, "I'll take care of it all, mechanically". He put three guys on-site for four months, and donated \$400,000.00 and put an entire system in the building. That will happen here, that is already happening here. I mean I can tell you that, name a contractor, they are involved. There are a lot of people and it's a way for the construction community, the design community to come together to meet each other. I've gotten work out of it, I mean I still have to earn a living, but I do a lot of this, and it's not to earn a living but to pay it forward. What is going to happen with PAL is just going to be transformational. It is going to be something totally different.

My challenge now is to make that happen, is to get that done. We would like this Board to consider, and I know it is a difficult thing to do, but to perhaps waive the building permit fees or if we pay the fees, they somehow come back to the project.

Mayor Donchess

I mean I think all we need is a resolution passed by the Board of Aldermen and we can waive the fees, I believe, we can check with our legal counsel. It's within the discretion of the Board of Aldermen. It's a great project so we are not really looking to get money out of it with fees on this. So I don't think that'll be a big problem.

Steve Bolton, Corporation Counsel

The closing the street you may need the Board of Public Works.

Mayor Donchess

Yes the street closing, so you want to close Ash Street for during the day for a period of time?

Mr. Nelson

We've already had a preliminary conversation with Public Works, the Fire Department, the Police Department for sure, they are in the building all the time. So I think that there are some things that we can put in place and we can manage it. We don't intend to close it down for 2 weeks, we will maintain access through. So that's the second request to somehow manage that.

Mayor Donchess

Well that we can work on, I'm sure we can work something out there as well.

Mr. Nelson

So the last piece is just spread the word. We are at a point now where we are getting to the project. This is going to happen in May. So we are essentially moving our membership essentially mid-April over to the gymnasium and over across from the church and a few other places to make sure that the programs continue throughout this process and then we are going to take over the world after that.

Mayor Donchess

So you were, of course, very instrumental in the Your Voice, Your Choice project which resulted in the futsal court last year. Are you going to be open this year, is your building going to be open so that we can again use PAL to kind of, as the center of that project this year?

Mr. Nelson

After May 17th we can do whatever we want, back to operations.

Mayor Donchess

And before that maybe not?

Mr. Nelson

From April 6 to May 17 it will be difficult to use the center for community meetings. But as you know, we've got strategies to make things happen. We talk to our neighbors.

Mayor Donchess

Alright, so we will start working on that.

Alderman Harriott-Gathright

You spoke of the ten days in May I believe as asking to close down, is that a full day close down or are you just speaking during the day? Because the church is there and there are three meetings a week.

Mr. Halley We would not in any way hold up anybody needing to get into the buildings that surround us. We are just looking for cross-traffic, there's a lot of traffic that does cut through to sort of mitigate that. I'm talking maybe 7:30 to 7:30 and allowing residents to come in to get to their homes and church goes to get to the church and those kinds of things. But to ask them during that period that they might, unless they have parking on the property that they are in, not to park in the road where we are. What I don't want to have happen is a contractor back into somebody's car. Or, you know, those kinds of things happen when somebody is done for the day and they just want to go home. So 7:30 to 7:30.

Alderman Harriott-Gathright

I believe you have meeting scheduled with the Church of the Trustees or someone does? I think it's the 11th or the 12th of the month, February, I think, I was told that.

Mr. Nelson

Yes, I don't know if it's set yet, but yes it is coming.

President Wilshire

Anyone else? It looks like Ty Pennington has met his match. Congrats that's a really awesome project and we wish you the best and we will do what we can to work with you and make this happen. Thank you very much.

Mr. Nelson

Thank you.

ADJOURNMENT

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN O'BRIEN TO ADJOURN
MOTION CARRIED**

The special meeting was declared adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Attest: Susan K. Lovering, City Clerk