

PERSONNEL/ADMINISTRATIVE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

APRIL 3, 2023

A meeting of the Personnel/Administrative Affairs Committee was held Monday, April 3, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. in the Aldermanic Chamber.

The roll call was taken with 5 members of the Personnel/Administrative Affairs Committee present:

Chairwoman Shoshanna Kelly presided.

Members of the Committee present: Alderwoman-at-Large Shoshanna Kelly, Chairwoman
Alderman-at-Large Ben Clemons, Vice Chair
Alderman Tyler Gouveia
Alderman Thomas Lopez (arrived 7:03 p.m.)
Alderman Derek Thibeault

Also in Attendance: Alderman Ernest A. Jette
Alderman Patricia Klee
Mayor Jim Donchess
Tim Cummings, Adm. Services and Economic Dev. Director
Bob Mack, Welfare Officer/Manager

ROLL CALL

PUBLIC COMMENT - None

COMMUNICATIONS - None

INTERVIEWS

Downtown Improvement Committee

Philip Scotsas (alternate to member)
14 Ashland Street
Nashua, NH 03064

Term to Expire: February 14, 2026

Chairwoman Kelly

If you haven't done this before, come up and sit in the horseshoe with us when we interview. If you can, state your name when you speak for the transcribers that will really appreciate that.

Mayor Donchess

Thank you Madam Chair. I am nominating Philip Scotsas for the position of Downtown Improvement Committee. Now Philip has been an alternate on that committee for a couple of years now and we're just seeking to move him to a full member. Now everybody I know is familiar with Philip. He's the owner of Scotsas Fine Jewelry and Home Décor and he and his family have operated that store on Main Street for 111 years. He's very interested and involved in the downtown and therefore is a great nominee for this position.

I'm also nominating him for the Board of Directors for the Performing Arts Center or the Board of Trustees. But if you would like Madam Chair, I will just discuss the first thing now and then get to the...

Chairwoman Kelly

If it's okay with the Committee, I don't mind asking him questions around Downtown Improvement Committee and then just asking him questions around the other.

Mayor Donchess

Now we've now I've also nominated Philip for the Performing Arts Center Board of Trustees. He, Philip, has been very involved and very supportive of that project over a long period of time. Most importantly, Philip has been

involved with raising funds for private funds for the use of the Center and has worked with a number of large donors. In fact, it was Philip that over a period of time persuaded the \$1 million anonymous donor to make that very generous contribution to the Center. As a result, we have the name Nashua Center for the Arts as opposed to, you know, the such and such a bank center or the so and so center. We have the very community-oriented name of Nashua Center for the Arts. I mean it's with great enthusiasm that I appoint him to that Board because I know he will do a great job there and within, you know, a few doors, he'll be able to keep a close eye on what's going on and work with Peter Lally and Spectacle to make sure that we have a good variety of performances. Philip has exquisite taste so he knows music, I think, well enough to be able to be a contributor as far as programming as well. So on both Committees, I know Philip will do a great job. I look forward to working with him on both of those.

Chairwoman Kelly

Thank you.

Mayor Donchess

And with that, I'll turn it over to Philip, he can tell you a little bit about himself to the extent you already don't know it and tell you a little bit about why he's interested in the Downtown Improvement Committee and the Performing Arts Center Board of Trustees.

Philip Scontsas

Hi. Philip Scontsas. Thank you for having me here this evening. I'm very excited to - it was a big weekend here in downtown. It's been a really exciting year for us. I have been involved in my family business since 1974. I was trying to do the math as I was driving down here today. I have sat on - I started out being attending Heart of Downtown Nashua meetings and then it morphed into Destination Downtown where I served as President for five years, five long years. Then from there, we applied to become a Main Street program which I was heavily involved in that that was during the Bernie Streeter mayoral time and we did not win. I was just telling this lovely lady that we did not become a Main Street because they said we were too equipped. We didn't we didn't need them as much. At that point, somebody said to Mayor Streeter that we are a Great American Downtown and we should work on our own. He said well there's the name of our new organization "Great American Downtown", which I've been involved with.

During my tenure, I have chaired the Holiday Stroll twice. I was the Chairperson for the Taste of Downtown Nashua for about a decade. I also had the honor of chairing the Millennium - the 2000 Celebration on Main Street as well. So I have a lot of commitment to this area. I love it. My building is here. My family history is here. I tell everybody that downtown Nashua was where my family we were all born in the in the downtown hospitals and my parents met at 173 Main Street. My father was a shoeshine boy and my mother had her penny loafers shined there so I have years of history there. I'm happy to see the direction it's going. I'm very excited about the Center for the Arts but I'm also very excited about being a part of the Downtown Improvement Committee because I think it's something that is very valued and really we've done some really great things and I'm happy to be a part. So thank you for having me.

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Thibeault?

Alderman Thibeault

Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm just - before I ask a question or make comment, I just want to say that Alderman Lopez was here at 7:03. I know the clock's wrong. Mr. Scontsas thank you for coming. After hearing all that, I'm not sure you're qualified for this. Just kidding, of course. So my question was how did it go on Saturday?

Philip Scontsas

It was great. It was very well attended. There was a lot of enthusiasm. The place looks amazing. The donors that were there we're happy were pleased with the way it came out. It was a lot of - it was a very, very positive day. Then I did head back to the store and I was happy to tell you that all afternoon it was nice to see the amount of people walking by the store, coming in telling me Philip I'm going to the performance at one o'clock and looking forward to it, and had lots of questions. So very excited about it. Thank you.

Alderman Thibeault

Thank you. So that's great and that's what I wanted people to hear. Because, you know, still hearing things online that aren't as nice as I want it to be. I wanted to hear that exactly what you said because I was there and it was awesome. I thank you for all the work you've done to get that going, to getting that donor, and I think you'd be a perfect fit for this Committee so I'm going to support you on this.

Philip Scontsas

Thank you. Thank you very much.

Alderman Thibeault

Both committees.

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Clemons?

Alderman Clemons

Thank you. Thank you for coming forward. You've been obviously a tremendous part of Nashua and particularly its downtown. I just want to say thank you for all of the things that you've done over the years, for your service to the Downtown Improvement Committee. In the past, I know you'll continue to serve there well and I know that you will do a good job on the other board so you have my full support. Thank you.

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Gouveia and then Alderman Lopez?

Alderman Gouveia

Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you so much for putting your name forward. We've talked a few times in the past, most recently during the Chocolate Stroll where, you know, picking up a piece of chocolate turned into a 30 minute conversation about downtown Nashua. It was a really good conversation. You're passionate about our City and what the heart of it which is downtown. I think you're a great fit and I look forward to supporting your nomination. Thank you.

Philip Scontsas

Thank you.

Chairwoman Kelly

All set Alderman Gouveia? Alderman Lopez

Alderman Lopez

I want to thank you for putting your name forward and for all the service that you've contributed to the downtown over the years, particularly on the Downtown Improvement Committee and the Nashua Center for the Arts. Both entities have to struggle with an element of downtown that I think is undersold by people who don't necessarily live or work down there all the time. That being who is downtown for, who has access to it, a right to it, and how do we maintain an active and vibrant downtown? Also addressing the fact that in order for it to be active in downtown, it's pretty diverse.

So around this time last year, I think Alderman Clemons was present, we had some concerns that were brought to the Downtown Improvement Committee particularly around people struggling with mental health issues, with substance use disorders. They pretty self-evident repercussions of our - the way we treat homeless people here and the supports that are available to them and that has a lot of effect on local business owners and downtown shop owners but it also isn't necessarily something that we can just quite so easily sweep away as other communities may have done. The Performing Arts Center is characterized by its adjacent proximity to neighborhoods where

demonstrable levels of poverty exist and that was, in fact, how we justified getting some of the funding for it. So what's your opinion of these different priorities coming into play and how do you see yourself navigating in either the roles that you'd be accepting?

Philip Scotsas

I know that a big part of what the programming will be from monies that we have raised will be to help underprivileged and people with financial challenges to get to shows, to be able to experience shows, and especially school children. That, I think, is a really great part of incorporating the neighborhood. I think that there's going to be a push for shows that will be affordable during the day or during the week. I've been a big supporter of the Soup Kitchen and we as a business have helped them with many of their fundraising abilities, their fundraising events that they do. I also am, you know, I really have spent my days - I used to watch my father and my grandfather who always engaged everybody that came in, came down the street no matter who they were or what they were doing. We always engaged with them. In fact, I had a long conversation with a gentleman on Saturday about he had a cart from the grocery store and a couple of blankets on him and I asked him how his life was going, how he was doing. I asked him where he was staying and he said he was on the street because he had not followed the rules at the Soup Kitchen but he was trying to get back in. It was interesting because he really appreciated that I took the time to speak to him. So I feel like, you know, we all of the businesses downtown although it's not always easy because sometimes the encounters aren't as nice as the one I had on Saturday. We do try to be sensitive to them as people and understand they're part of our neighborhood. They're part of what we do and part of our City here.

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Lopez?

Alderman Lopez

I appreciate that response because as Alderman Thibeault noted, I've seen some of the social media commentary too. There are a lot of people who are eager to say that this whole Nashua Center for the Arts is this bread and circuses while we are not attending to the other needs. While I will be the first to say we can do more and we need to find ways to do more, I also recognize that to a hammer everything looks like a nail. So if you only focus on one aspect of a problem, you miss all of the other opportunities. Some of the best resources for local shop owners and people downtown to offer supportive resources and alternatives to people that are struggling are the non-profits that are adjacent to it and that's a large part of where the infamous tree streets has the population that's low income. That's because the tree streets is the place to start over. That's where all of the places that are doing the best work whether it's the Rescue Mission, or Vive, or the Soup Kitchen. They're all located in these neighborhoods and they're all adjacent to Main Street and part of the downtown. They do amazing work.

People will point at us in how much we committed to the Performing Arts Center in terms of resources and the new market tax credits but they're not always quick to point out that the Soup Kitchen did it first with its partnership to revitalize the Spring Street School into the Spring Street Shelter. They got the new market tax credits first and that showed a lot of those organizations that are doing amazing work and transforming all of this tragedy into opportunity for people, new opportunities, and new tricks. I think as you said earlier, Saturday was an amazing event not just because of the performances but because of the community that showed up and I think making sure that people in distress are struggling with poverty, families that are putting things back together have access to that is key. Anyone who's worked with the homeless or in social services knows that there's a culture of poverty. It's very important for children to get a chance to be children whether it's celebrating Easter with Easter baskets, or Thanksgiving with a turkey, or getting Christmas presents. It's important for families to not be defined by their economic situation and I think the Nashua Center for the Arts is gonna play a huge role in that. So I look forward to your voice on the Downtown Improvement Committee and as an advocate for the Nashua Center for the Arts. Thank you for stepping forward with yet another project.

Chairwoman Kelly

So I'll go last. I've known Philip about as long as I've been in Nashua. I think on almost weekly we talk. My business was downtown as well. So I have a couple of questions for you though. They're easy but I just wanted to know I'm sure I have a laundry list with you might have a different one. If there's one thing you could do on the Downtown Improvement Committee for the downtown this year like what would be the topic for - you guys have done a ton of stuff?

Philip Scotsas

This year, you know, a lot of our concentration has been on beautification. Our philosophy is if we make the place look nice, it will help to attract and it inspires others. All your neighbors too then step up and do more beautification things. I know we're going to do the street sweeping again, of course the holiday lighting is very important. We're talking about some sort of installation of flowers and flower beds to increase the look of the flower beds over the summer months. I know we've helped with many of the lead up to the Performing Arts Center with paying for studies or that type of thing. I can't think of anything in particular Shoshanna but there are so many things. Please let me know if you have something because I would love to hear what you have to offer.

Chairwoman Kelly

Sidewalk plows and a sidewalk plow staffer.

Philip Scontsas

Yeah absolutely. Yes.

Chairwoman Kelly

That would be on the top of my list. But that's just one business person's opinion. Thank you for that answer.

The other question I had was for the other Committee. I know the Mayor pointed out that you have impeccable taste but if you had one act you could bring to the Nashua Performing Arts Center - sorry Nashua Center for the Arts. We said Performing Art Center for about five years. So what would it be?

Philip Scontsas

You know, I was of course I'm going to see Lyle Lovett. I mean I would like to see Lyle Lovett. I just saw they announced he's going to be in Lowell. I'm like I hope we can get him to Nashua. I don't know if he's just too big. I'm not sure if the 750 would be enough to afford to get him. I'm thrilled with Boz Scaggs. I think that is a major, major coup for us. Suzanne Vega is very well liked. From what I understand, the Spectacle Management has said that the ticket sales have far exceeded their expectations. They are thrilled. They are also are thrilled with the facility in general. They feel it's their gem. Of all their other facilities, this one is the one they've been involved with from the beginning. They've seen it. They've seen all the equipment coming in. They've had their say. They've saved us some money. They've been a wonderful, wonderful participant and I think they're going to do an amazing job. I am very excited about them. Shoshanna there's so many I would love to see. Who they could afford, you know, there's that whole if you can only get somebody that you can make money on if it's 750 people. But who would you like to see coming?

Chairwoman Kelly

You keep turning your question on me. I want to see Madeleine Peyroux. She's coming to Lowell but not coming here. She's one of my favorites but no, that was more of a your tastes was (inaudible) I was just wondering.

Philip Scontsas

I would love to see Lyle Lovett but I think he's a great act. There's so many others.

Chairwoman Kelly

There was no wrong answer.

Philip Scontsas

I think it's going to be a lot of fun and I think we're going to be very surprised at what it's going to bring and just the quality of life that it's going to bring to the area so thank you.

Chairwoman Kelly

Any other questions for Philip? Alderman Lopez?

Alderman Lopez

I'm trying to help Alderman Thibeault over here. I think there's a some grassroots support for Blues Brothers and Next Generation.

Chairwoman Kelly

I'd be in for that. Alderman Thibeault

Alderman Thibeault

Thank you. I have a constituent actually that's in that band so he's asked a couple of times. I put him in touch I think with Pete but I don't think he's been able to get back with him and obviously, Peter's been probably out straight right now with the opening. I did forward his information. So he's going to try to reach out again to Peter and see if he can - I think he's the drummer in the band I think.

Chairwoman Kelly

Awesome. Thank you. Let's go ahead and read both and we'll have Lindsay come up.

Performing Arts Center Board of Trustees

Lindsay Rinaldi (new appointment)
2 Lock Street
Nashua, NH 03064

Term to Expire: February 14, 2027

Philip Scontsas (new appointment)
14 Ashland Street
Nashua, NH 03064

Term to Expire: February 14, 2026

Mayor Donchess

All right Madam Chair, I'm nominating Lindsay Rinaldi to the Board of Trustees to the Nashua Center for the Arts. Now Lindsay is the Director of the Community Music School, is classically trained in opera, and has been involved in many music groups not only the Nashua School but also others before that. She was on the Steering Committee for the Nashua Performing Arts Center. She knows the performance business quite well and one thing that struck me was you will recall that the Feasibility Study that was done by Duncan Webb suggested that we could put the Performing Arts Center on the second floor above retail. That was sort of the plan going into the RFP for the various architects and the designers of the Performing Arts Center. Lindsay was the first one, first person who articulated doubts about the second floor concept on the idea that look, you know, if you want performers that you want to see to come there, they're not going to want to go up elevators and stairs to get to the Performing Arts Center. They want to come in and get out quickly. That would be a big handicap for scheduling performers at the Center if you use the second floor. People listen but did not make a change in the design then.

But as we interviewed the architects and ICON was eventually chosen, they made the same point especially ICON said, you know, this is not going to work on the second floor. But Lindsay had forecasted that months earlier and eventually the Steering Committee saw the logic in that and when you see the way the Performing Arts Center is designed, the idea that the truck can just pull up, run the equipment down a short, concrete slab right onto the side of the stage, that's the whole point and that's the point that Lindsay made from the beginning. We want to make things as easy as possible for the performers that will come to Nashua and we want it to be a place that performers in general prefer so that we get our selection at least within the parameters of the 750 seats. We are a venue that is a preferred venue to those performers we're seeking to attract. So I just tell that story because I think it shows that Lindsay has great insight into the business of performances and will be a good addition to the Board of Trustees for the Nashua Center for the Arts. And of course, she's incredibly passionate about music. We all know that because we've encountered her over time but anyway, I'm glad to be nominating Lindsay Rinaldi. She did grow up in Nashua too, right?

Lindsay Rinaldi

Yes.

Mayor Donchess

So I will turn it over to Lindsay just so she can tell you a little more about herself and why she's interested in the Nashua Center for the Arts.

Lindsay Rinaldi

Thank you, Mayor Donchess. It's very nice of you all the lovely things you just said. I appreciate it. I think they're all true. So I am honored to have been asked to serve on this committee. After sitting on the Steering Committee for so long and being involved in the design process, it was the first time I had been involved in that. It opens my eyes a little bit more to what you folks all do all the time as well, and how incredibly amazing that is, and all the work that goes into, you know, and those kinds of construction projects. So as somebody who grew up in Nashua and enjoyed a lot of the products that you folks built, that's really exciting. So thank you. And to have the opportunity to do that with the Nashua Center for the Arts is, I feel, equally touched to have been asked.

The thing that makes me most excited about serving on this Board as the Chair of the Nashua Arts Commission as well, I think, by being the Chair of the Arts Commission as well as having a seat on this Board, it will give me the really good place to be an advocate for non-profit use of the building whether it be for fundraisers, or events, or things like that. Being basically like a liaison for those non-profit groups whether they be arts related or not, I think that there's a lot of systems that need to be put in place to make sure that that access is made equitable and I'm excited to hopefully be a part of those discussions and be a point person for those organizations to come and talk to so that they feel heard. I know that Pete Lally from Spectacle is very willing to have those conversations and make a system work that makes sure that everybody who wants to use the facility that there's a channel for that to occur. So I would say that is one of the things that I'm most excited about.

Secondly, to be an advocate to make sure that low cost tickets are available whether those be rush programs. I already know that there's a program in which you can check out two tickets at the Nashua Library which I think is amazing but making sure that folks from all socioeconomic backgrounds have the ability to enjoy the facility as an audience member. I think is really important. I think that that's something that I'm very excited about being on this Committee.

Lastly, again, you know other systems that need to be built but I'm really excited about the idea of getting more young talent from Nashua connected with Art Center for employment purposes. I think that this is a really great opportunity, a walkable opportunity for folks who are downtown to be able to learn a trade such as, you know, working within the entertainment industry in this avenue. Something that's probably not on my resume because I was like 20 when I did it but I worked for Broadway Across America. I worked for Live Nation. I worked for Blue Man Group for six years crawling under the stage and like filling tubes with banana, and picking up toilet paper. I don't know if everybody's anybody has seen that show but there's a lot of really silly things you do as a stage crew but you just do it to make it happen. I think that back-of-house experience made me really grow as a person so it gives me a good idea of like what's necessary backstage. Then my performing experience gives me a good avenue into what needs to happen on stage for a successful performance. So by being in both of those places as a young person that was really invigorating for me and kind of help steer my path of life a little bit. It might be a little wide eyed but I have a feeling that's just how I am. I'd like other young people to be able to have that too. So I'm hopeful that we'll be able to find a path for folks who might want to work at the Art Center one day to be able to take advantage of that.

Chairwoman Kelly

Great. Alderman Thibeault and then Alderman Lopez?

Alderman Thibeault

Thank you, Madam Chairman. I was one of the lucky few to be able to follow the Mayor the other day and end up on that slab that he was talking about and go right onto the stage even though we probably should have went through the front. Thank you for that idea because it is literally you walk up there and you're right on the stage.

You know the thing that I like about you is that you have so much energy and so much passion for this and for the arts. There's lots of kids out there that maybe it's the right fit for them to go into the arts. For some reason, you know, I said it before when you were speaking before here. I felt like coming out of COVID there was kind of a war on the arts and people looking to get rid of those programs more than make them bloom. So I appreciate all you guys that are trying to do that and I'm fully going to support your role on here.

Lindsay Rinaldi

Thank you.

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Lopez?

Alderman Lopez

So first, you're already accomplishing your goal. I caught the lead singer of No More Blue Tomorrow's Work within the mix. So there's already young musicians in there and like they've been playing at the Tree Streets Block Party for years. They could easily put on a big show.

I was very impressed by the opening ceremonies dynamic. Instead of going for a big name, which I would have expected, I was like why wouldn't we use Recycled Percussion or someone you know super famous to bring attention. The tone of it reflected exactly what you've been describing - a variety show that included a number of very, very impressive performers like in terms of notoriety but also a lot of very talented local people. I mean the Peacock Players are not going to forget being able to be the among the first performing acts and that's great for kids to have that experience to be on stage and to be part of something so amazing as the opening of the Performing Arts Center. So I think you're definitely already on the right track.

I had some reservations when I saw your nomination in terms of the close association with the Nashua Arts Commission because I think I had it backwards. I was thinking like oh is the Nashua Arts Commission going to start like offering funding and stuff but the way you described your priorities in terms of being able to advocate for those arts organizations is spot on. I think your priorities are great. I think your ideas and your vision have really already contributed a lot to our art scene and I look forward to more of that so I appreciate you stepping forward. Your resume is like there's no fluff. It's literally just a list of all the things you're doing. So I know you're very active, you're very engaged, and I appreciate you taking our community art so seriously.

Lindsay Rinaldi

Thank you.

Mayor Donchess

And if I'd known about the six years working for the Blue Man Group I would have definitely mentioned that.

Lindsay Rinaldi

I've given some of them voice lessons actually but they're all good shows.

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Klee?

Alderman Klee

Thank you, Madam Chairwoman. First, I did not speak about Mr. Scontsas prior because I knew Ms. Rinaldi would be coming up. I do think you would be perfect for the job. I've have spoken to you. I see your passion and I even spoke to you at the theater. You'll be great in that job.

I do want to address some of the things that Ms. Rinaldi had mentioned. First off, I can tell you that her school that she runs - the Community Music School - her passion is there. Mr. Locci is who was performing there is one of your teachers. Ethan, I believe, also worked for you but was also a student and you can see what's come out of there. So she's got this passion and so on. I think you're a common sense advocate. I'm blessed to be able to be the liaison to the Arts Commission and to be there and watch you firsthand. When the money comes in, how she's very fair and equitable. She has to recuse herself because her school is one of the recipients of it but she's always pushing all of the other organizations, and all of the arts programs, and trying to work with them to make application and so on. So I can see how having you is going to be great advocate for them.

I also want to talk to something that you mentioned about employment. I had a friend who was a - she was in Actor Singers and she did other things. When we started talking about our art center, she reached out to Mr. Lally and he

got her a job in Laconia. Nothing special really kind of as low level as possible. She's now the choreographer of, and I can't think of the school, but it's in Derry. It's a private school. They just did a performance and she got all kinds of rave reviews. So she watched performances and so on at Laconia and other things and she just - so I agree. I think if we can get more employment there, that's exactly what will happen. So thank you for mentioning that because I do think it's important.

You're going to be a great asset and just to speak to something that the Mayor pair said, Lindsay was the common sense voice of reality and Madam Chairwoman will know this too having been on the Performing Arts Steering Committee. When we would say something, she'd say no it's just not going to work with the talent. Not always listened right away but we definitely heard her and she's persistent. Quietly persistent in her thinking so she works well with people and that, too, will bode well. So thank you.

Chairwoman Kelly

Thank you. Alderman Clemons?

Alderman Clemons

Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you for putting your name forward. Thank you for everything that you do. You have my full support.

Lindsay Rinaldi

Thank you.

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Dowd?

Alderman Dowd

I'm not a member of this Committee but Lindsay's been involved from day one tirelessly working towards the grand opening and I fully support her nomination. I always wanted who picked up after the Blue Man Group.

Chairwoman Kelly

Thank you for putting your name forward and bringing forward such an incredibly experienced person for this role Mayor Donchess. I also had the same story around switching the lobby in my head because it's so indicative of somebody who is a performer or does this stuff every day and their experience and how they can affect a design or a choice where the architects like oh it will look cool this way, or whatever it was but having that common sense background that you don't always get unless you have a really good group of people from all different walks of life. It sounds like a small detail but small details can make a big difference. So I remember that story too and I was like oh that was huge. You know people choose whether they're going to perform based on if it's easy to get in, what's the sound system like. The chairs. Remember how much time we spend on the chairs? The chairs were very comfortable. I was very happy with the chairs. I appreciated your experience and thought process there and I'm sure you'll bring the same to the Board of Trustees.

Lindsay Rinaldi

Thank you.

Chairwoman Kelly

All set. We'll take up your nomination later in the evening.

Ethics Review Committee

Roger Wiseman (new appointment)
88 Peele Road
Nashua, NH 03062

Term to Expire: March 14, 2026

David Tencza (new appointment)
10 Monica Drive
Nashua, NH 03060

Term to Expire: March 28, 2026

Alderman Thibeault

You guys can come up. Alderman Tencza you can take your old seat.

Mayor Donchess

All right, Madam Chair. Well I'm nominating Dave Tencza. We'll go one at a time I think for the Ethics Committee. Now everybody I think is familiar with Attorney and former Alderman Tencza. He was 10 years as a prosecutor in Hillsborough County after graduating from Suffolk Law School and St. A's College. Then professionally, he left and became a practicing attorney in private practice on his own and is now employed by McLane Middleton in Manchester as an attorney there. McLean being one of, I think, maybe one of the two biggest law firms in New Hampshire maybe Devine or McLane. I'm not sure which. You know he served four years on the Board of Aldermen where I think he showed himself to have a very cool head and reasoned approach towards all the issues that we faced. Also active in the Bar and President of the National Bar Association, a biddy basketball coach, and I think his participation on the Ethics Committee will, again, demonstrate his fair-mindedness. If there are any cases, he will be able to consider them in light of the facts and the ethics standards that are set forth in the Nashua Revised Ordinances. So I'm glad to appoint Dave Tencza and I hope you will consider him favorably. Of course, I will let Dave tell you a little about himself and of his interest in the Ethics Committee.

Chairwoman Kelly

Mr. Tencza?

David Tencza

Thank you Mr. Mayor, Madam Chair. As the Mayor said, I'm Dave Tencza. I've been a resident of the city of Nashua since 2007. As the Mayor said, I've served the city the Hillsborough County Attorney's office prosecuting from 2007 to 2017 prosecuting felony level crimes and working closely with the Police Department but also a lot of agencies and different people here in the City.

Since I've been in private practice, I still continued on in litigation and an attorney now at McLane Middleton in Manchester. You know, I welcome the opportunity to serve on the Ethics Committee. I think it's an important job and I think that, you know, I'd bring a perspective both as someone who is a former public employee as well as someone who's a former elected official. I think I have a respect for both the folks who work in our City to make it run well but also respect and healthy respect for taxpayers and understand that how people are represented in the City matters and enforcing the Code of Ethics matters so that everyone can feel confident that the services that you folks are delivering are balanced. Happy to take any questions you folks have.

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Gouveia?

Alderman Gouveia

Thank you, Madam Chair. Just a question I've been asking every candidate we've had for the Ethics Review Committee and you kind of highlighted it during your opening. Being part of the Ethics Review Committee, that's a very non-partisan position. Highlighted in your resume you've had political experience obviously in the past. Is that something you're able to put aside, look at the facts, and come to a conclusion without any political biases coming in?

David Tencza

I mean I think absolutely. I understand on the Ethics Committee I would be not the only person with one of five people making decisions. So I expect that everyone on the Committee will have varied backgrounds in that. But you know being an attorney and you know being in court, I think part of what our job is, is to be well fair and impartial at times, right? We have an obligation not just to represent our clients' interests but to do so in a way that's fair and consistent with the law. So I would not, you know, regardless of who came before the Committee - if it was

somebody that I didn't feel comfortable, someone who I had a personal relationship with, I would certainly recuse myself.

Chairwoman Kelly

Thank you. Alderman Clemons?

Alderman Clemons

Thank you. So former Alderman Tencza and I, we served together here. I think with a lot of us did and you've always had an even-minded approach. I think you'll serve the Ethics Committee well. I see no reason why you wouldn't take that same approach there. I think your answer that you know if somebody was to come up that you knew personally, you'd recuse yourself I think is obviously the right answer. I wouldn't expect anything less from anyone on the Committee. So I think with your background and being an attorney on both sides and also your political background here knowing the City and how the City government works, I think you're the perfect fit and you have my full support.

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Klee?

Alderman Klee

Thank you Madam Chairwoman and thank you again. I served with you obviously on the Board of Aldermen. When I look at the resume you put forward, you put your community aspect of things that you you've worked on and you put your legal community involvement. The first one that pops up is the first on the list as the President of the Nashua Bar Association. That position is, I would assume, is for somebody that's unbiased and knows the law and knows all of that. To what my colleague also stated, the fact that you've shown an unbiased and that you've worked as you pointed out the public sector. You've worked here on the Board of Aldermen and you've worked in the private sector. You see all sides of it and I think sometimes that we lose perspective and we've only gone one direction. So I think the fact that you've got that wide variety of experience does make you perfect for the position. So while I don't get a voice vote today, I do when it comes to the Board of Aldermen. Thank you.

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Dowd?

Alderman Dowd

Yeah I've known Dave, served with Dave, and as an attorney and a graduate of a great college fellow alumnus. I fully support his nomination.

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Lopez?

Alderman Lopez

Yeah, I just want to express support as well and congratulate the Mayor on another pick. I know the Ethics Committee particularly doesn't meet all the time so being able to identify candidates that understand the general like principles of government, and you know how the city's processes work, and are able to be both discerning, and respectful of those, I think former Alderman Tencza is a great pick.

I think Alderman Gouveia made a very good point that we need to be conscious of bipartisan. I mean I prefer non-partisan that's local level, although I don't know if I'm being realistic about that anymore. I think Dave's track record has spoken for itself even the four years that he was on there. This Board was divided on quite a few very tense issues and he was able to stay focused on representing the people, doing his work, and didn't get dragged into any of the back and forth that I for example get constantly being pulled into. So I think he's a great pick and I commend you on finding good candidates to get this work done.

Chairwoman Kelly

So I think that you brought forward a very qualified person for the job Mayor Donchess. I know Dave served with all of us so I was grateful that there'll be a perspective from having sat on this side of the horseshoe. I will say I was a little bit concerned about how well you know many of us in this chamber and how we might be the person who comes in front of us, so you touched on that a little bit. You said you'd recuse yourself if you had a personal relationship. Do you consider us personal relationships? What is what would be your definition of when you think you should recuse yourself?

David Tencza

That's a very good question. It's probably something that I would refer to the City - to Attorney Bolton for an opinion on. You know it's funny, I'm amazingly at a point in my legal career where some of my peers are becoming judges and they sit on cases that I'm in front of them on even though we had a professional relationship before and somewhat of a personal relationship. So that does not disqualify me from appearing before them. It would have to probably be a case by case basis and I would seek outside counsel from the City as to whether it's a conflict or not.

Chairwoman Kelly

Thank you. Anyone else?

Would you like to speak on Mr. Wiseman now?

Mayor Donchess

Yes, thank you. I'm also nominating Roger Wiseman who's to my left here for the Ethics Committee. He's a resident of Ward 8. You can see from his resume that he has extensive high level management experience - CFO, many other positions in the healthcare industry, including Tenet Healthcare, a large healthcare provider. So he has a lot of experience managing people and evaluating situations where I'm sure there were conflicts regarding ethics. Mr. Wiseman has indicated that he would really like to do something for Nashua where he resides of course. So it seemed that he was a good fit, seemed to me that he was a good fit for the Ethics Committee, someone who has a lot of experience in evaluating I'd say complex personnel kind of decisions, or situations. I'm happy to be nominating Roger and I will now ask Roger to tell you a little more about himself and why he's interested in the Ethics Committee.

Roger Wiseman

Well thank you Mayor. I appreciate the recommendation. Excuse me if I'm losing my voice a little bit but it's having grandchildren that bring this stuff home from school and grandparents who visit them. But in any event, my wife and I've lived in Nashua for approximately almost nine years now. Prior to that, we spent over 10 years in Hollis. So when we decided to buy a retirement home, we looked around and we decided that Nashua is a great city, a great city to live in not only from its safety standpoints and its services but just the overall community in which we're lucky enough to buy a home and reside in.

In my career, I have spent almost my entire career in healthcare. I'm retired. In my career, I spent over I guess 40 years in the C suite and mainly as a CFO but also as a COO and a CEO. I had the good fortune of working in Massachusetts, Philadelphia, Detroit, and then I ended my career out in California. The benefit, I think, of working all those years in healthcare is you get to in across various states as you get to see all kinds of different activities, operations, conflicts, physicians, hospitals, employees, labor unions. So I had the challenge and the benefit of dealing with those and trying to work out what was best for all the parties involved.

After retiring having spent many, many hours and unable to really give back to my industry and to my city would like to do that and so that's why I'm here today. I'd like to bring some of those experiences, especially having dealt with issues where it highly charged and people jump to conclusions and calming situations down where you put facts on the table and then based on those facts, make recommendations for boards such as yourself to take whatever action you determine is appropriate. So I would look forward to serving and I am giving back to my industry and I'd like to give back to the City of Nashua by helping in any way that I can. Thank you.

Chairwoman Kelly

Thank you. Alderman Thibeault and then Alderman Gouveia?

Alderman Thibeault

Thank you Madam Chairwoman. So Mr. Wiseman's in my Ward. I get to meet him at the Mayor's Ward 8 Town Hall. He exactly said what he said here. He wanted to do more. What can he do for the City and here you are. So I appreciate that. We need more people like that. It's good to see some different faces. Although I love seeing Alderman Tencza as well, he's also in my Ward. So I'm a proud, proud Alderman today. I really liked the difference. We have a varied group in there of the five so far and I think you're going to bring something different to the table, and I think that's excellent, and I fully support you as well.

Roger Wiseman

Thank you.

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Gouveia?

Alderman Gouveia

Thank you, Madam Chair. First just to start off, I think it's great that you bring a non-attorney kind of look at things. Obviously, it's an Ethics Committee. We need attorneys on it to interpret that but I think having an outside opinion, somebody who might think a little differently, is not a bad thing in my opinion. To just stay fair with what I've asked everybody else who's applied and been interviewed for this Committee, it's obviously a political in retrospect, a political committee. Are you able to put aside any political bias you might have and look at facts and come to the conclusion of those facts?

Roger Wiseman

Yes, I believe I can. I tend to not be either too far right or too far left. I am happy to be a centrist. But I think it's important and it was mentioned earlier that in dealing with principles and ethics, which is the basis by which we all have to operate, we have to put biases aside if we have them and it comes down to the facts. What are the facts? Then the interpretation of the facts is going to be different from obviously from person to person. But bringing that facts and information forward to the Board as committees are responsible for doing rather than making decisions, I think I can. I will put those biases behind whatever they may be. Because at the end of the day like in the hospital business, what's important is the patient. What's important here is the City, its residents. So keeping those in view and making any kind of recommendations I think is important.

Alderman Gouveia

Thank you.

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Lopez and then Alderman Clemons?

Alderman Lopez

I appreciate your comments and your commitment to service. When we talk about partisanship and politics and all that kind of stuff, most of us showed up here because we're trying to serve the City. We're trying to do something for our community and give back. I think while politics can definitely maybe inform that once you get wrapped up in the, you know, the dynamics of what certain causes, how to look at something, and how to look at others. Having a diverse perspective is important. As it was pointed out, there's a lot of lawyers and a lot of legal expertise on the Ethics Committee as it is forming and we do need an outside perspective. I was very impressed by your professional accomplishments. I think you're gonna bring that diversity of experience but you also have the credibility to back it up and people can't you know, poor Lindsay's have great insights and people didn't catch on right away. I think you're going to be able to express yourself effectively and balance the viewpoints. I hear in your voice your commitment to service. I think that's the cornerstone of any Ethics Committee so I appreciate you stepping forward. I appreciate your willingness to come to Nashua, be part of our community, and contribute in such a meaningful manner.

Roger Wiseman

Thank you.

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Clemons?

Alderman Clemons

Yes, thank you. I just want to say you know I read your resume. I was impressed and I'm equally impressed with your conversation and the answers to the questions tonight, and I will be supporting you fully. So thank you.

Roger Wiseman

Thank you.

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Klee?

Alderman Klee

Thank you, Madam Chairwoman. I, too, very impressed with your resume and so on. I worked with the Department of Veterans Affairs for a lot of years and knowing doctors, and medical staff, you know, there are a lot of different boards that they have to answer to and most of them are made up of doctors or their peers. When it came to the Ethics Review Committee, it wasn't just of their peers. It was people of all different walks. So we didn't just have doctors, or medical staff on it, and it did bring a different perspective. While we'll have enough attorneys on there to answer any kind of legal questions and so on, you will give a different perspective. You've obviously held positions of prestige, and you've had a lot of people work underneath you, and I'm sure you've had to make some ethical decisions, and counsel people, and so on. So I think you'll bring that to it. Again as I don't get a vote here tonight, I do think that the Board will do a good job if they if they approve you and thank you for stepping up.

Roger Wiseman

Thank you very much.

Chairwoman Kelly

Anyone else? Great, thank you. We'll take up your nomination later in the evening.

Roger Wiseman

Thank you all.

Economic Development Director

Liz Hannum (new appointment)
12506 NE Hassalo Street, Unit B
Portland OR 97230

Indefinite Term at the pleasure of the Mayor

Chairwoman Kelly

It's funny the way it looks on our is that she's Mayor of Portland. Okay. Welcome.

Mayor Donchess

Thank you, Madam Chair. So as you see, I'm nominating Liz Hannum to the position of Economic Development Director. This is a position that Tim Cummings has held for a number of years now but has moved on to the Administrative Services Director. So in order to search for his replacement, we advertised extensively and we formed an interview team consisting of Tim Cummings, Matt Sullivan the Community Development Director, Celia Leonard from the Legal Department, Lisa Fauteux, and Megan Caron. Interviewed different candidates, reviewed a number of resumes, and it came down to two people. Then I and the whole group then I interviewed them again. We all thought that Liz was the best candidate for Nashua.

In terms of her history, Liz grew up in the Worcester area and that's the principal reason she seeking to come back to New England. She went to Bucknell as an undergraduate private school in Pennsylvania and then went to Clark University in Worcester to get a Master's Degree. She has worked in economic development in South Dakota, Gallup, New Mexico - if you've ever been to Gallup, which I have, it's a really unique place, and now in Oregon. Of course, the mission of the Economic Development Department or economic development function in general is to build a stronger, healthier Nashua economy and in any respect that we can attracting jobs, strengthening downtown, helping to develop areas that are called for in the Master Plan. For example, Amherst Street, the Daniel Webster Highway. If we can, if the day comes of the Daniel Webster College property. So Liz has visited the City and Tim has shown her the various areas that need attention - the south end, downtown, Amherst Street, areas that I've just discussed.

Now she's got experience developing and of course we all know that housing and affordable housing is a big challenge for Nashua and for New England in general. She, Liz has experience bringing housing in her current job - assisting in the development of a significant housing project and now has firsthand experience. This is not just something that she's read in a Master Plan or something, trying to find housing in Nashua. Not so easy especially if you have a small dog. So she's been looking in the south end and elsewhere and so far, now if she wanted to wait 90 days or 120 days, she could probably get in. So definitely personally committed to the cause of our mission of trying to bring more housing and affordable housing to Nashua. I think her variety of experience in terms of all these places she's worked across the country helps in providing a perspective on just economic development and economic problems in general. These are all very different areas with very different economies. South Dakota, New Mexico, and Oregon are extremely different in terms of the economic challenges each of them faces. That certainly is a strength that Liz brings to Nashua.

So I am confident that Liz, still working with Tim to some degree in terms of showing her the ropes, can do a really good job for the City and help us move the City's economy forward. Therefore, I, again, I'm glad to be nominating Liz Hannum. I will ask Liz to tell you a little more about herself, and of her interest in Nashua, and why she's seeking this position.

Liz Hannum

Hi. I'm Liz Hannum. I currently live in Portland, OR. Grew up in the areas you heard and would like to move back. I'm really missing, especially during the pandemic, missing my family and would love to be back in the New England area. When I visited, I just fell in love with your building stock in the downtown area and the surrounding areas. It just felt really comfortable and homey. Loved the community. I got a chance to read through the ImagiNashua Master Plan and think that my experience in the downtown can actually be really helpful for those areas outside of the downtown as well. It looks like your goal is to kind of bring the village aspect to parts of the community and build community within those. I've had a lot of experience doing that in the downtowns that I've worked in. So I think that skillset will be good throughout the community and not just the downtown.

I'm really excited I got to go to a couple of different places in the community. I'm really excited about the Amherst Street corridor area. There's so much potential down there. There's really good housing options that could be in that area as well as some more pedestrian safety kind of things. So there's lots of different ideas that I've heard and seen in the Master Plan that I think I could bring some really good skill set to. I've had the opportunity to work on all kinds of projects from affordable housing projects, market rate, adaptive reuse projects. There's lots of really cool buildings around here that need some adaptive reuse. So I'm pretty excited to be a part of that. I'm really excited to continue working on housing. As you mentioned, I'm struggling to find housing so I knew exactly what I would be working on the first thing I did. So I'm pretty excited about the whole community. There's just an amazing history in this area. So I guess I'll take questions.

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Thibeault?

Alderman Thibeault

Thank you, Madam Chairwoman. So Director Cummings told you about the warts of the job as well, right?

Liz Hannum

Yes.

Alderman Thibeault

Okay, just checking. So like you said, Nashua is a great place. My concern with hiring someone – and I guess they said you come from the area in New England. I was concerned when I first saw the resume that was Portland, Oregon. So I'm like, how do they ever know, how would someone ever know how Nashua is? I've been here all my life. Born and bred in Nashua or the Nashua area. Even I don't always know everything that's in Nashua despite being here that long. I know Director Cummings wasn't from around here. If I was Alderman then, I probably wouldn't have voted for him. But I'm kidding.

So how do you get to know the area? I think you've already started that, so you've already answered part of that. But how do you really get to know the area? We have different corridors. You talked about Amherst Street. We also have the south end and obviously downtown. How do you get to know that? What would be one of the first things that you do as you take over this role?

Liz Hannum

Yeah, I think it's about building partnerships and relationships with the people. Just asking questions and listening really well. I think I've had to work in many different areas that have very different needs. It's been really kind of a labor of love to figure out what those needs are in those communities based on what the community tells me. So I think it's about just talking with people quite a bit. I know housing is a need nationally so that's not something that we have to worry about but all the nuances with development and how we shape the community is going to be based on the community that lives there. So listening is the number one thing.

Alderman Thibeault

Great, thank you.

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Clemons and then Alderman Lopez?

Alderman Clemons

Thank you. So I was on the Board when Tim was up for nomination in your seat. Tim was from Massachusetts and professionally obviously, his career was in Massachusetts and New Hampshire is just so different and yet, you know, we're only four miles from the border but it is night and day. I imagine that it is night and day probably from Portland, Oregon, as well.

So I asked him back then are you ready for the challenge that is in front of you which is basically coming into a city that has an old mill mentality. Half the City if you were to ask them what changes they want what, they would tell you I want to go back to 1950. So that's the challenge that you're up against. My question to you is why - I don't know if you knew that but knowing that that's the case I mean, what is your goal? What do you want to see out of your position, I guess?

Liz Hannum

Okay, that's a great question actually. I think the town that I'm working in currently is an old mill town as well. We're just outside of Portland and so I think there's a lot of similarities in that. There's some culture clashes with people from Portland moving into the community. So there's a lot of conservative values as well as a more liberal kind of progressive side of town. So I think I've had to navigate that, you know, even with two business owners kind of right next door to each other having to kind of mediate those conversations. So I've been in the middle of it. I think I'm at least comfortable being uncomfortable and moving forward in positions just to figure out what's going on, and how to move things forward in a way that works for everybody, or partially for everyone. So I think that's been a real challenge for me. I think I've stepped up to the plate in the community that I'm in currently.

The second part of that is kind of what my personality is, is bringing it. I really do try to kind of be a part of the community as well. So trying to bring best practices to a community, educate people about what those best practices are, and then listen to the feedback, and how it might work for the community, if it works for the community. So just kind of, again, doing my research, making sure that I understand what those best practices are, and how we can - as I put it in my current communities, r&d is rip off and duplicate and modify it for the community that I work in and make it work for that.

Chairwoman Kelly

Sorry, Alderman Clemons?

Alderman Clemons

Thank you. Thank you for that answer. That was actually really great. It's good to know that you work in a similar environment out there because I think, you know, we face multiple challenges here because we don't have the ability to do things a lot of times because we have to get permission from legislature or things have to go through very archaic. There's just a lot of arcane things that happen and you'll get to see that but navigating those things and having the attitude that, you know, I guess of not losing sight of the end goal because you have to get through all of those challenges, I think is key to anyone that's going to be in this position because it would be very easy for somebody to step into this position. I don't want to deal with all of this because it's tough. Tim has done a fantastic job of managing that and I know that he will mentor you through that as well. So I wish you the best of luck. I think that you're going to do a fantastic job and following in his footsteps. He's certainly given you a great roadmap and I think if we continue to follow that, this City is going to be very successful. So thank you.

Liz Hannum

Thank you.

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Gouveia?

Alderman Gouveia

Thank you, Madam Chair. Yeah, I think it's great and you have a good resume that is impressive. You have the background experience. I do agree with Alderman Clemons. If you go around my Ward and ask people what they want to see, it's nothing. Let's not do anything and just leave me alone. But I think we need to be able to move forward and that's something we see whenever there's a new project. At least since I've been on the Board is when you bring up a new project with a lot of these people, a lot of them don't just doesn't faze them. They either have no interest, they don't want it, or they just want Nashua to be the way it was like when my parents grew up here, when my grandparents moved over here and came here. So I do see some of those challenges as well.

Thanks for bringing up Amherst Street. I know once you get past the highway, it kind of turns into where me and Alderman Dowd share part of Amherst Street. So I do believe there's a lot that can be done in that area that would, I think, really make the City glow even more.

Just the one question I have is in the next five years, where do you see the City as a whole from an economic development standpoint?

Liz Hannum

You know, that's a good question. I think reading the ImagiNashua vision. It seems like there's a lot of really good options. I think the growth is kind of exponential at this point. So being able to shape that change I think is going to be really important for the Economic Development Department, and being able to kind of create those small like village neighborhoods, and create livable communities for the citizens. I think is going to be really important. So I think that's probably what I would say is that you know is making sure that there are enough services for everybody and in an accessible way for each community is the future I can see out of that Master Plan.

Alderman Gouveia

Excellent. Thank you.

Chairwoman Kelly

All set Alderman Gouveia?

Alderman Gouveia

Yes.

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Lopez?

Alderman Lopez

So I have a slightly different take on this. I think you're heading for a great job. I think Nashua's community is very vibrant. I think we've fended off a lot of challenges over the years. A sort of quiet dignity, particularly like the pandemic, and economic recessions, and all of those. Nashua has thrived under pretty unusual circumstances. While I will give credit where credit's due with regards to Director Cummings, I think our greatest successes have also reflected a community that's willing to step forward and be very supportive. So I think that that engaging component is very important that building partnerships and that, you know, not just listening but hearing.

Where we kind of referenced the housing stock or the inability of it, it's definitely true that it is of economic importance that if a young professional or somebody can't move here for a job, where we could be potentially losing talent. But that's not the same housing crisis that's being faced by other members of the community. I would point out that Nashua has benefited from giants over the years whether it was the late President McCarthy, or Meri Goyette, or any other number of leaders that have spent their lives dedicated to this community. Their ideas and their experiences have really helped us navigate. There's that danger too with the housing crisis that when people get priced out of where they're living, or they start to get you know unable to maintain the houses that they have, you don't want to lose them because there's cheaper housing somewhere else. We don't want to lose the momentum and the contributions that they can still offer to the City. I think economically we have probably over focused on the young professional for a lot of years and we've neglected elder housing. We've neglected low income housing, and workforce housing, and those are areas that we as a community need to be looking at. I think it helps, particularly that you're interested in moving to Nashua because I think having a resident perspective in a lot of areas - overnight parking comes to mind - is very important because it looks different on paper than it does when you're actually here overnight and you're trying to figure out how far we have to park to get to your car.

So there's a lot of issues that I think do need attention. I think there's a tremendous amount of support in Nashua. One of the first times that Director Cummings and I butted heads was with regards to the fundamental role that charities and non-profits play in Nashua. They help like they under - like it's not underwriting another business's expenses to try to help an organization that is doing work that the City needs done. There's a lot of people who are very passionate and committed to the work that they're doing that can help you in your role and can help the City's economic development and do. So I think having that perspective is key.

In reviewing your resume, I've seen plenty of professional accomplishments of late in the economic development but I also noticed the Refugee Assistance Program and the other types of work that you've done too. I think that is going to be very, very helpful in this community as well. My only question is, because I haven't really razzed Director Cummings recently, is in his recent interview for his current position, he pointed out that he was experienced and professional as an economic development but his passion was city administration. Where's your passion? Is this the job you want? Is this what you're committed to?

Liz Hannum

Yes definitely. I'm as you noticed have kind of created a social justice bend to most of my economic development work. I spent about eight or nine years in developing countries working with communities to help them with an economic development lens build equity and sustainability in their communities. I think that economic development can be used as a really great tool for that in both creating wealth and creating equity as well. So that is my passion definitely.

Alderman Lopez

Excellent answer for me. Someday I'll have to tell you about the stuff I'm doing in Honduras. Thank you for stepping forward.

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Thibeault? I have questions but I'll let you go.

Alderman Thibeault

Thank you, Madam Chairwoman. So this question is more about I guess, I'll just say it. So we've had some big projects here in Nashua. Director Cummings has worked on obviously the Nashua Center for the Arts which we had to use New Market Tax Credits for. We have the TIF for the riverfront. So there's been a lot of creative ways of maneuvering money to be able to have some of these big projects that that we've had. So my question is have you had a or could you tell us about a project that you had where maybe you it was a big one and you had to kind of maneuver the money around and do something creative to get it done?

Liz Hannum

Yeah. I think almost all of the big projects that I've worked on have had, you know, three to twelve different funding sources. So you know between New Market Tax Credits, we use urban renewal which is kind of like a TIF but I've used TIF money for projects. We've used housing credits, Section 8 housing for things. So there's lots of really amazing, especially federal dollars out there for projects that I've gotten to use. So one example, I worked on a 53 unit affordable housing adaptive reuse project. So we took an old church and made it into a housing first model for individuals that had trouble staying in with housing. So we used I think thirteen different funding sources if I want to try and get that project off the ground. That was a pretty successful project. So we pulled it together piece by piece but we got all the funding that we needed for that project. Even as adaptive reuse projects go, there's lots of last minute oops, we didn't know we had to rewire the whole building. So finding funding for those kind of whoops projects with adaptive reuse has been also something that I've had to do along the way. So that there's definitely getting creative is kind of my passion as well.

Running the organization that I run, I think I have eleven different funding sources through just for my organization. I have eleven staff members. So it's constantly creative trying to find money to make sure that I can afford all my staff all the time plus amazing projects that we can do in the community.

Alderman Thibeault

Follow up?

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Thibeault?

Alderman Thibeault

Thank you, Madam Chairwoman. So just a follow up, so that was the money. How about a project where there was a lot of critics to it or maybe at least like half and half and that you had to kind of, you know, win them over or at least just try to push forward knowing that the project that you were creating was better for the town or the city that you're in compared to - I mean there's always going to be critics even if there's one, right? But what about a project that you had a lot and you had to really kind of really wade through that to get to the end completion of a project?

Liz Hannum

Yeah. I can use that same example from the housing project. You know the housing first model is essentially there's no reason to kick out a person from that housing unless there's violence. So that that concept in itself that they would house people who were still on drugs and things in the community was a real, real hard sell. We were using public dollars to support these people. So what I ended up doing even the commissioners that were there some of them were really skeptical about the concept of a housing first model. So I actually brought the community that started the concept out to speak to the commissioners. They did three days fully with the commissioners to see a model that had been successful for seven years so far. So trying to get them to see not just a conceptual idea of what it looks like but actually hear from people that has have done it and have done it successfully for seven years. I think that that was the way that I could help them understand the concept and move that forward.

We had community meetings so that people that were concerned could talk about what their concerns were and have those experts in the concept talk to them through the concept and the concerns, you know, they had missteps as well. So learning from their mistakes just as much as their successes was really important.

Alderman Thibeault

Thank you.

Chairwoman Kelly

All set Alderman Thibeault?

Alderman Thibeault

Yep.

Chairwoman Kelly

I have a number of questions. Your resume is very impressive and I thought there was a great range of experience that you've had. I am the affordable housing. I don't ever shut up about it Alderman but the Affordable Housing Trust Fund, you would actually sit on that. So I'm really interested in your perspective. You've read our ImagiNashua. I love that the first opening you said was you fell in love with our housing stock or building stock. I thought that was very funny. Some of the words that have come up as we've been talking is, you know, exponential growth. There's a there's a real need for housing not just you know low income but also market rate. Like people just can't find housing in Nashua. So I wanted to know your philosophy and how you handle that sort of growth but still make sure that what we're bringing in is reflective of the community.

Liz Hannum

Yeah. I think the federal incentives that are out there for you know 80% AMI, 100% AMI, average median income kind of projects. Where we're talking policemen, or teachers, or that still counts as affordable housing a lot of the times. So reflecting the income levels is really important but the incentive programs that the federal government provides for those really lends themselves really well to mixed-income housing. So I think having developers take advantage of some of those incentives can create opportunities for all levels of the community - all income levels. So I think that has been really, really supportive of a wide range of housing options. I guess my philosophy is use the incentives that are out there to create opportunities for everyone.

Chairwoman Kelly

Great, thank you. I appreciate that you also talked about mixed income. That's really important.

You also talked about equity and sustainability in terms of economic development. You talked about working in third world countries. Nashua is a welcoming city. We have a very diverse background. So I'm interested in your thoughts around bringing those sorts of ideas to Nashua.

Liz Hannum

Yeah. I think, you know, some of the really basic things that I've been able to do in other communities is just provide a babysitter for public meetings or a translator. I think those really simple concepts can help people that wouldn't necessarily be able to participate, could participate with just a simple, you know, \$20 an hour babysitter. So I think there's really good opportunities to get more communities involved with more language options as well as, you know, childcare options. I think there's a real opportunity for the people that create or people that use the community need to be part of the decision making process because they're going to make it better. The way that I use the community is different than the way that you use the community. So if we're going to create a community that continues to be welcoming, we need both of those opinions in the room.

Chairwoman Kelly

I just have one more. Well I have 10 more but I'm not gonna keep you here. I'm interested in your perspective around environmental justice.

Liz Hannum

Yeah. So that's been a really tough issue to work on especially, you know, with recent news train derailments and things. So I think that working with the Community Development Department to create kind of zoning processes is really important. I think that not just zoning, industrial areas, or semi-industrial mixed use kind of areas in places that already need investment tends to push out the community members that you were talking about pricing out of

the community, right? So thinking through not just where investment is needed but what type of investment is needed in those communities. It's not always industrial, raise buildings, and create new opportunities. So being really thoughtful about it is important.

Chairwoman Kelly

Good answer. Alderman Klee?

Alderman Klee

Thank you, Madam Chairwoman. First, I'm very impressed with all your answers. I know this is the third interview you've had to have so I truly appreciate you coming up here and talking with us. Hopefully, this is the last one you'll have to have. But as I said, I really love all your answers. It was really good. One of the things that I've always learned if we don't move forward, we're moving backwards. I'd like to see that that you kind of in essence said that.

You have big shoes to fill with Director Cummings but the nice thing is you'll have him here to help you, guide you. But it sounds like you already have your own ideas which is good because it's always good to get a fresh perspective on it. One of the things that Director Cummings has always had to - I don't want to say suffer with - but has had to tolerate or however you want to put it is lack of staff. I heard you mention that you have eleven staff underneath you. That is eleven more than you're gonna probably have. So how do you feel that you can move forward in this and knowing that you also have Parking Enforcement underneath you, which is a different perspective. I can tell you that when it comes to the Parking Enforcement, you will see a lot of myself and Alderman Lopez knocking on your door saying what's going on? What's going on? What's going on? So I love to hear how you're gonna deal with not having staff because you brought some brilliant thinking but you said your staff and I heard you say your staff.

Liz Hannum

Yeah so I actually built the capacity of my organization. When I started, it was just me and one part time person so I've built that over time. I think that the way that you get things done when you don't have staff is you build good partnerships. You know it sounds like we have some great partners with the Downtown Association and the Improvement District. So there's really great partnership opportunities even with private development. So I think building really good relationships, and partnerships, and working together is the way to make things happen, and move forward in a timely way.

Then I would say, I'm currently on our Parking Committee in my current community. It's the one and only thing that everyone can complain about equally. I think that I've learned way more about parking than I've ever needed to know and will continue to share my knowledge. So I think there's a real opportunity to hear with what we have in the community. So I think it seems like there's a new app potentially or that was just installed the new app for the parking.

Alderman Klee

Yes.

Liz Hannum

And there's enforcement, and there's parklets, and all sorts of things that will affect parking going forward especially as the community continues to build, and there's more and more residents in the in the downtown area. That will continue to be an issue. I think there's lots of opportunities to do management in a good and equitable way.

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Klee?

Alderman Klee

Thank you. I like that answer. One of the things I'm not sure how much knowledge you have of this. We've done a parking study and one of the things that myself and Alderman Lopez are dealing with is dense residency with no place to park. You know some of the homes are very, very old and may or may not have driveways or they have one car. Driveways and nowadays no household just has one. Even people with only one person sometimes has

two vehicles. So that was kind of what I was alluding to as well as the parking management aspect of it. I'm not going to put you on the spot to ask you to come up with any plans or anything like that. We'll get you later on that one.

One of the things that I liked your answer was that you stated very specifically that you would use outside sources like the Downtown Improvement and so on. I think that's important to engage in and I've seen Director Cummings do the same thing. I think it was brought up when it came to the Performing Arts Center - engaging those other groups to see who could pay for what so that we weren't necessarily knocking on the door of the taxpayers again. So that's one of the things that you will need to be creative and it sounds like you have wonderful ideas. Madam Chairwoman brought up the comment about your working with diverse individuals and you will find throughout the City, we truly we have pockets here and pockets there of different types of people and you have to adapt to that area. Many of us like to I think it's just human nature, you know not in my backyard kind of type of ideas where you're going to have to be creative and get them to understand how this would be helpful. So I'd loved your answer as to how you brought the community together for the initiative that you had planned. Thank you very much Madam Chairwoman.

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Dowd?

Alderman Dowd

I'm not going to ask you any questions just some observations and some suggestions. I know that you've been questioned by a lot of senior city staff and I have a lot of respect in their opinions and they seem to be very high on you.

One thing as far as the economic development, the background that you have, or any economic development person has is probably just as valid on the west coast as in the east coast. I've spent an inordinate amount of time, probably more than I wanted to, on the west coast. While the end results of the development may be a little different than here, the basic principles on how to get there are the same. So I'm impressed with that. I would suggest that coming forward that you do like Director Cummings does is you listen to people and you formulate your decisions based on the inputs. If you have questions, you rely on the other Directors to give you guidance. I think that will work out fine. I'm very anxious to have you take over this position so that Director Cummings has some life left.

I'm impressed by your personality because you're very outward. You can talk to people. You can relate. Again, Tim's been that way. He listens and doesn't always agree but you'll find that as far as Amherst Street is concerned, I'm sure Alderman Gouveia and myself will have a lot of questions and concerns about Amherst Street.

So another suggestion I have is you want to ensure that you keep your cell phone free because right now Director Cummings' cell phone burns up every 10 minutes because he's got so many hats, he's going bald. So I'm impressed with your background and impressed with the fact that you've had experience across the country. As was mentioned before, there's some times people here want to stay in the 50s. Trust me, I was around in the 50s and I don't want to stay in the 50s. But that experience from nationwide experience is very valuable because you've seen what happens and what works and doesn't work in other areas of the country and you can bring that experience and relate to this position. So I look forward to you joining our staff. When it comes to budget, don't let Tim dump the whole budget thing on you. Too early in the campaign but I look forward to you serving with the City of Nashua.

Liz Hannum

Thank you.

Chairwoman Kelly

Okay. I'll just end by saying thank you for your time. Your resume was impressive but your answers were incredible. It was a breath of fresh air to have you here. I look forward to having you serve.

Liz Hannum

Thank you.

Business and Industrial Development Authority

Scott MacKnight (new appointment)
33 Franklin Street
Nashua, NH 03064

Term to Expire: March 28, 2026

Mayor Donchess

Madam Chair and members of the Committee, first I want to apologize or express my appreciation to Mr. MacKnight for waiting a long time. We should have invited him up earlier I don't know but. Mr. MacKnight I've proposed him for the Business and Industrial Development Authority. He is head of Triangle Credit, a very substantial downtown lender and business partner. They've been active in the downtown for many years now on Franklin Street and they've been in that location for 30 years maybe a little more. We are looking for Mr. MacKnight's kind of background on the Business and Industrial Development Authority. As you probably recall they were very involved in the development of the Riverfront Landing and we're hoping to get them involved in the millyard development, particularly the parcel where the police currently have their training facility but which the training facility will be moving out to where the Public Works Department was on Riverside Drive and possibly the adjacent parking lot and some of the other millyard properties.

Mr. MacKnight's experience as a lender and his general experience downtown will certainly give a good perspective to the future projects undertaken by the BIDA. He does have a Master's in Business MBA from Rivier. He has an accounting degree and obviously a lot of banking and business experience. So I will turn things over to Mr. MacKnight and thank him for waiting. I wouldn't have been surprised if he just left and told us to buzz off or whatever but he didn't. So I really appreciate that. I turn it over to Mr. MacKnight to tell us a little bit about himself and of his interest in the BIDA.

Scott MacKnight

Thank you Mayor. My name is Scott MacKnight and a little bit about myself. First of all, thank you for considering me to serve. I started at the credit union in '93. Left for a year and a half thinking I wanted to go to public accounting and I knew I was on the wrong side of the desk and I came back. I worked at the credit union since that time. So I have a couple of degrees from Rivier. I've been very involved in Nashua and have served on many of the different or I had the opportunity to serve many different roles. I was Trustee of the Hunt Building when we were redoing that. That was quite the project. It took a little bit longer than we had thought but it got done. I have served on Great American Downtown. I was the Treasurer, then I became the President, and that was an interesting job. I've served also with the Salvation Army here in Nashua as Finance Chair. So those are just some of the different roles that I've played or done over the years.

My company, we were started in 1939 here in Nashua by Nashua Corp. We're very fortunate we don't out live Nashua Corp. and we're very much dedicated to the community. We do what we can. We're involved in just about everything that we can afford whether it's on a monetary basis, or just showing up and help putting on an event. That's the way we've always done it, this is the way we do it. We're very involved in all the different communities. We really believe in the southern counties, communities in New Hampshire but we're definitely based here in Nashua. We do a lot on what we can do. We speak 23 languages at the credit union and a very high percentage of our employees are from different countries. So definitely think this is a good fit. I think I can bring whatever talents I have to the committee. I look forward to if approved serving on the Committee and bring the lending experience that I have but also the dedication on serving all the different communities whether it's the Spanish speaking community, the Brazilian community, the Indian community. So there's a lot of different communities I think that we serve here and we have and bring whatever talents I have to it. So I think that's a little bit about me. Hopefully that's good.

Chairwoman Kelly

Questions of the Committee? Alderman Lopez?

Alderman Lopez

Yeah. I want to commend you on your comments about the multilingual status and attributes of Triangle Credit Union because as you are being interviewed for the BIDA position, I mean that just shows savvy. I spent years as a job developer trying to convey to employers that a bilingual staff member wasn't like somebody who wasn't good at English. It was somebody who is good and able to engage a whole another population. So the humanitarian in me

appreciates the equity but I just think its common sense. I have seen firsthand that Triangle Credit Union applies that because I've been a member of it and I've worked in partnership with them on a number of community events, including the job fair that Continuum of Care organizes. I think that your leadership at Triangle Credit Union reflects very well on you and it's something that both the community should be proud of and we should be taking notes from in terms of the work that BIDA is going to be doing. So I'm very encouraged by that. I appreciated the existing breadth of knowledge reflected in your resume, participation with Great American Downtown and Hunt Memorial. So I think you're going to be a great fit. I'm looking forward to it. I think the Mayor made a great pick here. So thank you for stepping forward.

Scott MacKnight

Thank you.

Chairwoman Kelly

Anyone else? Alderman Clemons?

Alderman Clemons

Thank you very much for coming forward. I think your experience, obviously will lend well to the Business and Industrial Committee and I look forward to supporting you.

Chairwoman Kelly

All set? Thank you. We'll take up your nomination.

Mayor Donchess

Alright, thank you Madam Chair.

APPLICATION TO LICENSE HAWKER'S, PEDDLER'S, ITINERANT VENDOR'S LICENSE - None

APPOINTMENTS BY THE MAYOR

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN THIBEAULT TO RECOMMEND THE FOLLOWING APPOINTMENT FROM ALTERNATE TO MEMBER TO THE DOWNTOWN IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE: PHILIP SCONTSAS WITH A TERM TO EXPIRE FEBRUARY 14, 2026
MOTION CARRIED**

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN THIBEAULT TO RECOMMEND THE FOLLOWING NEW APPOINTMENTS TO THE PERFORMING ARTS CENTER BOARD OF TRUSTEES: LINDSAY RINALDI WITH A TERM TO EXPIRE FEBRUARY 14, 2027 AND PHILIP SCONTSAS WITH A TERM TO EXPIRE FEBRUARY 14, 2026
MOTION CARRIED**

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN THIBEAULT TO RECOMMEND THE FOLLOWING NEW APPOINTMENT: LIZ HANNUM AS THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR WITH AN INDEFINITE TERM SERVED AT THE PLEASURE OF THE MAYOR
MOTION CARRIED**

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN THIBEAULT TO RECOMMEND THE FOLLOWING NEW APPOINTMENT TO THE BUSINESS AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY: SCOTT MACKNIGHT WITH A TERM TO EXPIRE MARCH 28, 2026
MOTION CARRIED**

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN THIBEAULT TO RECOMMEND THE FOLLOWING NEW APPOINTMENTS TO THE ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE: ROGER WISEMAN WITH A TERM TO EXPIRE MARCH 14, 2026 AND DAVID TENCZA WITH A TERM TO EXPIRE MARCH 28, 2026
MOTION CARRIED**

Chairwoman Kelly

Congratulations everyone. I'll see you at the next Board of Aldermen meeting.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS – None

NEW BUSINESS – RESOLUTIONS

O-23-048

Endorsers: Alderman Richard A. Dowd
Alderman-at-Large Michael B. O'Brien, Sr.
Alderman Patricia Klee
Alderman-at-Large Melbourne Moran, Jr.
Alderman Thomas Lopez
Alderman-at-Large Ben Clemons
Alderman Alex Comeau
Alderman Tyler Gouveia
Alderman June M. Caron
Alderman Derek Thibeault
Alderman-at-Large Gloria Timmons
Alderman-at-Large Shoshanna Kelly
Alderman-at-Large Lori Wilshire

**EXEMPTING GAMES OF CHANCE USED FOR STATE LICENSED CHARITABLE GAMING FROM THE
"AMUSEMENT DEVICES" ARTICLE IN THE NASHUA REVISED ORDINANCES**

ON THE QUESTION

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Dowd?

Alderman Dowd

Yes just to review. This Ordinance had elements in it that were from past Nashua if you will back when the clubs used to have one armed bandits in the back making money for the establishment. The wording in there was meant to keep that type of arrangement out.

What we have today is we have machines that look like one armed bandits but they're not. They're charitable gaming machines. The change in the Ordinance is to just exempt charitable gaming organizations from this \$500 machine fee plus the fact that the Police Department would have to confiscate them which believe me they don't want to do. So this is just to change the language to exempt them from these exorbitant fees.

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Lopez then Alderman Clemons?

Alderman Lopez

Can I just ask Alderman Dowd to the Chair? I don't know the vintage definitions or whatever it is. Is the one armed bandit just a slot machine?

Alderman Dowd

Yes.

Alderman Lopez

I'm sure it more of a complex thing. I don't gamble people.

Chairwoman Kelly

All set Alderman Lopez?

Alderman Lopez

Yes, I appreciate it.

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Clemons?

Alderman Clemons

Yeah, this is good legislation because the charitable gaming facilities in Nashua give a lot of money back to our community in the way of to the nonprofits. So to tax them a \$500 per machine is kind of - would really be silly. The idea behind that ordinance because it was put in I believe back in like the 80s or 90s was to prevent basically illegal gambling from happening as Alderman Dowd had stated. So now that we have legal gambling, these parlors are good places. They benefit the community. This is something that, in my opinion, should be doing and exempting them. I don't think for a second had at least had I known that even thought that had been I would have brought this Ordinance up sooner. So I'm glad that it's being brought up and I thank Alderman Dowd for bringing it forward because to me it's just common sense.

Chairwoman Kelly

Any additional discussion? Alderman Jette?

Alderman Jette

Thank you, Madam Chairwoman. So I guess I have a different point of view. I'm wondering my first thought is why? You talk about charitable gaming which is another word for gambling. It is true that that by law in order to operate, they have to donate or partner with the charity and donate I think it's 35% of the proceeds to that particular charity they pick for that week or two week period which does benefit the local nonprofits and it's been a great boom. The 65% of that money that isn't going to charities, I don't know how much goes to the State and I don't know how much goes to the operator. That 35% only applies to these certain machines. This new horse racing provision and none of that money goes to charities. That money goes all to the operator and the State.

Alderman Gouveia

No. You have a charity for HHR machines. Historic horse racing machines, those have a charity.

Alderman Jette

Oh, there is part of it that goes to charity?

Alderman Gouveia

So there's a charity to the slot machines yes.

Alderman Jette

Okay.

Alderman Lopez

How many arms did those have?

Alderman Klee

None.

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Jette?

Alderman Jette

So I don't think it's unreasonable for the City to assess a fee for these machines. The Nashua - I'm not sure - I think there are a lot of unanswered questions and I would suggest to the Committee that you hold this and that we get more input about this. Maybe this is good legislation but I'm wondering how are the other cities handling this? I looked very quickly at Manchester and their fee I think is \$2,000 per machine not \$500. So I'm wondering what is Manchester doing? What is Concord doing? What is Dover, Portsmouth, Keene and other place, Salem what are other cities in the State doing? What is the breakdown of the money that the operator gets and how much the State gets? To my knowledge, the City is getting nothing from these machines except an argument could be made that there's the rooms and meals tax on the beverages and the food that's served goes to the State but the State returns part of that to the City. There's no direct - and I guess you could say that they occupy real estate so they pay a real estate tax. We just saw in the current revaluation that - I've had commercial property owners say to me gee what's the problem with the revaluation? My taxes went down substantially. So we all know we've all heard about how the residents are carrying more of a burden of the of the property tax.

I would encourage the Committee to look more deeply into this issue to determine are we giving up an opportunity to generate more revenue that would lessen the burden on the residential property tax owner too quickly here? So maybe this is good legislation and maybe it's the right thing to do but I would like to have us get more input and get a lot of these questions answered before we move it. So thank you.

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Dowd did you want to reply?

Alderman Dowd

Yes. As was mentioned, there is an over 8% piece that goes to charities. 35% of the revenue goes to education. The State has allowed these to take place to relieve having to send money to the cities, and then for education, and in charities. It's fully embraced across the entire State. Billiards alone has donated \$15 million to charities here in Nashua which we couldn't possibly touch in our local budgets or the State budget. I think it would be a huge disservice to postpone action on this. It is solid legislation and both of these establishments in Nashua went out and spent hundreds of thousands of dollars on these gaming machines for charity. It would be a disservice to take this money out of the charities pockets. So I advise that we've fully pass this tonight.

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Lopez?

Alderman Lopez

I'm unclear exactly how we're taking money out of charities pockets given that the percentage of the millions of dollars that they donated was earlier identified as only a portion of the revenues being generated. I was confused as well in reading the legislation. The fiscal note just says there's no impact. So to me either that's because there's none of them in the City right now and I will defer to Alderman Dowd or somebody who actually gambles who might be able to tell me. Is this because this fee is blocking these things from happening or how is there no fiscal impact that confuses me? I would imagine if we're suddenly making a tax break for charitable gaming and the only gambling we can do is charitable gaming, that would be all of these machines are no longer being taxed at \$500.

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Clemons?

Alderman Clemons

I can answer that question, I believe. It's because we're not collecting the fee currently. So the machines are here but we're not collecting the fee because the Ordinance - this was not the intended purpose of the Ordinance. The intended purpose of this Ordinance was to prohibit to make it really difficult to have an illegal gambling parlor set up in the back of some restaurant somewhere. So the police, and the City Clerk, and government never intended to collect this money. So there is no fiscal impact in the sense that if we pass this legislation, we've never collected a fee on it. We shouldn't collect the fee on it. So the fiscal impact is zero. If we want to keep the Ordinance on the books, I would imagine that the fiscal impact would be positive in the sense that now you would have to have

somebody go out and assess the fee onto each one of these businesses, count the machines, basically give them a bill. I don't think in my opinion that that is a worthwhile endeavor because the money that we are getting from these gaming facilities to go to our local charities is worth more than going in and taxing them and saying, we want to do this for whatever purpose we're going to have here in city government. It's not going to offset taxes. You're talking about maybe a couple 100 machines times \$500 is not going to offset anybody's property taxes.

The other thing is, it would be a detriment to the people who work there and the people who set these things up in the City side to then have to go in and do some kind of tax assessment on this. It to me, it was not the intent of the original Ordinance and so therefore we should pass this to just exempt them. I strongly urge the Committee to move forward in that direction.

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Klee?

Alderman Klee

Thank you, Madam Chairwoman. I think I have some answers to some of the questions. I've been in contact with one of my colleagues from the State House who was on the Board of Aldermen in Manchester. His exact words where that at one point, we did have a \$2,000 before we had charitable gaming in the HHR. Now it's zero. So they aren't charging anything per their machines. I'm not saying other communities. I can just say for Manchester. This particular historic horse racing was passed in 2021 and it's House Bill 626 for anybody who wants to go and look at it. They do discuss the 35%, and the 25%, and so on. I believe 35% has to be distributed within the charitables and 25% goes to the organization that the licensing I think as they call it and the remaining goes to the State. We always hear that the State of New Hampshire pays for everything from schools to roads with a lot of syntax, you know, with the Keno, with lottery in general, with gaming, with alcohol tax, and so on. So a lot of this does still go to the State. There is also a small percentage of I don't know if it's 3 or 4% that the organization gets to hold the back for the administration cost as well. It's pretty kind of separated out.

I think you would be doing a disservice to these businesses who brought these in and on another perspective, we're looking at another organization trying to come into the City of Nashua at the Pheasant Lane Mall as well. So we would have three gaming facilities here and in the City if that were to pass or if they do continue with their perspective. We'll be hurting all of these organizations if you put even at a nominal fee of \$50. I know I've walked into the Thirsty Moose and I have sat down at one of their machines. They have quite (inaudible) so the Lucky Moose. I've sat down at the machines and they have quite a few there. It would add up to a lot of money if we started charging for each one. It's the same thing, I think, with Billiards. If the one that is looking to come into at the Pheasant Lane Mall, I think they're looking for an even bigger unit. While that would be nice money to come into the City right now as I think Alderman Clemons already explained, we haven't been collecting it. So there is no impact. To collect it would mean revenue. We can't argue that. It would mean revenue but I don't know to what end and to what harm we would be doing these businesses. To compare ourselves to Manchester, right now they're not doing anything. They've done zero. They got rid of their \$2,000 fee from what I've been told. So thank you.

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Gouveia

Alderman Gouveia

Thank you, Madam Chair. Yeah to my understanding when other communities put in the fees for the slot machines, it was for the reasons that Alderman Dowd stated. It was to keep our illegal gambling. Were those ever used or enforced? I couldn't tell you but at least to my knowledge of being in the industry for a little bit of time, that was that was kind of the status quo. Just put it out in public record, I am no longer employed by a charitable gaming facility so I don't have a conflict on this vote. I was around when these were starting to come into play and the laws were passed. So that was at least what I remember when we were going through the whole process was there was these fees but they were never truly enforced to anybody.

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Lopez and then Alderman Dowd?

Alderman Lopez

I just want to say that the explanations kind of are clarifying in my mind because I'm very much unfamiliar with this particular area. But my concern as was presented earlier would be if we were offering tax breaks to businesses that were disproportionately impacting taxpayers. If we can do something to ameliorate the skewing of the property tax burden as it has been shifted to private citizens, and I will do any revenue seeking mechanisms we can, especially for people who have it to spare. From what I'm hearing though, it doesn't sound like we ever accounted for this and this wouldn't necessarily provide as much of a benefit as it would be a deterrent from charitable gaming places to maybe have less machines available or reduce their offerings.

So I mean at the moment, I'm not really inclined to do anything to oppose this. I think Alderman Clemons' explanation about the fiscal note makes a lot of sense because I don't usually see the Legal Department completely miss the target. So they must have known that and understood that we haven't been collecting any revenue in this particular area. So it's a little easier for me to kind of let it go. But like I said, I do think charitable gaming is important. Emphasis on the charitable part. I am aware that it's a little bit skewed away from the house in terms of the donating part but that the house has to take all of the overhead as well and non-profits don't really have to do much to generate revenue. So it's as equitable as it can be at the moment I think. I was just asking questions because I'm very unfamiliar with this particular industry. If there is a way to reduce the tax burden on property owners and individuals trying to pay their rent through landlords passing there in their taxes, then I would definitely be in favor of that.

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Dowd?

Alderman Dowd

Again as pointed out by the owners, they have the cost of the building, they have the cost of buying the machines, they have the cost of maintaining the machines, they have the cost of electricity, and staff. They have significant costs. So it's not all profit that's going to them. It's covering all of the expenses. Every charity, every penny taken away from the overall profits is money out of the charities because it's split by percentage. So to me, all the money that we give to charities is a huge impact to the charities here in Nashua. I know they all support this Ordinance.

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Jette?

Alderman Jette

Yeah I would just like to point out that, you know, I think there are a lot of unanswered questions. One of them - I mean I certainly don't know how the money is split up and how much it cost buy these machines, maintain these machines, etc. I cannot imagine - I may be completely wrong about this but I cannot imagine that Delaware North is going to decide not to expand Boston Billiards because they're going to have to pay \$500 per machine. That's less than \$2 a day. How much do those machines - how much money do those machines generate? I think it would be good to know what the answers are.

I think why can't the Committee take the time to have those people come in, and talk to us, and tell us these are the dollars and cents rather than have us guessing about these things. What the original intent of the Ordinance was? Why isn't it being - if it's not being enforced, why not? You know I'd like to know if we've been leaving money on the gaming table so to speak all of this time. I don't see why this can't wait a few weeks to get these answers but I'm not on the Committee. It's your decision. I'm just pointing out that \$500 maybe that sounds like a lot of money to you compared to what those machines generate each day - each and every day. I doubt that it's significant and I doubt that it's going to be that the business plan of these people who operate these facilities are so tenuous that this kind of a fee would make them leave town and go somewhere else. I just don't see it happen but I don't know. It would be nice to have them come and talk to us, and hear what they've got to say, and hear what other people from the State have to say. Thank you.

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Clemons?

Alderman Clemons

Yeah, I don't share any of those concerns. I don't have any of those questions and I don't really particularly want them to come in and explain anything. I think that charging a fee is ridiculous for those machines. So I'm going to be voting to move this forward this evening.

Chairwoman Kelly

Are you moving to move the question?

Alderman Clemons

Nope.

Chairwoman Kelly

Okay. Alderman Dowd?

Alderman Dowd

You know this is a private company. We don't bring the restaurants in and ask how much they make in a profit for a salad. I mean why would we do it to this? I also want to point out that these fees were announced to these companies after they invested in all the machines which is totally unfair. I think for the pennies we're talking about, it's important that we give them this relief. All the people I've talked to are totally in favor of this. I think we need to move this forward. We don't need to bring them in and ask them business questions. It's for all intents and purpose, it's none of our business. The State has thoroughly reviewed this and the State has allowed these machines to be in place for the reasons that were stated to support these charities and education. For us to be taking anything out of that is to me not fair.

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Klee?

Alderman Klee

Thank you, Madam Chairwoman. Just as an added piece of information, the City of Manchester removed their \$2,000 fee when Keno got brought in. That was because Keno machines actually kind of fell close to similar to what these machines are considered by their definition. From what I'm gathering, I do not have any information from any other community but I don't think other communities are charging per machine towards these things. So I would while you know anybody would love to see more revenue coming into the City in any way shape we can, I think we would be singling out one particular business type. I'm not sure that that's a slippery slope we want to go down. So again, I'm not on this Committee but I think when it gets to the Board of Aldermen, I will be voting in favor of this so thank you.

Chairwoman Kelly

Motion on the floor is to recommend final passage, is there additional discussion? Alderman Lopez?

Alderman Lopez

Yeah as a Committee member, I would entertain making a Motion to Table but I do not think it will pass. I would say maybe instead to people who might be interested in this particularly the three companies that do gambling, maybe just send us communications describing like what the impact would be for you so that we have that before we bring it to the full Board. Because I mean Alderman Jette can absolutely bring this up in discussion in the full Board and he would be rightfully pointing out that we just went forward with it. So maybe the compromise is the community passes information in a written format rather than coming up and having to do any kind of question and answer or anything like that. It might even be better for them since we hold our meetings during their operational hours.

Chairwoman Kelly

We'll just let them open until 2:00 a.m. Do they have nonoperational hours? Sorry. Just kidding. Alderman Gouveia?

Alderman Gouveia

Just to throw it out there. The lottery compliance does put together reports that are submitted, I believe, every month or two. I'm looking at the one from January now and looking at the numbers, the NHCG, LLC, the owner/operators of the Lucky Moose that has the HHR machines just as a rough thing, their handle was \$5.9 million which would be the amount gambled. The total commission was about a half million \$497,000 with \$43,000 of that going to charity, and then \$80,000 to total State revenues. That was the third highest in the State behind two other owner/operators in the State. But that's just kind of the rough numbers are all out there from these reports. You can go and find them. They're easily available too.

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Lopez?

Alderman Lopez

To anyone who's going to send a communication, I would be looking for like how many slot machines do you have that you get taxed on? Because that for me is I get the revenue generating part and the charity donating part, I got that but I don't know how many. I mean are there like four of these in the back room or is there like a whole row? So I think that'd be probably important to just understand the context of like what is the burden we'd be placing on these businesses?

Chairwoman Kelly

All set Alderman Lopez?

Alderman Lopez

Yes, thank you.

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Thibeault?

Alderman Thibeault

Thank you Madam Chairwoman I haven't said anything about this. I've been just kind of listening. I mean it sounds a lot like what we're trying to do for private restaurants to be able to have their space outside without charging them a fee. What ended up happening with that is we ended up sending it back to a committee. I don't want this to happen to this if it ends up going to the Board of Aldermen and then this gets sent back to this Committee. I think we've talked about this enough and I think it makes sense to me that why would we have a private company come in and tell us what they need to do?

This Ordinance was not set up for the way the business works today. These horse racing games are completely different than a slot machine. It's charitable. Like Alderman Clemons said, the money we make we could never give to these charities through the City. So if we're taking away money that could go to these charities or we're making businesses cut down on some of the things they do to generate money for these charities, where's that extra money going to come from? It ain't coming from the City because I'll tell you right now, we ain't going to generate it. So it's a good thing for these businesses to operate the way they do so that these charities can get this money and to continue for this to go forward. If we're nickel and diming these places, they're going to just say why don't I go to another community? I mean the Jacobs or Delaware North whatever they are, they could just say you know what, we'll take this to another City. They don't have to go and put it in south Nashua where they're thinking. They could just take off. Why wouldn't we want that money to stay here? To charge them what I think is a petty amount would kind of be a slap in the face to a business that's trying to give back so much to this community.

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Dowd?

Alderman Dowd

Yeah I just found out that there's no city or town in the State of New Hampshire charging any fee for these machines for charitable gaming. I also found out that Billiards has 500 machines now and they're expanding and would have more.

Now there's also the other charitable gaming in the back - the poker, roulette, and all that other things allowed by the State. To me, that would be more of a concern. We don't charge them anything for that. This was something that was dropped on them after they made the investment and a) it's not fair; b) there's no other city or town in the State of New Hampshire charging this so why would we charge?

Chairwoman Kelly

All set Alderman Dowd? Alderman Jette?

Alderman Jette

Through you to Alderman Dowd, what is the source of this new found information?

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Dowd?

Alderman Dowd

The person that's the lobbyist at the State level that's in familiar with all of the charitable gaming institutions.

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Jette?

Alderman Jette

To the people who say this is private business, it's none of our concern how much money they're making, etc. You know you're the one who said that charging him \$500 is going to make them make a decision to leave town. I'm just saying...

Alderman Dowd

I never said that.

Alderman Jette

I'm not saying, I'm not talking. Other people have said, or somebody said, I thought it was you had said that it is unfair to charge them this fee and so I was just saying, you know, I don't think it would be that onerous or unfair to charge them the fee because I think they're making plenty of money.

The people who are saying that it would discourage them from staying in the city that they would go elsewhere, I just can't imagine that these businesses would leave the properties that they've invested so much money in, these machines that they spent so much money to pay for, that they would leave because of a \$500 fee. That's all that I was saying. That's why I was saying if you think that's the case, then have them come and show that to us. But thank you for allowing me to speak. Thank you.

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Clemons?

Alderman Clemons

I move the question.

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN CLEMONS TO MOVE THE QUESTION
MOTION CARRIED**

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN THIBEAULT TO RECOMMEND FINAL PASSAGE
MOTION CARRIED**

O-23-050

Endorsers: Mayor Jim Donchess
Alderman Klee
Alderman Alex Comeau
Alderman Derek Thibeault
Alderwoman-at-Large Gloria Timmons
Alderman-at-Large Lori Wilshire

**AMENDING THE GENERAL ASSISTANCE GUIDELINES TO PERMIT UPDATES TO THE FINANCIAL
STANDARDS BY THE WELFARE DEPARTMENT**

ON THE QUESTION

Chairwoman Kelly

Mr. Mack are you here to discuss this?

Bob Mack, Welfare Officer/Manager

Sure. Thank you Madam Chair, members of the Committee. Bob Mack, Welfare Officer for the City of Nashua. Here to speak to the legislation to update the financial standards. The financial standards are the maximum payment levels which are used in determining applicant eligibility for issuance of general assistance through the City of Nashua Welfare Department. Each municipality is required to adjust the financial standards based on its own economic characteristics and current market conditions. The typical timeframe for updating these financial standards is every 12 months or so or as there are any significant changes to the economic and market standards within a community.

The general sources that we use to make these adjustments are the New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority, Residential Rental Cost Survey for fair market rents for the City, the US Department of Agriculture for Food Allowance Standards, and the Consumer Price Index for cost of living adjustments. These reports oftentimes come out at different times throughout the year. So this process, slight change in the language for adjusting the financial standards brings us in line with what some other communities do as well. Also to be in line with the model welfare guidelines through the New Hampshire Local Welfare Administrators Association. It basically can protect the City by codifying the most current data is used in determining what our financial standards are and how we're making those determinations and issuing assistance for the City.

As we've seen significant increases recently in rental costs over the past couple of years, the cost of goods and services, food, gasoline, etc., it's important and it's required by law that we are issuing this assistance in line with those current market standards. So this, again, this change in the language would just kind of allow us to be more efficient and make adjustments as needed as in a quicker fashion as those things take place in our community.

Chairwoman Kelly

Questions from the Committee? Alderman Lopez?

Alderman Lopez

So last Tuesday the Mayor mentioned the expiration of a voucher program that had been in existence for I think the last two years since the pandemic. So I wanted to point out that it seems like there's going to be less resources and more people likely to need the welfare system supports. I wanted to get your opinion on that well also clarifying that I don't have a problem with allowing us to pay enough to meet the needs. I know in the past, people have maybe said well, why should we keep raising the amount of rent that we're going to pay just for market rate when we can do three people payments of whatever number versus one person that's like what's the point of three people not being able to pay their rent and one person actually be able to maintain their housing? So I follow the logic that like we need to make sure that we're able to give enough assistance to actually achieve the goal. But do you think we're likely to see continuing increases in utilization rate as other programs that might have offered supports decline?

Bob Mack, Welfare Officer/Manager

That's a good question Alderman Lopez. I think we have started to see an increase in requests primarily for rental assistance as the ERAP, Emergency Rental Assistance Program, has been exhausted for many people. The program for the motel assistance for adult only households has ended this past weekend. We haven't seen a tremendous amount of requests coming from that but time will tell. Some people have been able to save up some resources while their rent or their shelter costs, if you will, in the motels has been covered through this program. So we're going to wait and see how that that plays out.

The motels are a little different than rental assistance because it's a different process. Motels if you don't pay, they can immediately move you out of that room. With rental costs there's more of a process and an eviction process that takes place. They have more time to seek alternative assistance. As mentioned, the cost of rents has gone up significantly. I think over the past year we've seen anywhere from 15% to 30% increase in rents for one bedroom and two bedroom units within the community. This again is based on the New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority survey that they complete every year. So these aren't just numbers that we come up with but it's what we're actually seeing in the market and that that organization does some significant research on.

So I think we have seen some increase in utilization. I sent out my report earlier today to the full Board. We've seen some significant increases over the last number of months in that shelter and rental costs line in particular. I hope that answers your question Alderman Lopez.

Alderman Lopez

It does, thank you.

Chairwoman Kelly

All set? I actually have a question. So it sounds to me like this is just allowing you to be a bit more nimble in changing these Welfare Guidelines. I know you've come before this Committee yearly to ask for those updates. You've mentioned that there's allowance for you to change those guidelines based on what's going on in a particular city. What types of things do you use to evaluate that? Is it anecdotal? You said that the Housing Authority only comes out with a once a year so how are you adjusting based on like what's happening last month, this month, next month?

Bob Mack, Welfare Officer/Manager

That's a very good question. A lot of it is based on what we're seeing coming into the office. When we assist a client with a rental payment, we require a rental form to be completed by the landlord or property owner. They fill out what the rent amounts are, how frequently they're being paid, etc. So whether it's a weekly rent or a monthly rent, etc. What we've seen is higher rental costs on those rental forms. It is in line with what the New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority has pushed out. Over the course of the last couple of years, a number of housing conferences that I've been able to attend have also discussed this. It's a statewide issue that the rents are increasing significantly.

I think it was mentioned earlier with the candidate for the Economic Development Director position the challenges in finding housing. .4% vacancy rate within the City creates a significant housing issue particularly for lower income individuals. We continue to see these higher rents. Another concept that that I heard about at one of the housing conferences was this concept called "renting down" where people that are making a decent living due to the cost of buying a house decided not to buy a house and they decided to rent an apartment at a lower cost to them which then in essence takes that rental unit away from people of lesser means and lower income. So it kind of pushes that downward. So there are some interesting trends that we've seen over the last few years, particularly with the rental market and the economy.

Chairwoman Kelly

And we've also seen that there's not the higher end housing move out of is what people used to think were starter homes. So that middle housing also has really had a lot of a crunch.

Bob Mack, Welfare Officer/Manager

Yes.

Chairwoman Kelly

Not to go too far in the future here but as you're seeing these increased costs knowing that the budget is coming up do you have concern about your budget being able to cover the amount of people who are coming in for help?

Bob Mack, Welfare Officer/Manager

Yes. We have considered these increases as we're planning for the upcoming fiscal year for the budget.

Chairwoman Kelly

As much as you can. Alright, thank you. I saw hands everywhere. Did you have your hand up?

Alderman Thibeault

I did not. Tyler did.

Alderman Gouveia

Thank you, Madam Chair. I just have a quick question. So the bottom piece of the legislation I believe makes sense. The one thing I had a question on was actually at the top where it removes the Mayor and Board of Aldermen from approving these changes. I guess I would like to know more of the rationale behind it because I know there's well a soon to be Director and another Director behind who would love to have some wiggle room where they don't have to come to the Board of Aldermen. I was just wondering where that kind of comes from.

Bob Mack, Welfare Officer/Manager

Good question Alderman. I think it goes to what the Chair had pointed out to be more adaptable and being able to adjust as needed. We are required by Statute to operate at current market standards to assist that current market standards. So this would just kind of eliminate some of the process if you will, the need to go through the bureaucracy if you will of getting this done. It is, again, based on current different surveys that come out. So these numbers aren't things that we're just kind of making up. It's what we're seeing in the market, what these organizations are surveying, and so we're just also following what some of the other communities have done with this particular aspect of general assistance. I hope that answers your question.

Alderman Gouveia

Thank you.

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Klee?

Alderman Klee

Thank you Madam Chairwoman and thank you, Mr. Mack. One of the things that I've heard from my constituents is that they can get a voucher or they can get assistance but there aren't landlords that are taking them because it's not enough. So we're kind of - so to Alderman Lopez's point, you give out three vouchers that can't be used.

Alderman Lopez

You wasted three vouchers.

Alderman Klee

You wasted three vouchers is absolutely correct versus being able to help maybe one person find home or find a place to stay. Is that also one of the reasons for trying to move this forward as quickly as possible so we can help as many people in the end?

Chairwoman Kelly

Mr. Mack?

Bob Mack, Welfare Officer/Manager

Thank you. I think just a point of clarification. Our vouchers are actual - they're like promissory notes. Promises to pay a certain amount of rent generally to prevent an eviction from taking place. I think a lot of the vouchers that you're referring to are Section 8 vouchers that are like housing subsidy vouchers, housing choice vouchers that are administered through HUD, or the Nashua Housing and Redevelopment Authority that are monthly supplements to someone's rent. So it's a subsidy. I think one of the things that we're seeing is people with those particular vouchers, those promises for that subsidized rental payment every single month, are struggling with finding apartments to rent because of the vacancy rate. So I think there's they're kind of two different things if I understand you correctly. But it is a significant challenge with those folks finding the apartments to rent in many instances because they're their income is lower income and some of those tenants don't have good rental history. So it's a challenge. They may not have a good reference from a landlord. So those are additional challenges which is why we've had conversation as a community, and at the Greater Nashua Continuum of Care, and also with the Housing Trust Fund level about landlord incentives and programs like that, that could incentivize landlords to accept those vouchers.

Now some of what we can do is we can assist someone with one of those vouchers to move into an apartment because we can pay first month's rent. As the rents adjust according to the market, we have to be able to cover that what that actual cost is for that applicant. I hope that makes sense.

Alderman Klee

It does and may I follow up? Thank you very much Madam Chairwoman. Thank you for that clarification. Again maybe I'm going off-base here but even speaking to some of the landlords, some of the assistance and so on that they're getting and while that is a promissory note, they're finding that they can't afford to pay that little even though they're getting some assistance. So they've gone up at the other end of it and they're getting because of this low, they're actually getting more money for those particular things. So I do want you to have as much flexibility. Again, I'm not on this Committee but I think having you be able to change things on the fly and not have to go through a 30 day, 60 day, 90 day process to come here and get our blessing I think is a good idea. So thank you very much Madam Chairwoman.

Chairwoman Kelly

Any additional discussion on this? Alderman Lopez

Alderman Lopez

Yeah, I just want to plug the Continuum of Care meeting on Wednesday for all the Aldermen that are attending. They meet the first Wednesday of the month. They're at 9:00 right?

Bob Mack, Welfare Officer/Manager

9:00 to 10:30. Yes, that's correct.

Alderman Lopez

9:00 to 10:30 up in the auditorium. I highly recommend going to this one particularly because it's a bunch of really, really interesting information being presented. This is where all of the housing focused organizations are tackling this issue and it's a very good thing for us as Aldermen to be literate in.

Chairwoman Kelly

Thank you Alderman Lopez. Motion is to recommend final passage.

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN THIBEAULT TO RECOMMEND FINAL PASSAGE
MOTION CARRIED**

NEW BUSINESS – ORDINANCES - None

TABLED IN COMMITTEE

O-22-028

Endorsers: Alderman Derek Thibeault
Alderman-at-Large Michael B. O'Brien, Sr.
Alderman-at-Large Melbourne Moran, Jr.
Alderman Thomas Lopez
Alderman-at-Large Ben Clemons
Alderman-at-Large Gloria Timmons

REQUIRING NONPUBLIC SESSIONS TO BE ENTIRELY IN-PERSON

- Tabled at 12/5/22 meeting

Alderman Thibeault

I think we're expected to take something off.

Chairwoman Kelly

028 is staying on the table.

There is a motion to remove O-22-031 from the table but as far as I understand, we haven't gotten any information that we had postponed it for. Alderman Thibeault?

Alderman Thibeault

Thank you Madam Chairwoman. Director Cummings is back there. Can I ask him a question on this because I believe Director Cummings runs the Assessment Department?

Chairwoman Kelly

So technically to ask him a question, we need to put it before us but okay.

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN THIBEAULT TO REMOVE FROM THE TABLE O-22-031
MOTION CARRIED****O-22-031**

Endorsers: Alderman Derek Thibeault
Alderman-at-Large Melbourne Moran, Jr.
Alderman-at-Large Ben Clemons
Alderman Alex Comeau
Alderman Tyler Gouveia
Alderman June M. Caron
Alderman-at-Large Gloria Timmons
Alderman-at-Large Shoshanna Kelly

INCREASING THE VETERANS' OPTIONAL AND ALL VETERANS' TAX CREDITS

- Tabled at 11/1/2022 meeting – review at first Personnel meeting in April 2023

MOTION BY ALDERMAN THIBEAULT TO RECOMMEND FINAL PASSAGE**ON THE QUESTION**

Chairwoman Kelly

Now it is before us. Alderman Thibeault?

Alderman Thibeault

Thank you. Director Cummings, thank you. So I had wrote to Jen Zins. I believe she's in your department right? Assessing about a week ago and I haven't heard anything back. So the information we were trying to get back and maybe you could help us with this is what people I guess or Veterans have applied for this tax credit? Some information so that when we do bring this off the table, we'll have some information to debate and decide on whether we want to go forward with this. Is that something you could get us by like maybe the next Personnel Committee?

Tim Cummings, Administrative Services and Economic Development Director

First I want to defer to Alderwoman Klee because I see that she has her hand up and then I'll be able to answer your question.

Chairwoman Kelly

Technically, I can do that. Alderman Klee?

Alderman Klee

Thank you very much, Madam Chairwoman for hearing me out. I did speak to Miss Zins personally and at this point, they don't have any applications that would qualify under this. Part of it is because we just changed the ordinance to allow it. The other part is she said the lack of education. She firmly believed, and I don't want to put words in her mouth, that it will take at least one year to get a full feeling as to what the application process would be. They have until, I believe, April 15 in order to be able to apply for this particular thing. Personally, I've been getting the word out to my constituents that this does exist. I've had a few of them that said to me oh my goodness, do I have to reapply? The answer was no. No currently receiving Veteran has to reapply but those that meet the new definition that we just passed, I think within this last month has just technically gone into effect here for the City of Nashua.

I have reached out to other communities to find out what they're receiving and they said the word just hasn't gotten out and they're kind of waiting on that. So again, I don't want to put words in Miss Zins mouth but I did speak to her last week I think it was.

Tim Cummings, Administrative Services and Economic Development Director

Now if I may Madam Chair?

Chairwoman Kelly

Mr. Cummings?

Tim Cummings, Administrative Services and Economic Development Director

Thank you. I have spoken to Jennifer Zins about this specifically and she has confirmed for me that she can't tell you how valid or good that data is going to be but she will have it after April 15th. So I would suspect that you can have something post April 15th which you could then use to make some decisions on.

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Clemons and then Alderman Thibeault? Oh, do you want to follow up on your question? Sorry.

Alderman Thibeault

So I guess thank you. You can tell Jennifer thank you for getting back to me. So I think at this point if we get any information at all by the next meeting, we should take this off the table and pass it. To Alderman Jette's point who's always trying to get fees out there or ways to save the taxpayers money, here we're trying to give the taxpayers a credit. So why don't we look at this and try to pass it and give Veteran's a credit of higher credit. I mean I don't know why we wouldn't do that especially if we're gonna have to wait a year for this to really take hold. Well, what are we waiting for then?

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Clemons?

Alderman Clemons

Yeah I mean part of the point of tabling this was to get an idea of how many new applicants there was at this point in time because we wanted to pass this legislation so that all of the applicants who have applied year-to-date or up to April 15th would get the benefit of the additional money. So it's kind of frustrating to have a non-answer to know how

many applicants that have come in thus far. So with that said, I have no problem moving this forward and giving people the extra \$250. It's going to cost the City some money and it is what it is. Veterans are worth it to me.

Chairwoman Kelly

I agree with you. I think the discussion we had and the reason it was tabled is we were concerned with the new definition of veteran that we may get a flood that we haven't had in the past and how we would handle that if it were thousands of people who decided to apply. I'm not sure how I feel knowing that this may take a while for us to even figure out what the impact with this will be. Obviously, I don't think that we should be foregoing giving Veterans a credit but I do have concerns that this could you know in a year people really wake up to it and now we're dealing with a lot more people applying and then figure out how to move the money around. That's all. Alderman Klee?

Alderman Klee

Thank you so much Madam Chairwoman. First, I want to clarify when we say the City can do this. It is not the City that will be picking up this extra funds. It will be the remaining taxpayers who do not get this credit. So let's make that very clear. We are not saving taxpayers money. We're taking a finite group of individuals. I have been working with Veterans and military since I was 17 years old. I have not stopped with that. I believe that we should do as much as we can with Veterans. I have numbers here that can show how much better Nashua is than almost any other community. Specifically, I will bring up Manchester. Technically speaking based on 2021 figures, Nashua gives \$2.9 million in Veteran's Tax Credits and exemptions. Manchester on the other hand, gives \$1.3 million. These are based on 2021 figures that are on the DRA numbers. When you calculate that up, now we can look and say okay well that added 250 based on the 2021's, we're looking at maybe \$650,000. That doesn't seem like a whole lot of money but we don't know what that new base is going to be. So that is my concern.

If I said that this is going to come out of the City's budget and the City would be paying for that, I would have a whole different feel of this. We just increased the elderly exemptions which I think was the right thing to do, and the disabled exemptions, and so on. We are walking into unknown territory. We are now looking at active duty. We are looking at reservists. We are looking at guardsmen and these are those that have been in service for at least four years and own property here in the City. As I stated the reason why Nashua has so many Veterans is because we give the highest credits to the most people. So to where we cannot compare this to what my colleague from Ward 5 had said about trying to give back to that. It is not coming out of the City coffers. It's coming out of the taxpayers' pockets and we need to be clear on that so thank you.

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Thibeault?

Alderman Thibeault

Thank you, Madam Chairwoman. I mean we did it for the elderly. We did it for special needs and stuff. So that's taking away from other people. I mean it's taking away from the taxpayers as well. So I know it's different. I know it's a little different. I'm sure I'm going to get schooled and why it's different which I know but we are still taking away money to give to the elderly. So it's fine. I mean if people want to table it, table it. It's fine.

Chairwoman Kelly

All right. I'm just gonna say something. I feel like the frustration I have is that we table this to get some more information and we didn't get more information. So I have that frustration. I think there are some really simple ways we could have answered this that haven't come forward to us. I am sure there is somewhere a database that tells us who's activists, or active duty, reservists, and Veterans living in our City. I'm sure that happens so we could absolutely figure out a general sense of what that is. We have no list of how many people are actively serving in the...

Tim Cummings, Administrative Services and Economic Development Director

May I answer that Madam Chair? Yeah I asked that very specific question. I can't get that answer.

Chairwoman Kelly

Really?

Tim Cummings, Administrative Services and Economic Development Director

Correct. That is one of the major frustrations with this exercise.

Chairwoman Kelly

Good to know. I also think that the comparison to disabled or elderly is a little bit different because it's not like we're suddenly saying if you're elderly. If you're 55, now you can get the credit and we don't know what - that's still the unknown. So it's I don't think it has anything to do about deserving or undeserving. There was questions that were asked that weren't answered. So I'm for putting it back on the table but I will listen to the rest of the Committee's decisions on this. Alderman Klee?

Alderman Klee

Thank you, again, Madam Chairwoman. To compare this to the elderly and the disabled exemptions is incorrect. Because the reason why we increased the exemption was not to give them more credit, it was to equalize the value of their homes. Their homes went up by a certain amount and that exemption just exempts a certain portion of it. So truthfully, I'm sure the elderly that are getting a credit or the disabled that are getting credit through the exemption - meaning that their taxes are less just probably put them at level that they were before we increased the value of their homes. So it is a completely different thing.

If I may Madam, thank you. When you all tabled it, once you tabled that I could not speak anymore and I did want to speak to say to you at that point in time tabling it to April 1st while I understood that wants so that you can get it done and by the close of the tax year so that the people could get the credit this year. I tried to say but it was tabled so I could not say it. What I tried to say was it is not enough time. It is not enough time to get the message out. It is not enough time to know what these numbers are. Again I want to reiterate, this is not the same as the exemption. All that did was exempted value of their home to basically bring them to where they were before. One of the things that we added to that elderly exemption was to make sure that we added the means tests that would be equal to the value of their increase in Social Security and so on. So that they did not get thrown out by that means test and so on.

We are talking completely not even apples and oranges. We're talking you know apples and roast beef. So it's really, really different in that respect. It pains me and it breaks my heart to even go against this. I spoke the last time and said the only time I spoke on the floor of the House was when this HB1667 made it to the House floor where we had to talk about it. One of the things I have learned through that process, and this process, and this is talking to the Department of Veterans Affairs, this is talking to DOD. They don't have an accurate number as to how many veterans. Do we know how many Coast Guards live in the State of New Hampshire? Probably. Do we know how many National Guards? Probably. It's very difficult with active duty because this is their home base and their home State. One of the things that we also do not know is if a Veteran is deployed, owns a home here, normally they have to live in that home in order to get the credit. If they've been transferred overseas and still own this home, they're still going to get the credit but they're not living here and that complicates things as well. I think that number is going to be small.

We also talked about those that go through basic training that will now qualify for it because they didn't make it through basic training for whatever reason that was. I think those numbers will be extremely low if we see anybody that would fall in that category. The thing that bothers me the active duty in general. I say those numbers will be low. It's the guards. It's the Coast Guards, it's the National Guards, it's a Reservists. As long as they've been in service for four years, they now qualify for this just like the active duty. I have been on the phone with people from DRA. I've been on the phone with people from the New Hampshire Municipal Association. I've been on the phone with my counterparts throughout the State of New Hampshire and I think we are being generous, and we are being kind to want to do this for Veterans but I think we're not seeing the big picture and to do this, and please do not be insulted by my saying this next door, but to pat ourselves on the back because we've done it, we're doing it on someone else's dime not ours. Again, thank you for letting me talk.

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Clemons?

Alderman Clemons

Can I ask you a question through you to Director Cummings?

Chairwoman Kelly

Of course. Director Cummings?

Alderman Clemons

My question is, is it fair to say that if we had seen a flood of applicants to the Assessing office for this particular application that you'd be able to relay that back to us?

Tim Cummings, Administrative Services and Economic Development Director

May I Madam Chair?

Chairwoman Kelly

Director Cummings?

Tim Cummings, Administrative Services and Economic Development Director

Yes, I feel confident that I could report back to you the foot traffic relative to all of the exemptions and credits. I actually know that the Assessing office is extremely busy right now working through all the various applications - elderly, disabled, and the Veteran's Credits. That's what's taking up a bulk of their time. I could happily give you that data. We can't do is forecast the new definition.

Alderman Clemons

Yeah so if I could continue?

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Clemons?

Alderman Clemons

I just don't - I understand. I guess where I come down on this is like the State decided that that's what the State was going to do. They decided to expand the definition of this. We have a Veteran's Tax Credit anyway. Those who fall into that category are going to be able to take advantage of the exemption whether we increase this amount or not. The increase obviously is going to have an impact on the remainder of the taxpayers. I understand that but so wouldn't just the increase of those who were not part of this before and now currently are coming to apply. That would also have a fiscal impact as well. So the question is whether or not we're comfortable with an extra \$250 on top of what we give per those new folks in that definition, or whether we want to keep it the same, or some other number in between? I'm okay with going up all the way. I understand that that is going to shift the tax burden to others but I think our Veteran community, I think, it is a worthwhile community to put that towards. So for me, I'll vote to move this forward this evening.

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Thibeault?

Alderman Thibeault

Thank you, Madam Chair. First rhetorical question, who's patting themselves on the back? Second, if it's going to be such a burden on the taxpayers why don't we just cut it then instead of raising it? If it's going to be that bad, right, I mean using that logic?

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Klee?

Alderman Klee

Thank you, Madam. I'm sorry. I will defer to one of the members. Thank you.

Chairwoman Kelly

Sorry Alderman Gouveia?

Alderman Gouveia

Thank you, Madam Chair. I agree with Alderman Clemons. I'd be fine with passing this outright here tonight. I think it's one of those things where it's worth it. It's a tax credit. I have received calls from the Ward asking why we're not at that top range of what the State will allow us. I was just talking with Director the other day about it with a resident and they were able to tell me well the Veteran was at his max benefit. But technically, it could go higher should the Board of Aldermen allocate more money to it and allow it to go higher. So I have heard about this. It sat on the table for a while. I was happy to sign on as a co-sponsor. I think it's still a worthwhile piece of legislation and would be all for passing it outright tonight and bring it to the full Board.

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Klee?

Alderman Klee

Thank you, Madam President. As I go through the DRA and looking at 2021 to see who in fact has, you know, put up to the max the \$750. I look at places like Alton that has 338 people. I look at Deerfield that has done it and they have less than 200 people that get it. I look at Danville who has less than 200 people are getting the \$750. I go to Dover which is a little bit higher than that and between the two 7228 and 7228B, they're looking at about a little over 1,000 that are getting it. When we look at Nashua, we have currently we have I think 2,000 - and this is 2021. I'm not even looking at this year's. We have 2,491 people that are getting this credit of \$500. While I do agree that anybody that applies is going to get the \$500 so we're only increasing it by \$250, we don't know and I hate to use Alderman Dowd's we don't know the unknown unknown. But the truth of the matter is we would not only be increasing the \$250 by almost 2,500 - and this is again based on 2021 numbers - we would then be giving an additional \$250 to anybody that would now exist. That number for all I know is five. That number for all I know is 5,000. I seriously doubt it's that much but I don't know what that number is. We don't know what that number is.

While again I would love the idea of being able to do it, I just have a very difficult time asking taxpayers who are already we're hearing from them. I will tell you when I sent out my email relative to explaining what this was, I got two Veterans who called me and said to me, I don't want to see it go up. I said well you cannot accept it. He goes well can I just keep the 500? I'm like no, it's all or nothing. You get the \$750 or you get the zero. No veteran has to take this credit. There's nobody that is going to force them to take this money but if they do apply for it, they will get the \$750. Both of them their concern was to make sure that we were giving the appropriate credits to the disabled and we do. So for surviving spouse, we give \$2,000. For service connected totally disabled here in the City of Nashua, I believe let me see here I think we have four and that means they pay \$0 in taxes. Again, I'm looking at 2021 numbers. Service connected disabilities, there are 118 and they are getting \$2,000. So it's not like we're not taking care of our Veterans. We are taking care of our Veterans. I understand I saw the emails that came through that said bring it up to \$750, bring it up to \$750. That is wonderful and my comment about patting ourselves on the back is that we do look good when we help things for Veterans. I know I'm repeating myself so I apologize for this but we're doing it on someone else's dime and not our dime. That's why I made the comment about it makes us look good because it doesn't cost us anything here in the City. That's the reason why I meant - it did not mean to insult any particular person that put this through. I apologize if that's what - so Alderman Thibeault, I do apologize if that's the way you heard it. It was not what I meant but I was wrong for probably saying it that way.

I just keep looking at these numbers. So let me just give you some real numbers here. Manchester gives I said the 1.3 and Nashua gives over \$2 million. We are a community of about what 93,000 people and they're a community of over 117,000 people. Just think about that how much less they give. If they pushed it up to \$750, it might not necessarily affect them the same as it's going to affect us. So I think we need to look at it. I would love to see you table it. Truthfully, I'd like to see this wait to come back next year. I understand everybody wanting to do it while this Board is in place but we don't know who will be here next year. I think we're wrong for doing it and I have to ask you to err on the side of caution. It's not like we're not doing things for Veterans. We are doing and if you just go into the DRA and look at the numbers and look at the comparisons, it's quite amazing what we pay compared to - and I'm looking at a like City of Manchester. So I know I feel like I'm just kind of talking to the wall now. I think many have already decided what they want to do but it pains me to say this but when I'm looking at that, we're over double

of what Manchester does in this particular thing. Manchester by the way has zero fully disabled. So they're not giving 100% tax free to any Veteran. We're giving you know, a lot. It's just it's amazing what we do.

I said the same thing about our elderly and our disabled. We do more than other communities do but I did agree in the end that yes, we had to bring that exemption up to meet what we did as far as – well not we but what value has happened on it. This one we don't have to do just for the sake of doing it. Thank you again for listening.

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Thibeault?

Alderman Thibeault

Thank you, Madam Chair. So again, I guess this goes to Director Cummings through the Chair. So are we told here that there's no more information we're gonna get for a year like if we table it a month would we have enough information to then make an educated - or two months, or three more? Can you give us a kind of like maybe a guide on that?

Chairwoman Kelly

Director Cummings?

Tim Cummings, Administrative Services and Economic Development Director

Yes thank you, Madam Chair. I think I could come back to you for your next meeting with some data. I think it would be good data for you to have. I don't think you need to wait a year. I think - and you're not going to like this actually - but I think it's probably going to be a couple years actually before you can actually do any type of trend analysis which is what you're looking for so you have some sort of confidence. Ultimately, I just want you to have the appropriate data so you can make an informed decision whatever decision that may be. I think to answer your very specific question Alderman Thibeault, I can have that data for you what we do have for your next meeting. It will be post April 15th so I think we can we can definitely accomplish that.

Alderman Thibeault

Thank you. Um, do you have an opinion on this?

Chairwoman Kelly

I believe that is directed to you, Director Cummings.

Tim Cummings, Administrative Services and Economic Development Director

Yes. Thank you Madam Chair. I'm not able to give an opinion as of yet. I think I need to do myself the service of studying the issue. I say that because when I provide a recommendation, I want you guys to rely on it. I want you to be able to have confidence in it. I wouldn't be very confident in the answer I would be about to give you this evening. As you all know, I take a very conservative approach. I tend to be very judicious when it comes to data collection and analyzing data. So what I do know is because I've been at this game for long enough, once you givith, you're never going to takith away. So just – what I know that you do this, you're going to need to do it for the following years and I really want to make sure I have an understanding as to what that potential exposure will be for you because I don't want to put a value to it. The value to it really shouldn't be paramount. It's just making sure you understand so you can steward the financials of the City appropriately. So that's really where I'd be coming from. If you give me a little time, I will come back to you with a concrete recommendation.

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Thibeault as a follow up and then Alderman Clemons.

Alderman Thibeault

So as much as it pains me to take my personal opinions out of this because you know son of a Veteran, Vietnam Veteran, and a grandson of two World War II Veterans, I think it's important to support them but I also want to make

sure we are getting the information that will help us make better decisions. So despite how I feel at the moment, my personal opinion is maybe table it another month. I don't think it will change anything if we wait a month to see what data we can find out. It doesn't change anything for a month out but that's what I'm thinking.

Chairwoman Kelly

Are you moving to table?

Alderman Thibeault

I am not but I can. I'd like to hear what Alderman Clemons has to say.

Alderman Clemons

Yeah, the only thing is waiting. If we don't do it tonight, then it's not going to happen for anyone for their tax bill for this year. So if we're all okay with that, then - but that's the reality. We're going to move forward tonight at the higher amount and we get it done at the next Board of Aldermen meeting so that it takes effect before April 15th or it won't take effect until next year. So that's just the deadline. That's the decision we're making tonight.

The unfortunate thing was when I made the Motion to Table, I was hoping that we would have this data so that we could make a decision tonight so that we wouldn't put anybody in that position. So it's frustrating to me and because of that frustration, I'm going to vote to move this forward and do it anyway because I don't think that it's fair that we don't get the information that we asked for. So I'm going to move it forward regardless.

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Klee?

Alderman Klee

Thank you. To Director Cummings through you, Madam Chairwoman. May I ask a question? Thank you.

Chairwoman Kelly

Yes. Director Cummings?

Alderman Klee

My question to you is they have to apply by April 15 but do we have to pass it by April 15 for them to get it? Will the DRA reverse that - I mean not allow us to give the credit or do you know this?

Tim Cummings, Administrative Services and Economic Development Director

I don't know off the top of your head. Actually to further confuse the situation, I was under the impression it was an April 1st deadline. I could be misinformed on that part but that's why I will need to double check and get back to you. I don't know.

Alderman Klee

May I follow up? Thank you, I appreciate that. I know that the property assessment is as of April 1st but I just didn't know whether or not the credits or exemptions or anything like that. I've been trying to look at on the DRA as far as the regulations and so on but it doesn't state that here. So I think that's something that we need to know because if it was April 1st, we've already missed that deadline. If it is April 15th, I understand where Alderman Clemons is coming from and I do respect his comment on that but I think that's something we need to find out.

Tim Cummings, Administrative Services and Economic Development Director

If I may Madam Chair. Part of what's driving me to the April 1st was I was very cognizant of the fact that we needed to readopt the Veteran's definition, the Veteran's legislation that were talking about this evening by April 1st. I thought that that was the - for some reason I thought that that was the deadline for this as well. But again, I would need to double check that.

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Lopez?

Alderman Lopez

I think and actually I would ask the Chair through the Chair to Alderman Clemons, we can take it from the Committee, from the Board of Aldermen if we do find out over the next week that or if we don't pass this in the next Board of Aldermen meeting, then we're not going to get it in time for people this year. So we could still table it and then extract it from this Committee at the Aldermanic level if there was an urgent need. Just double check me on that though before screwing up.

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Clemons?

Alderman Clemons

Yes, that is true. Just to clarify, I was under the impression of the April 15th because at the meet - and I can't remember when it was tabled but I think it was sometime back in October but at that meeting. So Alderman Jette just pointed something it said that the applications are required by April 15th and I believe that the thought was that if you had an application in prior to that, that you would get your or you know - the conversation at the time back in October was that if we pass this by April 15th anybody that had applied would get the increased benefit. So whether that's true or not, that was what was discussed in October. Again even if that isn't the case, I still support the legislation. I still would move it forward.

Chairwoman Kelly

Director Cummings?

Tim Cummings, Administrative Services and Economic Development Director

Yes. Again, I defer to whatever the previous conversations were. I wasn't party to any of that. What I would offer is prior to your next full Board of Aldermen meeting which I think is scheduled for April 10th, April 11th, I can have the most up to date data for that meeting if you'd like just with the caveat being that it won't be complete so then you can decide however you wish if you'd like to do it then.

Chairwoman Kelly

Is there any further discussion on this motion? Alderman Klee are you adding anything new?

Alderman Klee

Yeah, kind of. All along I've been giving you the 2021 data because that's all that's on the DRA website but when I look at the fiscal note on here and I look at the \$845,000, I remember when I and I spoke to Miss Zins, and I think Corporation Counsel about that number, and that number was basically taken from what we had at that point in time which was close to 3,400 Veterans. So when I've been giving you numbers just to keep things in perspective, I've been looking at less than 2,500 numbers and now we're already up to 3,400 numbers, and that does not add those other ones. So while the new things that are coming in, it's going to be \$500 apiece. Everybody - that 3,380 Veterans that made this \$845,000 will be getting the \$250 plus everyone else. So I just want you to keep this in mind when we talk about this. We're not talking about truly insignificant numbers. These numbers will grow. Thank you.

Chairwoman Kelly

Is there any further discussion? Alderman Lopez?

Alderman Lopez

I actually want to make a Motion.

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN LOPEZ TO TABLE
MOTION CARRIED**

Chairwoman Kelly

O-22-031 is back on the table.

PUBLIC COMMENT - None

GENERAL DISCUSSION - None

REMARKS BY THE ALDERMEN

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Thibeault?

Alderman Thibeault

Thank you. I know it's late and I've been watching lights, camera, polka up there on the screen which is a fantastic show on our local TV. Honestly, you know it killed me to put that back on the table but I do trust Director Cummings and with him not being able to give an opinion, that concerned me. So I doesn't mean it can't come back and it doesn't mean we can't do it in the next Board of Aldermen meeting. It killed me to do that.

The other thing I wanted to say and I know it's late but you know, I thought the opening of the Nashua Center for the Arts was absolutely incredible on Saturday. Beautiful facility. I do want to mention one comment I saw online. The only one I could take before having to shut off the comments is look at all the elite people in Nashua elitist and I said wow I'm an elitist now. This is awesome. There were \$15 tickets for people so I don't think it was elitist. It had all kinds of different performances. If you liked symphony, it was there. If you like ballet, I can cross that off my bucket list now. The West African drumming which was probably the highlight to me, that thing was awesome. They did a great job on that and they were the most lively of the group. It was great singing, kids were performing. It was unbelievable and I think it's going to serve this City for a long, long time. The Mayor said 100 years after we're all long gone, it'll still be there serving the City. So thank you to Director Cummings, and Rich Lannan, and MaryLou Blaisdell, and Deb Novotny, and everybody else that worked on it. It was a big time coming and it was great to see.

Chairwoman Kelly

Alderman Klee?

Alderman Klee

Thank you. I want to echo what Alderman Thibeault said. One person that did not get recognition during all of that is a person who's also been part of it and she probably very, very upset with me for bringing up her name but there were a lot of people that worked on this Committee and that did so much but Judith Carlson was right there with the - I think it was just an omission that her name was not mentioned but she was there on all the Committees. She was there doing fundraising, she worked tirelessly for it, and the truth is she was there long before I was because there were pre-meetings and pre-studies that were done and she was part of all of that. So I want to thank Miss Carlson for all that she did as well. Thank you.

Chairwoman Kelly

Do I have a Motion?

ADJOURNMENT**MOTION BY ALDERMAN LOPEZ TO ADJOURN
MOTION CARRIED**

The meeting was declared closed at 10:18 p.m.

Alderman Derek Thibeault
Committee Clerk