

## BUDGET REVIEW COMMITTEE

APRIL 20, 2020

A meeting of the Budget Review Committee was held Monday, April 20, 2020, at 7:00 p.m. via teleconference.

### Chairman Dowd

As Chairman of the Budget Review Committee, I find that due to the State of Emergency declared by the Governor as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and in accordance with the Governor's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, this public body is authorized to meet electronically.

Please note that there is no physical location to observe and listen contemporaneously to this meeting, which was authorized pursuant to the Governor's Emergency Order. However, in accordance with the Emergency Order, I am confirming that we are:

***a) Providing public access to the meeting by telephone, with additional access possibilities by video or other electronic means:***

We are utilizing WebEx through the City's IT Department for this electronic meeting. All members of the Budget Review Committee have the ability to communicate contemporaneously during this meeting through this platform, and the public has access to contemporaneously listen in to this meeting through dialing the following number 978-990-5298 and using the password 273974. The Public may also view this meeting on Comcast Channel 16.

***b) Providing public notice of the necessary information for accessing the meeting:***

We previously gave notice to the public of the necessary information for accessing the meeting, through public postings. Instructions have also been provided on the City of Nashua's website at [www.nashuanh.gov](http://www.nashuanh.gov) and publicly noticed at City Hall.

***c) Providing a mechanism for the public to alert the public body during the meeting if there are problems with access:***

If anybody has a problem accessing the meeting via phone or Channel 16, please call 603-821-2049 and they will help you connect.

***d) Adjourning the meeting if the public is unable to access the meeting:***

In the event the public is unable to access the meeting via the methods mentioned above, the meeting will be adjourned and rescheduled. Please note that **all votes** that are taken during this meeting shall be done by **roll call vote**.

Let us start the meeting by taking a roll call attendance. **When each member states their presence, please also state whether there is anyone in the room with you during this meeting, which is required under the Right-To-Know Law.**

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

The roll call was taken with 6 members of the Budget Review Committee present: Alderman-at-Large Lori Wilshire was recorded present after roll call.

Alderman Richard A. Dowd, Chairman  
Alderman-at-Large Ben Clemons, Vice Chair  
Alderman Jan Schmidt  
Alderman Ernest Jette  
Alderman-at-Large Michael B. O'Brien, Sr.  
Alderwoman-at-Large Shoshanna Kelly  
Alderman-at-Large Lori Wilshire

Also in Attendance: Bobbie Bagley, Public Health Division Director  
Bob Mack, Welfare Manager  
Alderman Patricia Klee  
Alderwoman Elizabeth Lu  
Alderman Tom Lopez  
Alderman Linda Harriott-Gathright

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Chairman Dowd

Let us start the meeting by taking a roll call of attendance. When each member states their presence, please also state whether there is anyone in the room with you during the meeting which is required under the Right to Know and tell us why you are attending remotely. Alderman O'Brien, please call the roll and ask them to state the reason he or she could not attend, confirm that they can hear the proceedings and state who is present with them. Alderman O'Brien you are on mute.

Alderman O'Brien

I was just going to say, as I call the roll, please state the intentions and the requirements that the Chairman has directed to you. Alderwoman-at-Large Shoshanna Kelly

Alderwoman Kelly

I am here, I am alone and I am attending remotely due to the COVID-19 Crisis.

Alderman O'Brien

Alderman-at-Large Michael O'Brien is present, I am alone and participating remotely due to the prescribed social distancing. Alderman Ernest Jette.

Alderman Jette

I am here, I am alone and I can hear you and I am participating remotely in compliance with the stay-at-home order.

Alderman O'Brien

Alderman Jan Schmidt.

Alderman Schmidt

I am here, I can hear you, I am following the CDC Guidelines and with me, you will hear my bird off and on, I am sorry.

Alderman O'Brien

Alderman-at-Large Ben Clemons?

Alderman Clemons

Yes, I am here, I am attending the meeting via telephone and I am following the Governor's Executive Order.

Alderman O'Brien

OK, our Chairman Richard A. Dowd.

Chairman Dowd

Yes, I am alone, I am watching the meeting from a distance, due to social distancing, and I can hear you.

Alderman O'Brien

OK, Mr. Chairman, you have six members present, one member not in attendance, Alderman-at-Large Lori Wilshire. Also in attendance in Bob Mack, Welfare Division Director and Bobbie Bagley, Public Health Division Director. Also in attendance Alderwoman Lu, Alderman Harriott-Gathright, Alderman Klee, and Alderman Lopez. Is there anybody else I did not call?

COMMUNICATIONS

From: Kim Kleiner, Administrative Services Director

Re: Administrative Services Division – Questions raised at April 7<sup>th</sup> Budget Meeting and Utilities Guideline provided to Division Directors for FY21 Budget Preparation

***There being no objection, Chairman Dowd accepted the communication, placed it on file.***

Chairman Dowd

By the way, when we get any of these communications back that were put out by the Budget Committee, they should be being distributed to all Board of Aldermen members. Go ahead Alderman O'Brien.

From: Justin Kates, Director of Emergency Management

Re: Responses to Questions asked of Alderman-at-Large Clemons

***There being no objection, Chairman Dowd accepted the communication, placed it on file.***

From: John Griffin, CFO/Comptroller

Re: Responses to Questions asked of Alderwoman Lu

***There being no objection, Chairman Dowd accepted the communication, placed it on file.***

From: George Walker, Assistant Fire Chief  
Re: Responses to Questions asked of Alderman Dowd

***There being no objection, Chairman Dowd accepted the communication, placed it on file.***

UNFINISHED BUSINESS – None

Alderman Jette

Mr. Chairman?

Chairman Dowd

Yes?

Alderman Jette

Alderman Jette here. So two things, number one – I received I think correspondence, I think it was addressed to all of us today from Lori Ortolano, and I would move that that be accepted and placed on file.

Chairman Dowd

I told Donna Graham to accept it and place it on file for the Board of Aldermen Meeting next Tuesday. It came in too late to be on the Agenda. We would have to vote to place it on the Agenda today, but it will be on the Agenda of the Full Board of Aldermen next Tuesday.

Alderman Jette

OK fine, and secondly, I am not sure where this comes in, I think it is unfinished business, but last week, last Thursday night we unanimously recommend for final passage Resolution 20-016. You know I said at last Thursday's meeting, at the end of the meeting that I apologized but I had overlooked the items on the Agenda and I was not prepared when this came up. So we ended up voting unanimously to approve or to recommend final passage without any discussion of the Resolution. You know, I said at last week's meeting that I would like to move to reconsider for the purpose of giving us an opportunity to hear a presentation about it and discuss it.

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN JETTE FOR RECONSIDERATION OF R-20-016**

ON THE QUESTION

Chairman Dowd

What was the Resolution number?

Alderman Jette

20-016.

Chairman Dowd

OK, alright. So the motion you are putting forth right now is for reconsideration of R-20-016?

Alderman Jette

That is correct.

Chairman Dowd

OK. With the motion on the floor, would the Clerk please call the roll?

Alderwoman Kelly

Alderman Dowd if I could ask a question. I do not have that in front of me. Alderman Jette can you remind us what that is about, because I am going to be the first one to vote and I do not know what you are referring to.

Alderman Jette

Yeah that was the Resolution that reallocated \$40,000.00 in the Community Development Division; it was originally to look at forming an Art District. This Resolution was looking to reallocate that for a mural project. I have since found out that this \$40,000.00 comes from the Country Tavern Building on Amherst Street. The owners of that building were asking for a release of a façade easement that they have on that building. They had agreed to pay \$40,000.00 as part of that request for the release of the façade easement. I understand that that project is on hold, that the \$40,000.00 has not been paid.

I also understand that in light of the COVID-19 problem that the City is not ready to go ahead with this project and the Mayor has asked that it be tabled and not sent to the full board. So if we could reconsider it, perhaps we could hear more about that. That is the reason for my motion.

Chairman Dowd

So before we do the reconsideration, I will say that I have talked to the Mayor and Director Cummings and they would prefer that we table this, retake it up right now, table it, because it is not going to happen anytime soon, if at all, we don't know. So at the current time, they would both prefer that we table this. So the vote now is to bring it up for reconsideration. Who is speaking?

Alderman Clemons

It is Alderman Clemons

Chairman Dowd

Sure, go ahead.

Alderman Clemons

Is Alderman Lopez still on the line because I would like to hear from him on this? Well the vote for reconsidering it before we have any discussions ...

Alderman Clemons

Yes, my question is particularly on the reconsideration.

Chairman Dowd

Alderman Lopez are you on?

Alderman Lopez

Yes, can you hear me?

Chairman Dowd

I can hear you yes.

Alderman Lopez

So my understanding of this is the Mayor's Office is working with Beyond Walls which is an Art Program out of Massachusetts in order to organize a mural festival. And the idea was that money that originally had been set aside to help local business develop and Arts District in the downtown area, maybe by building staging or sound equipment, like small scale performing arts amenities to their sites. That hasn't really come off or really taken off and we didn't really offer it to any of the businesses that had those amenities in the last year or so. So their idea was to instead fund Beyond Walls to do outreach into the community here and try to connect with the Artist Scene in Nashua.

I am also aware that Positive Street Art, a local arts organizers are in the middle of organizing the exact same project. They are, by my estimation, much further along, having already picked a date, organized the event. So while it would have been nice to have two different programs running, I think we should probably table in light of the current crisis and have a little more discussion about where our funding priorities are. Because we do have more than just this one option for creating an identical event.

Chairman Dowd

Alderman Clemons are you OK with that?

Alderman Clemons

Yes, thank you very much, I appreciate that.

Chairman Dowd

Ok if there is no other concern on the Motion before us to reconsider, would Alderman O'Brien please call the roll?

Alderwoman Kelly

Alderman Dowd, just to clarify we need to vote to reconsider it and then table it, right?

Chairman Dowd

Yes.

Alderman O'Brien

The motion now on R-20-016, which is amending the purpose of Fiscal Year 2020, for the Community Development Division. I would like to make the Motion by Roll Call.

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

Yea: Alderman Clemons, Alderman Schmidt, Alderman Jette, Alderman Wilshire  
Alderman O'Brien, Alderwoman Kelly, Alderman Dowd 7

Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED**

Chairman Dowd

So R-20-016 is back on for consideration. Alderman Jette do you have another Motion?

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN JETTE TO TABLE R-20-016**

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

Yea: Alderman Clemons, Alderman Schmidt, Alderman Jette, Alderman Wilshire  
Alderman O'Brien, Alderwoman Kelly, Alderman Dowd 7

Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED**

NEW BUSINESS - RESOLUTIONS

**R-20-028**

Endorsers: Mayor Jim Donchess  
Alderman-at-large Michael B. O'Brien, Sr.  
Alderman-at-large David C. Tencza  
Alderman Richard A. Dowd  
Alderman Linda Harriott-Gathright  
Alderman Patricia Klee

**AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF NASHUA TO ENTER INTO A MASTER DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT WITH LANSINGMELBOURNE GROUP, LLC.**

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN O'BRIEN TO RECOMMEND FINAL PASSAGE BY ROLL CALL**

ON THE QUESTION

Chairman Dowd

OK is there any discussion or does anyone not know what this all about.

Alderman Harriott-Gathright

I have a question on that, this is Linda. I did get a call today from the (inaudible) and he was asking if this particular one just for high end ones or what types of apartments are supposed to go into this building.

Chairman Dowd

That is the first question I asked. These are going to be, it will not be public housing or low-end housing it will be market rate housing. And it will provide, it goes in with where the parking lot is right now, across from the River. As I understand it, and if you have additional questions, we can ask it at the full Board Meeting when it

comes up. But my understanding is it is about \$900,000.00 immediate funding for the City and significant funding year-to-year from the tax revenue.

Alderman Harriott-Gathright

Yeah I did understand all of that, but typically when we put in high end or market rate if you want to call it, there are a certain amount of apartments that do have to be, for example, low income or something like that. So I guess the question is do we know or should I just talk to Tim Cummings?

Chairman Dowd

No it is market rate housing. I did talk to Director Marchant about is and he's done a project in Manchester and it turned out exceptionally well. They are felt to be a very reputable company to deal with and they feel that this will be a very nice building. You all set?

Alderman Harriott-Gathright

Yes, I am thank you.

Chairman Dowd

OK Alderman Lopez and then Alderman Lu?

Alderman Lopez

Yeah, I just wanted to comment that just because a building is market rent, it does not mean that you will not be able to use vouchers to place people there as well. Because I know that the Public Housing Authority does a lot of that and other organizations within the community. It won't be owned by Public Housing but they can enter into an agreement with the landlord to subsidize the lease if necessary. Personally I have concerns about the parking situation but that is going to be a function of the development of this project and then I also want to make sure that the abutting neighbors, which include Nashua Wallpaper and Southern NH services fully, endorse this program and this project.

Chairman Dowd

I know that they have voiced some concerns so that seems to have been addressed by Director Cummings. But he will also report more to us as we go on. Alderman Lu.

Alderwoman Lu

Thank you. I was actually just letting Tom know but I thought of something I would like to ask. What struck me it just seems like a low price for a big piece of property in the middle of the City. Did that surprise anyone else? Because I as thinking of 201 Main Street and that basically has to be rebuilt, that's all thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Well we have been trying to market that piece of property for some time. We would have preferred a hotel, but I can tell you that the City is in dire need of that almost million dollars in the short term. So I know that some of the neighbors are concerned about it and I am hoping that the City can work out their concerns going forward. It is basically this motion going forward to the Full Board of Aldermen will be to allow them to start further negotiations and this won't be the last time that people get to chime in on this.

Alderman Schmidt

Alderman Dowd?

Chairman Dowd

Yes? Are you all set Alderman Lu? I have Alderman Schmidt and then Alderman O'Brien.

Alderman Schmidt

Thank you, I've also heard from several people, Granite Organizing Budget is concerned about housing (inaudible) market rate capable. The question is there will be public hearing on this, is that right?

Chairman Dowd

Yes, I am pretty sure there will be, yes. Because it involves the sale of City property and I think because of the amount it will be.

Alderman Schmidt

Thank you, it will give them an opportunity to talk to you about this. Thank you.

Alderman O'Brien

Thank you Alderman Dowd. I just want to say as Chairman of the Infrastructure Committee, this particular item was extremely vetted. In the area if you know it, at one time, there were buildings here, it was associated with Harvard Mill Housing. It was area that was blighted and basically torn down and was made into a parking lot. It has remained a parking lot as far as I can remember of 30 to 40 years. However, there was a proposal to put a hotel on it, but in putting the hotel the developer wanted an investment from the City. The investment from the City would have had a long time before we could have recouped some of the funds back.

In going to this, it will increase the livability of people who are, increase the people living downtown who perhaps may even go out and spend some of their leisure time and money and visit some of our fine downtown establishments. It will quite possibly by making this into residential housing, create a sort of economic boon for the downtown area itself. I understand the concerns of having public housing, that's a separate issue than getting into just basic housing. We need housing for the younger type of professionals. We've seen success at 34 Front Street. We've seen success down by the Riverfront, that area down behind the Peddler's Daughter. And again, we can look at the needs of housing, you know, probably in the future. But this will have an economic boon to the City. We had the support of the Infrastructure Committee and I am going to vote for it because I think it would definitely help our downtown. Thank you.

Alderwoman Kelly

Alderman Dowd?

Chairman Dowd

Yes is that Alderman Kelly?

Alderwoman Kelly

Yes.

Chairman Dowd

Go ahead and then Alderman Jette.

Alderwoman Kelly

So thank you first to Alderman O'Brien for giving us a synopsis of what happened at the Infrastructure Committee. In general, I am for this project, especially knowing the rate of vacancy in Nashua and how much we are in need of market rates apartments. The only thing I want to raise is that I wish that somebody was here to answer some of our questions as we are supposed to do this work in Committee and there seem to be a lot of questions. So I understand we are all working under different circumstances, but it is hard for us to make a vote on something if there aren't people here to speak on it, especially something this big.

Chairman Dowd

I think there will be a full presentation at the Board of Alderman Meeting. I know that Director Cummings is out straight with a whole bunch of things that went on. I have had a couple of phone calls from him like at 9:30 at night. So he is working very long days and the information that I received from him relative to this project and after having double-checked with Director Marchant, I feel comfortable with what would be built there and how it would function. I know we do have to take into consideration the impact of the neighborhood, but with the rents as they currently exist in Nashua, especially downtown. They are prohibitively expensive for a lot of people but there's also a lot of demand. The last two projects down there sold out very, very quickly. So we will try to get a full presentation at the Board of Aldermen meeting, perhaps I can even get him to send a presentation in advance, but I will talk to him tomorrow as well as the Mayor. Who was next? Alderman Jette.

Alderman Jette

Yes I agree with Alderman Kelly that, you know, we have talked about this before, that when something like this is coming up before us, I know that when I've had the experience personally of trying to bring things up at the Full Board of Aldermen Meeting and to be told that I should have brought it up at the Committee level. The way we do business is we are supposed to be vetting these things in Committee and making the recommendation to the Full Board. This project was presented conceptually at the Infrastructure Committee Meeting. All that we were presented with at the Infrastructure Committee Meeting was would you rather do a hotel where we would have to pay the developer a million dollars, or would you rather doing housing where we would get a million dollars? And the Committee said, "Yeah we think the housing is a better idea". It wasn't unanimous, but we kind of gave, I think it was also the Economic Development Committee that participated in that.

What we are being asked to do tonight is to make a recommendation to the Full Board to adopt this Resolution. This Resolution specifically authorizes the Mayor to sign this development agreement. And I am very disappointed that there is no one here apparently to answer questions about this development agreement. I talked to Director Cummings about it; I gave him some of my questions and he really didn't have an answer and said he would look into it. But he is not here to give the answer tonight. I know he is very busy, but I think that we as a Committee should be vetting this thing, vetting this development agreement. This development agreement, you know you talk about money in the short-term. Closing on this thing isn't until February 1<sup>st</sup> of 2021. The agreement says that if the developer defaults, the City is limited to liquidated damages, which are defined as we get to get the developers drawings and plans that he developed but there's no provision for any penalty, any money that the developer would have to pay if he doesn't go through with this thing.

It talks about parking, you know, it says that the developer will pay \$50.00 a month for 150 spaces in the High Street Parking Garage for 10 years. I don't know, I'd like to find out, is that reasonable, 10 years is a long period of time. Should we not be looking to increase the rental rate of parking in that garage prior to that time? The agreement also says that it waives the rule that ambiguities ought to be resolved against the drafting party. I don't know who drafted this agreement. I suspect it was the developer. Normally when there are

ambiguities, this is legal principle, that ambiguities are resolved against the party that drafts the agreement. This agreement waives that and it says specifically that we and our legal counsel have had the opportunity to completely look through this document and we are satisfied with it. We can't litigate any uncertainties or any ambiguities that come up in the future. It also excludes, you know, if the developer defaults it excludes our seeking any kind of damages from the developer.

I am not an expert on development agreements, but I would certainly like to hear from people as to some of the details of this development agreement. Rather than discussing it at the Full Board Level, I think it would be more appropriate for us to table this tonight and have Director Cummings and maybe Director Marchant, whoever else, maybe someone from the Legal Department come and explain this agreement and answer our questions so that we can then make a recommendation to the Full Board, not just conceptually do we want to favor this project; but specifically do we want to authorize the Mayor to sign this particular agreement?

#### Chairman Dowd

OK I was going to suggest, that I don't know that there is a real time crunch on this. We have another Budget Meeting on next Monday and we could have them come and discuss it. But it would be then probably be brought up at the Full Board Meeting. Alderman O'Brien do you have something?

#### Alderman O'Brien

Yeah thank you, I listened to Alderman Jette and as Chairman of the Infrastructure Committee I would to bring – what Alderman Jette says is true. But to be more clear, the question more is as was presented to the Infrastructure Committee, and the question that was asked by Director Cummings, was “do we want to go forward, we have to make a decision and do we want to go forward with the hotel or do we want to go forward with the housing”. And the Infrastructure Committee voted to go for the housing.

At that particular time, questions were brought up because I know Alderman Jette was there as he has brought up, there was a decision made on the parking into a 10-year lease. And why 10 years, why not 50 years or anything else, the point was brought up. It is so the City can re-evaluate the economic value of those spaces in a timely manner. And it was brought up that usually parking spaces should be evaluated every 10 years and if there is an increase it could be added at that particular time. You are not going to give anybody a parking space for 99 years, you would lose money. As far as any other legal questions, nobody on Infrastructure is a lawyer. So the thing is I kind of put the faith in what Alderman Jette has brought up into our Corporate Counsel, that they would advise the Mayor particularly on what to basically sign. I don't know if this is a hot button issue; I'd have to talk to Director Cummings about it. I could probably be in favor of going and tabling it at this particular time so that we can get the final solution out to everybody on this because it seems some people are confused with it.

What we have heard in Infrastructure is one thing but we can probably hear from Mr. Cummings to explain to the rest of you that would be appropriate, thank you.

#### Alderwoman Kelly

Yeah, I would like to move to table please.

#### **MOTION BY ALDERWOMAN KELLY TO TABLE R-20-028**

#### Alderman Clemons

Mr. Chairman, I had some comments to make though.

Chairman Dowd

Would the maker of the motion allow Clemons to comment first?

Alderwoman Kelly

Sure.

Alderman Clemons

So I just want to go on the record, I will be voting against this Resolution and against this project. I've spoken to a lot of residents in the City that do not want this; particularly the abutters who ironically enough we were told would want housing over hotel and actually I was told the opposite by the abutters which I thought was interesting. And the other thing was that this is, it is funny to say that a Committee made this decision, because the Committee may have endorsed a decision that was made by the Mayor and by the Director of Economic Development. This was kind of forced on the Board of Aldermen as "we are going to do housing because want the \$900,000.00 and we don't want to finance \$1 million dollars over 15 years".

So for all of those reasons I will be voting "no" on this project and I will stand with the citizens of Nashua who also do not want this. Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Alright the comments were probably not warranted since the motion before us was to table. So the motion on the floor is to table. I believe that is not a debatable motion, so would the Clerk please call the roll. And would the maker of the motion allow it to be tabled to the next Budget Meeting, the 27<sup>th</sup>?

Alderwoman Kelly

That would be fine.

Chairman Dowd

Alright, Alderman O'Brien?

Alderwoman Kelly

Provided that we have someone there to give a presentation at that meeting.

Chairman Dowd

But it's tabled, if they are not there, we don't need to take it off the table.

Alderwoman Kelly

That's true.

Chairman Dowd

Alderman O'Brien.

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

Yea: Alderman Clemons, Alderman Schmidt, Alderman Jette, Alderman Wilshire  
Alderman O'Brien, Alderwoman Kelly, Alderman Dowd 7

Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED**NEW BUSINESS – ORDINANCES – NoneTABLED IN COMMITTEE**MOTION BY ALDERMAN O'BRIEN TO REMOVE FROM THE TABLE RESOLUTION R-20-023 RELATIVE TO THE ADOPTION OF THE FISCAL YEAR 2020 PROPOSED BUDGET FOR THE CITY OF NASHUA GENERAL, ENTERPRISE, AND SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS BY ROLL CALL**

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

Yea: Alderman Clemons, Alderman Schmidt, Alderman Jette, Alderman Wilshire  
Alderman O'Brien, Alderwoman Kelly, Alderman Dowd 7

Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED****R-20-023**

Endorser: Mayor Jim Donchess

**RELATIVE TO THE ADOPTION OF THE FISCAL YEAR 2020 PROPOSED BUDGET FOR THE CITY OF NASHUA GENERAL, ENTERPRISE, AND SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS**

- Public hearing scheduled for 5/20/2020 at 7:00 p.m. at NHS-North Auditorium

DEPARTMENTAL REVIEWS OF THE PROPOSED FY21 BUDGET FOR THE CITY OF NASHUA

<u>Dept. #</u>		<u>Appropriations</u>
	<b><u>PUBLIC HEALTH &amp; COMMUNITY SERVICES DIVISION</u></b>	
171	Community Services	156
172	Community Health	161
173	Environmental Health	165
174	Welfare Administration	169
175	Welfare Assistance	170

Chairman Dowd

This evening we are going to be addressing the FY2021 Budget for the Public Health & Community Services Division. Again, as I mentioned earlier before the meeting started, Director Bagley is an extremely Division Director right now based on the pandemic. I would like to channel all of the questions to the Budget and if you have other questions relative to the pandemic, there are other opportunities to talk to her unless Director Bagley mentions something on her own. Director Bagley?

Bobbie Bagley, Director of Public Health

Yes Chairman, thank you. So for our budget do you want me to just go straight into the portions of the budget for each of the Departments for the Division?

Chairman Dowd

Yeah unless you want to give a quick overview of how you are doing?

Bobbie Bagley, Director of Public Health

So we are doing very well. As you mentioned, the entire Division across each of the Departments have all been repurposed to focus on the event that is currently affecting and impacting our State overall and our community. So the staff are working 7 days a week and this truly is a public health event where you actually really get to see how our public health infrastructure and our City works in combination with all of our Division Directors. And the collaboration has been phenomenal across all of the Departments. This is what you would expect to see in response to an event of this nature that impacts pretty much every single aspect of our City across Public Health, Office of Emergency Management, Community Development, Public Works; all of the City under the leadership of the Mayor and our Board of Aldermen and our Board of Health. You really get to see how the resiliency is there for us to respond to this in a way that helps keep our City as healthy as we can and at the same thinking of the economic position that this event puts us in.

With that said, it is timely that we do have this conversation around the budget because of what we see is needed in our Public Health Infrastructure; not just during this current event, but what we will need with regards to recovery and then sustainability of our efforts to maintain the health and well-being of our citizens in the City of Nashua as well the surrounding towns which are part of the regional work that we do with some of the support from some of the grants that we have for the Public Health & Community Services Division.

I am not sure I know Aldermen, Chairman that you said to kind of stick straight to saving some of those questions for later. If folks do have questions that they would like to have some immediate response to, I can take those and then we can get right into our Budget. Our Budget has not changed much with regards to the funding requests that we put (no audio) some increases over the (no audio) pretty much related to (no audio). Any questions with regards to our response to COVID?

Chairman Dowd

Does anyone have any questions for Director Bagley? Alderman Lopez.

Alderman Lopez

(no audio) anticipating (no audio).

Bobbie Bagley, Director of Public Health

(no audio) Budget, no.

Alderman Lopez

No one has a crystal ball even though some of us try.

Chairman Dowd

Anyone else?

(No Audio)

Alderman Clemons

I just wanted to state on the questions that I had presented, I actually felt kind of bad because Director Kates

was the first one to respond and I was thinking to myself, “Well duh, not you guys, obviously like you can’t cut your Budget, not in the middle of this”. So I just want you to know what obviously I think there is room to (audio cuts out) you know, emergency, this (audio out).

Chairman Dowd

I think as part of your budget you are adding one person, right? And again that was done before the COVID-19 pandemic. As you go through, if you feel that there are areas you might feel that because of this, in FY2021, you might need more help somewhere, please just let us know.

Bobbie Bagley, Director of Public Health

Ok, so with that I can go through and I’ll go through each Department and basically as I mentioned, Community Services is the Department that has 3 staff that are supported by the City that includes the Division Director, the Epidemiologist and also our Health Promotion & Communications Specialist. So there are no new positions there, just a position title change with some additional responsibilities added to the position of the Health Promotion & Communications Specialist. And as has been pointed out in response to this public health event, all three of these individuals, myself and these other two individuals, are working 7 days a week and many hours are put into this response effort.

As far as some of the line items in here, again, these are all flat funded. The only line in here where there was an increase was in the marketing and outreach line. This was, again, previous to the COVID response but what we have seen is that we have a particular program that we use to promote information and to get data out to all of our partners so they can understand what is happening in our community with regards to things like outbreaks and in response to some of the other emergent public health issues that were taking place just prior to this because we were just coming off a Hepatitis A outbreak when COVID19 started to ramp up. And so we did ask for some additional monies to help cover that marketing and outreach and to cover a couple of platforms that we use to push out information. That is pretty much it in Community Services. I am not sure if there are any questions or thoughts to any of the line items in that Budget.

Chairman Dowd

The only question I had was under property services - electricity, oil, water. We have all of those going down. Is that because of the renovation to the new building?

Bobbie Bagley, Director of Public Health

That is exactly what that was for. So right now in our current building we were having – because the building was not or is not efficient with regards to heat and electricity use, we were thinking that once the building was renovated those costs would actually go down even though there is an increase in some of those costs, we were thinking that those costs would go down once the building is more energy efficient.

Chairman Dowd

Any other questions for this Department? Alderman Lu?

Alderwoman Lu

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wondered how, it looks like you are planning to hire another person, you are adding to the staff? Is that correct?

Bobbie Bagley, Director of Public Health

In Community Services?

Alderwoman Lu

Yes, I am looking at Public Health & Community Services. Under full-time it goes from 2.88 to 3.88. And I just wondered how you could hire another person with only \$10,000.00 in salary increase.

Bobbie Bagley, Director of Public Health

I am sorry, which page are you on?

Alderwoman Lu

Well I saw that on Page 155.

Chairman Dowd

I think it is for the entire Division. Do you share a person across several of your groups?

Bobbie Bagley, Director of Public Health

So there is one – in Community – in Community Services there's one position, the Epidemiologist who has five hours under one of the Public Health Network Services Grants. So there are no new positions under this Department.

Alderwoman Lu

OK I thought I saw that on Page 155.

Chairman Dowd

I think that is one Division.

Alderwoman Lu

OK (no audio).

Bobbie Bagley, Director of Public Health

Oh I see what she says here. I'm not sure. I think that's an error.

Alderwoman Lu

Two more questions if I could.

Chairman Dowd

Go ahead.

Alderwoman Lu

Ok thank you. Ok and benefits are going down in cost and that surprised me. You are going from \$32,000.00 to \$24,000.00. I was expecting benefits to increase.

(No Audio)

Bobbie Bagley, Director of Public Health

And I can't answer that unless one of these positions, so I have two individuals like I said that are covered under here which is the Epidemiologist and our Health Promotions Specialist and I'm not sure if that would be going down because they are getting married and being covered under the other person's benefits coverage.

Alderwoman Lu

OK thank you. Just one other question, what are the indirect costs that are negative at the bottom of the page?

Chairman Dowd

That's 68200 Director Bagley. Other Expenses, Indirect Costs it is a negative number which means it is revenue rather than ...

Bobbie Bagley, Director of Public Health

Right. So our Indirect Costs where there's a negative, it comes from what we get from some of the grants.

Alderwoman Lu

Ok. Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

So there is money that has gone up that is coming in not money going out so that's a good thing, being higher. Ok anything else on Community Services, 171 or we can jump to the second department. Alderman Lu?

Alderwoman Lu

Has the lease for the new, have we leased a temporary rental (no audio)

Bobbie Bagley, Director of Public Health

(no audio) have not. (audio cuts out). Initially that was supposed the work was supposed to start in May, we were supposed to move .... (no audio) a lease put in place as of yet. I can follow up on that question about benefits just to make sure (no audio) benefit coverage of (no audio) the person who is about to get married.

(Audio cuts out)

Chairman Dowd

(no audio) had his hand waving first.

(No audio)

Alderman Lopez

... Performing Arts Center as a temporary (no audio) works there? A temporary public health site.

(No audio)

Bobbie Bagley, Director of Public Health

It would not (no audio) a place that will allow for our City's ADA Compliance (no audio) to have a facility for (no audio).

Alderman Lopez

(no audio) anticipated that, that's because one of my questions of the week from someone is "we put this in there" and it's always (no audio).

(No audio)

Alderwoman Kelly

Yeah, I had a quick question under supplies and materials your marketing and outreach is flat from last year. (no audio) by Federal Funds but I imagine (no audio) high, do you anticipate being able to stay within that budget given the current crisis?

Bobbie Bagley, Director of Public Health

So because we actually have additional funds from grants, and in fact, because the CDC has provided extra funding for this COVID response, there are additional funds that are coming through for those particular grant programs. So for instance, our Public Health Emergency Preparedness Budget has been increased significantly which will help cover the cost of that as well. And then across some of the other grants that we have, we had that marketing and outreach line and those budgets to help off-set the costs of what we wouldn't have through the City Budget.

Alderwoman Kelly

Thank you. I really appreciate that answer. I am glad to know you guys are being taken care of.

Bobbie Bagley, Director of Public Health

Thank you. So the next Department is Community Health. And again with regards to the questions that were posed by Alderman Clemons, there are no positions that we could do without. And, in fact, because of the work that the Public Health Nurses are involved with in this response, there is a great deal of contact investigation and contact tracing that has to be done in a particular event at this level that we are seeing with COVID-19. That type of work is also done when we have any type of disease outbreak. Like I had mentioned before, we were just coming off of the Hepatitis A outbreak where we did the same thing with investigation and contact tracing for individuals that have been exposed to a viral infection. And so although we would not be looking to not fill any positions, this is where, you know, in the future, as the Chairman asked, we would be looking to increase actual positions if we had that opportunity.

Right now, with some of the support that's coming from the CDC, that option has been given to us so that we can look to bring on temporary assistance with some of those positions. And so the increase that you see here basically is under the wages line again to accommodate for the salary increases. It looks like we put in for some overtime and that is now going to be available for us in 2021. We are hoping that again with some of the resources that are coming through, some of the grants that that will cover that for us.

Other increases that you will see in this budget and some of the lines, in fact, a lot of this has gone down. So we came in under Budget for this particular Department.

Chairman Dowd

Yeah and I always wonder how that you are able to survive with the monies that you request. One question I had on this was on anything going up. But the wages per diem are going down. Does that to do with position (no audio).

Bobbie Bagley, Director of Public Health

So the wages per diem here went down so that we could help cover the costs of the increases in the salaries. And that was why we had to decrease that line.

Chairman Dowd

Who was being paid under that line?

Bobbie Bagley, Director of Public Health

That includes Public Health Nurses that we had to fill per diem positions.

Chairman Dowd

Ok. I saw some hands. – Alderwoman Kelly and then Alderman Jette.

Alderwoman Kelly

Yes thank you, Director Bagley you were talking about contact tracing and the uptick in being able to bring people on to do that. Is that a job that you need formal training for? I am asking for the masses out there that are currently looking for work.

Bobbie Bagley, Director of Public Health

So far contact tracing, as long as the person has been trained in understanding what types of questions are asked it does not have to be a nursing position. In fact, right now, with the re-purposing of the staff at our Division, the 26 staff that are there, we have the 4 full-time nurses, the Chief Nurse and myself that do the investigations and then for the follow-up calling for symptom and temperature checks, we have our other staff that are from Environmental Health that are from Welfare and from Community Services, that are not nurses. They can make those calls, with that, it is a matter of, again, doing a just in time training and teaching individuals what types of questions to ask. The nurses do the investigation and they do the close out of the cases.

Alderwoman Kelly

Ok thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Alderman Jette?

Alderman Jette

Yes, I know that the Public Health Department administers vaccines and immunizations. I see that there is a line item for \$20,000.00 for vaccines and medicines. Do we recoup everything that we can? I am assuming that most of the people that come to the Public Health Department are not insured privately? But are we getting everything we can from Medicare and Medicaid and private insurance for that matter?

Bobbie Bagley, Director of Public Health

We have been, Alderman Jette, been able to collect administrative fees for individuals that have Medicare. We have not been able to collect anything for individuals that have Medicaid and we do not collect for private insurance.

Alderman Jette

Can I ask why you cannot collect from Medicaid?

Bobbie Bagley, Director of Public Health

We have put the application and so far, it has not been accepted by CMS, we've been denied. We put it in this year, we will try again next year, but it was denied.

Alderman Jette

Do you have any idea it would be denied?

Chairman Dowd

The Federal Government.

Bobbie Bagley, Director of Public Health

Yeah, it took us almost, actually it took us two years just to get set up so that we could collect on the administrative costs for Medicare and then Medicaid, they take us through a lot of different hoops with that and we just keep resubmitting the application.

Alderman Jette

Ok thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Anyone else have a question on Community Health? No? Ok. Director Bagley?

Bobbie Bagley, Director of Public Health

The Department is Environmental Health and again, there's not staff that we can spare in this Department either. Environmental Health is one of the Departments where we do have some funds that are generated through some of the work that is done through the licensing and some of the fees that come through this Department. You will see that there has been an increase again in wages and salary lines to compensate for those salary increases. We have also asked for pretty much everything in here was flat funded across our lines. There are a couple of decreases in here as well. Under Environmental Health and there weren't too many changes there, either. The most increase, again, was to compensate for the salaries.

Chairman Dowd

Consulting Services – it for professional technical services, 53142 Consulting Services went down \$1,500.00. Is this something you really need to stay level?

Bobbie Bagley, Director of Public Health

The consulting services what we usually that for is for mosquitos and last year the contractor, the consultant came in a little bit later on that one. So the amount for that went down. We do expect that if that does change, we may be able to make revisions in another part of the budget to be able to cover that cost if we have to take that back up.

Chairman Dowd

Ok, questions? Alderman Jette?

Alderman Jette

In a similar vein Director Bagley, when you do inspections of restaurants, for example, do you charge a fee for that?

Bobbie Bagley, Director of Public Health

There's a fee for licensing, there's no fee for inspection unless a restaurant fails and then there's a small fee that they pay to get their license reinstated. But we work really hard with the restaurants to help them not fail inspections.

Alderman Jette

Ok thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Any other questions? Alderman O'Brien.

Alderman O'Brien

Thank you. Alderman Jette kind of tripped the question out me, but Director Bagley, could you explain to the rest of the members, coming from my previous job on the Fire Department, if we had a fire in a restaurant at 2:00 in the morning, we were called by Environmental Services to do that inspection to make sure that no food would ever be sold out of the restaurant, protecting the public health until it reached clean standards. Am I correct? That's another very important function of this Division, correct?

Bobbie Bagley, Director of Public Health

Correct and this is one set of staff that are on call 24/7. So as Alderman O'Brien just explained, if there is a fire in a facility where there is food being served or food that is stored, the staff is called out and they go and the meet with the Fire Department and the Fire Marshall to make sure that establishment can serve food again, meeting the standards and requirements and deem it to be safe.

Chairman Dowd

Any other questions?

Bobbie Bagley, Director of Public Health

Our final Department is Welfare and I do believe that manager Bob Mack is on. Again, this is another Department where we stayed flat funded in our line items and the only increase that you will see is in the line for wages and salaries, again, to meet the increase that was passed to all of the unaffiliated employees.

Alderman Wilshire

Thank you, Bobbi do you know what's been spent year to date in the Welfare account. And do you happen to know also what the balance is in the Trust Fund?

Bobbie Bagley, Director of Public Health

Mr. Mack are you still on?

Bob Mack, Welfare Manager

Yes, I am here. I was hiding in the background. Yes as far as, if I may Aldermen, the Welfare Trust has around \$368,000.00. I am not exactly sure it could be a little bit higher or a little bit lower than that. It has a fairly significant balance in there. Over the years, we have restored that to have a healthy balance in case there was a need, if we had an overage in our General Assistance Budget. And we have not experienced that so that's a good thing. To date we have spent about \$377,000.00 out of the General Assistance Budget and that is about 70% of our Budget for the Fiscal Year.

Alderman Wilshire

Thank you very much, appreciate it.

Bob Mack, Welfare Manager

You are welcome.

Alderman Wilshire

Keep up the good work.

Bob Mack, Welfare Manager

Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Director Bagley did you want to add anything?

Bobbie Bagley, Director of Public Health

And so just with this, again understanding, as has been pointed out, we tend to run a very lean and mean Division there with the staff. We can see from our response with this event, how the staff has been very adaptable and very receptive to repurposing of their work and prioritizing what needs to be prioritized to , again, make sure that we can respond appropriately to these types of events. I am very proud of our staff over at the Division. Through all of this, we have still been able to maintain our accreditations. So we are going into year 3 and have been approved again when we submitted our end-of-the-year evaluation for accreditation, it has been accepted. And so your Health Department continues to maintain a high-quality performance so that we can maintain that as well. And although we have had these different emergent public health events occur from our opioid response to our TB clusters and our homeless population to our Hepatis A outbreak and then now to this COVID-19 event.

We have a very strong public health infrastructure and team that is in place right now and I hope that there is consideration that if we did need to increase our capacity – because over the years that I've been there, this is going into my 4<sup>th</sup> year we have lost 3 positions at the Health Department that were Administrative Support

across three different Departments, that those things would be taken into consideration if we did see the need to bring on additional staffing as we continue to work through these types of events knowing that you really have to have a really strong Public Health Infrastructure to maintain the health and well being of our community without overburdening the capacity that we have currently existing. And I would just ask that that would be taken into consideration and I do thank you for this time to present our Budget and your consideration for our Division as a whole.

Chairman Dowd

Thank you. Alderman Jette did you have a question?

Alderman Jette

I have a question for Mr. Mack. I am looking at the overall Welfare Budget if I am reading this correctly is less than \$500,000.00 (no audio) \$468,000.00 is that correct?

Bob Mack, Welfare Manager

I am sorry there's two budgets there is the administrative piece. So the 174 Budget is for the administration which is the staffing and just some of our expenses. And then the 175 is the General Assistance. So if you have a question, Alderman Jette, about the General Assistance Budget or for the Administrative piece of the Welfare Department.

Alderman Jette

Yes thank you for pointing that out to me, I was mistaken. OK for General Assistance is that 540 or 640?

Bob Mack, Welfare Manager

Its 540,500 so it is basically level funded from this year to the next Fiscal Year.

Alderman Jette

Does that money come from the CDBG money that the City gets?

Bob Mack, Welfare Manager

No that does not Alderman Jette. That is from the tax base it is City money. We do not get any grants or anything like that in this portion of the General Assistance Budget or the Division Budget.

Alderman Jette

Ok thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Any other questions? Seeing none. Alderman Wilshire.

Alderman Wilshire

I don't have a Budget question as much as timeline, Bobbie you said that the renovations are pushed off until September. How long do you expect that project will take?

Bobbie Bagley, Director of Public Health

Once they get it started?

Alderman Wilshire

Yes.

Bobbie Bagley, Director of Public Health

Well you know there a couple different things with that. We are planning to have everyone out of the building so working with Director Cummings to identify a property that will allow for all of us to be out of the building at one time, that will help expedite the work that needs to be done so they are not trying to work around our staff being in the building. They were anticipating depending on once they start the work, what things they find when they start pulling up the floors and going through some of the ceiling and the asbestos and other things that are there. Those things, depending on how much they may take longer to get those things out before they can start doing the work. The anticipated time for us to be out of the building was supposed to be somewhere between 6 to 9 months. So our lease, we were going to lease for a year just in case we needed to be out of the building for that period of time. But it all depends on once they start working, what they find and what needs to be taken out of the building.

Alderman Wilshire

Very good thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Yeah if they find asbestos or mold you better plan on 12 months. Director Bagley I just want to thank you and your entire Division for the outstanding job you are for Nashua under this COVID-19 pandemic. I think we are far in advance of a lot of other cities and I know that you are doing your utmost to track all of the cases, keep the caseloads down. I know our hospitals are in pretty decent shape right now. Hopefully when they break loose the testing, that Abbott Lab came up with, that we can get even farther ahead. But you are doing a great job, keep up the good work. And as you along, you find that your FY21 Budget needs to be adjusted because of the pandemic, just reach out to us, and let us know.

Bobbie Bagley, Director of Public Health

Thank you, Chairman, and thank you Aldermen, we appreciate your support.

Chairman Dowd

OK so that takes care of the Public Health Department. Alderman O'Brien, do you have a Motion?

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN O'BRIEN TO TABLE R-20-023 BY ROLL CALL**

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

Yea:	Alderman Clemons, Alderman Schmidt, Alderman Jette, Alderman Wilshire Alderman O'Brien, Alderwoman Kelly, Alderman Dowd	7
Nay:		0

**MOTION CARRIED**

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Chairman Dowd

Director Bagley, I want to thank you again and if you would like to get some much-deserved rest, you do not need to stay. We are going to be wrapping this up rather quickly and thank you very much. OK, General Discussion? Anyone? Seeing none – Remarks by Aldermen?

REMARKS BY THE ALDERMEN- None

POSSIBLE NON-PUBLIC SESSION - None

ADJOURNMENT

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN O'BRIEN TO ADJOURN BY ROLL CALL**

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

Yea:	Alderman Clemons, Alderman Schmidt, Alderman Jette, Alderman Wilshire Alderman O'Brien, Alderwoman Kelly, Alderman Dowd	7
Nay:		0

**MOTION CARRIED**

The meeting was declared closed at 8:19 p.m.

Alderman-at-Large Michael B. O'Brien, Sr.  
Committee Clerk