

## BUDGET REVIEW COMMITTEE

MAY 24, 2021

A meeting of the Budget Review Committee was held Monday, May 24, 2021, 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:

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

To access Zoom, please refer to the agenda or the City's website for the meeting link.

*To join by phone dial: 1-929-205-6099 Meeting ID: 829 8925 9144 and Passcode: 174893*

*The public may also view the meeting via Channel 16.*

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 and Nashua Public Library.

If anyone has a problem accessing the meeting via phone or Channel 16, please call 603-589-3329 and they will help you connect.

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's 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.

### Chairman Dowd

Before we get started, this is our first meeting to try to come back into the Chamber. There are three committee members in the Chamber and the rest of the committee is on Zoom. This will be a learning curve as we start to take advantage of the new systems in the Aldermanic Chamber. Please everyone bear with us because we may have learning curves as we go forward but we will address them as we get to them. With that, will the Clerk please call the roll?

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

Members not in Attendance: Alderman-at-Large Ben Clemons, Vice Chair

Also in Attendance: Alderman Linda Harriott-Gathright  
Alderman Thomas Lopez  
Alderwoman Elizabeth Lu  
James Testaverde, Deputy Police Chief  
Bobbie Bagley, Director of Public Health  
Kim Bernard, Chief Public Health Nurse  
Bob Mack, Welfare Officer  
Heidi Peek, Environmental Health Manager

### ROLL CALL

#### Chairman Dowd

Thank you everyone. As we go forward, we're going to be testing all of the new systems as I mentioned before. The automatic timer is for public comment are in place. When we have public comment, you have three minutes. When you have one minute left, we will see the yellow light. I'm not sure if you see it on Zoom. If you do, that means you have one minute left and we'll tell you and then when it turns red, please finish your thought and please stop talking. If it proceeds, we'll have to mute your mic.

I'm getting all kinds of text messages. I'm not sure what these message are. "Buzzing when Rick speaks." "Fuzzy noise too." "Buzzing when Alderman O'Brien speaks also." Okay. IT is on that problem and we will proceed. The IT people are abuzz and we'll work to make sure we clear that up.

The first order of business is Public Comment. Is there anyone that would like to speak on anything that is before the Budget Committee this evening? Does anyone see anyone with their hand raised? No. I don't see anyone so we'll proceed.

PUBLIC COMMENT – None

### COMMUNICATIONS

From: Matt Sullivan, Planning Department Manager (on behalf of Conservation Commission)  
Re: Authorization request for \$24,500 from the Board of Aldermen from the Conservation Fund (#4080) to define and approve the Salmon Brook Trail section between Ingalls Street and Burke Street within the Joyce Park Wildlife Sanctuary

From: Matt Sullivan, Planning Manager  
Re: Referral R-21-145 AND Amendments to approved FY2022 Capital Improvement Program (CIP)

***There being no objection, Chairman Dowd accepted the communications and placed them on file.***

UNFINISHED BUSINESS – None

NEW BUSINESS – RESOLUTIONS

**R-21-132**

Endorsers: Alderman-at-Large Lori Wilshire  
Alderman Richard A. Dowd  
Alderman Jan Schmidt  
Alderman Linda Harriott-Gathright  
Alderman-at-Large Michael B. O'Brien, Sr.  
Alderman-at-Large Ben Clemons  
Alderman Patricia Klee  
Alderwoman Elizabeth Lu  
Alderman-at-Large Brandon Michael Laws

**APPROVING THE COST ITEMS OF SIDEBAR AGREEMENTS BETWEEN THE NASHUA POLICE COMMISSION AND THE NASHUA POLICE SUPERVISOR'S ASSOCIATION AND THE NASHUA POLICE COMMISSION AND THE NASHUA POLICE PATROLMAN'S ASSOCIATION REGARDING A WELLNESS INCENTIVE PROGRAM**

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

ON THE QUESTION

Chairman Dowd

Deputy Chief Testaverde is here and he will come up and give us a short presentation on what this is concerning.

James Testaverde, Deputy Police Chief

Thank you Mr. Chair. Thank you Ladies and Gentlemen. Over the past couple of decades the State's standards for physical fitness due to a lot of smaller agencies...

Chairman Dowd

Hang on.

Alderwoman Kelly

We can't hear him at all.

Alderman O'Brien

Chief there might be a switch on the mic.

Pete Johnson

Donna do you know if that's muted on there?

Alderman O'Brien

I'm not showing muting.

Donna Graham, Legislative Affairs Manager

No it's not. We can always have you sit at one of the desks too.

James Testaverde, Deputy Police Chief

Can you hear me okay now?

Donna Graham, Legislative Affairs Manager

We can hear you but it's the people on Zoom.

James Testaverde, Deputy Police Chief

Alderwoman Kelly can you hear me okay?

Alderwoman Kelly

I can hear you now yes.

James Testaverde, Deputy Police Chief

Thank you very much. Ladies and Gentlemen, Mr. Chair over the past few decades the Statewide standards for physical fitness have fallen to in my humble opinion an abysmal level. A police officer in this State needs only to meet the 35<sup>th</sup> percentile for physical fitness under the Cooper Standard. We're not proud of it and we don't brag about it but that is the State's standard.

In an effort, the Nashua Police Department prides itself on having officers that vastly go above that level but in order to add an incentive to that to promote physical fitness which promotes mental wellbeing and quality of life and longevity now that the new retirement system requires our officers to do a minimum of 25 to 30 years, the administration this is not a sidebar where the union came to us and said we want something. We need something. This is the administration saying we'd like to provide this to our men and women. If they can attain the 80<sup>th</sup> percentile, they would get one day off – a wellness incentive day. If they attain the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile which is I will admit looking at the standards difficult, they would get two days off. The benefit of these days off, we have it written in no more than two members of any shift can take these days off at any given time. They cannot take them on any of the major holidays, and the administration can deny a day if it incurs any overtime. We can allow it but we can also deny it so we can manage this within our own budget. I can answer any questions now and get into the weeds if anyone would like but it's fairly straightforward.

Chairman Dowd

Okay does anyone from the committee have any questions concerning this Resolution?

Alderman Wilshire

I don't really have a question so much as an observation that 35 percent seems like the bar is set really low so I appreciate you putting this forward so that you know we getting traction. I don't know better service from more well police officers. It just seems 35 percent is really low bar.

James Testaverde, Deputy Police Chief

May I respond, Mr. Chair, briefly?

Chairman Dowd

Yes.

Deputy Police Chief Testaverde

I agree with you Alderwoman Wilshire and again, my humble opinion and I am not bashing any of the agencies around the State. Smaller agencies and in speaking to their Chiefs and Administration have difficulty getting quality candidates and the lower some of the standards are the easier it is to get these candidates in. And if I gave you some of the numbers, again, this is not Navy Seal Standards, but we want our officers to be in much, much better physical fitness levels. So we have some that can do this easily but the major majority would have to work and it gives them something to work at.

Chairman Dowd

OK thank you. Alderman Lopez.

Alderman Lopez

Is there attention given to avoidance of body shaming and that kind of stuff because in terms of fitness, there's metrics in terms of productivity, ability to complete tasks like running within a certain amount of time and that kind of stuff. And then there are people who are just built differently. I know one of the first marathons I ever ran, I was not intending to cross anybody but I did a double take because there was a guy standing next to me who was like 300 pounds and like looked like he was a Viking; he caught it and he called me and was like, you think I'm gonna have trouble with this race? And I was like, this is my first race, I've never any before. He remembered; at the Finish Line he was sitting there like eating chili or something like, he's like, hey, I've been here for an hour, where have you been. So there's a difference between able to perform at a certain level and having metrics that reflect a certain look. So what are the specific metrics for these performances that we are talking about?

Deputy Police Chief Testaverde

I can give you an example through the Cooper Standard. I am going to compare a 25 year old male to a 45 year old male and if any of the Aldermen or Alderwomen wanted specifics for different age groups, males and females I can get it for you, but again, I didn't want to give you every specific, because I'd present for about...

Alderman Lopez

It might be more personal curiosity. I've seen Navy Seals too and they come in all shapes and sizes too.

Deputy Police Chief Testaverde

Absolutely. This is a voluntary basis, so all of our officers have to, all but one who is grandfathered in who started in late 1980's, everyone from the Chief on down other than this one individual, must take a physical fitness test. And because the State Standard is the 35<sup>th</sup> percentile that is going to remain the standard, but we are trying to incentivize to raise that bar. So if they didn't want to take it, the incentive, they don't have to. As far as body shaming, it just doesn't happen at least in our agency. But I will give you an example, 25 year old male for the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile would have to 57 push-ups, 52 sit-ups in a minute, run a mile and a half in 9 minutes, 34 seconds and bench press about 1 ½ times their body weight, which meant if they were 180 pounds, kind of an average weight, they would have to bench press 266 pounds.

For a 45 year old, like myself, those numbers drop to 90<sup>th</sup> percentile would be 36 push-ups, 43 sit-ups, run in 10 minutes, 9 seconds and bench press 1.1% of your body weight; basically take your body weight and add 10 pounds. So the Cooper Standard goes with age and gender differences.

Alderman Lopez

So that's very different from judging somebody based on their weight or that kind of stuff?

Deputy Police Chief Testaverde

Yes.

Chairman Dowd

All set, Alderman Lopez? Alderman Jette?

Alderman Jette

Yeah actually the Deputy Chief answered the question that I had, I was just wondering what type of measurements these would require and I know that I would not qualify to be a police officer. I've always been impressed by our Nashua Police Officers; my personal observation is they appear very fit and I think they represent the City very well. These measurements that you've indicated shows that it is a pretty high standard that you are aiming for and I applaud you for doing that.

Chairman Dowd

I was going to say if any Aldermen can meet those requirements he just stated, we'll give you a day off. Any other questions.

Alderman Lopez

In response to your comment I probably could, but I am still legally blind so it is a pointless exercise.

Chairman Dowd

OK. Anyone else have a question or comment? Seeing no one, OK. So the motion on the floor is to recommend final passage of R-21-132, Approving the cost items of sidebar agreements between the Nashua Police Commission and the Nashua Police Supervisors Association and the Nashua Police Commission and the Nashua Police Patrolmen's Association regarding a Wellness Incentive Program. I think in all of our meetings with the Commissioners that this ultimately could save the City money relative to sick time and health and welfare of the officers. So with that, would the Clerk please call the roll?

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

Yea: Alderman Schmidt, Alderman Jette, Alderman Wilshire  
Alderman O'Brien, Alderwoman Kelly, Alderman Dowd 6

Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED**

**R-21-141**

Endorsers: Alderman Ernest A. Jette  
Alderman Richard A. Dowd  
Alderman-at-Large Michael B. O'Brien, Sr.  
Alderman Skip Cleaver  
Alderman Linda Harriott-Gathright  
Alderman Jan Schmidt  
Alderwoman-at-Large Shoshanna Kelly  
Alderman-at-Large Lori Wilshire

**AUTHORIZING THE EXPENDITURE OF UP TO \$24,500 FROM THE CONSERVATION FUND FOR WORK ON THE SALMON BROOK TRAIL**

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

ON THE QUESTION

Chairman Dowd

OK the motion is to recommend final passage of R-21-141 by roll call. Alright, is there anyone here that is going to present this information. There he is, Mr. Sullivan.

Matt Sullivan, Planning Department Manager

Good evening Mr. Chair and I believe Alderman Jette would like to say a few words as well on this item. But I will provide a brief introduction to the Committee on this piece of Legislation. This is a request for an expenditure or authorization to spend \$24,500.00 for the purposes of making trail improvements to Salmon Brook Trail between the section of Ingalls Street and Burke Street. The request includes two specific items; 1) being a \$21,000.00 contract with the Student Conservation Association for the labor involved with the improvements which will be in the form of two 10-day "hitches" in the period of June and July. The second element of the request is a \$3,000.00 authorization or \$3,500.00 authorization for materials including lumber, rebar and other miscellaneous supplies which may potentially include the rental of affordable toilet for the job site. I am happy to answer any specific questions about the trail improvements but we are please and humbly request the Committee's recommendation this evening favorably.

Chairman Dowd

Thank you Mr. Sullivan. Are there any questions from members of the Budget Committee? I can't see everyone so speak up if you want to ask a question. Alderman Jette?

Alderman Jette

Yes thank you Mr. Chairman. I don't have a whole lot to add to what Mr. Sullivan provided in the package for tonight's meeting. There's a detailed explanation of the contract. I was asked to sponsor this by the Conservation Commission. It is a great opportunity to make much needed improvements to the trail at the Joyce Park starting out a separate item that another company is coming in to remove the poison ivy that is a hazard on the trail and prevents a lot of people from using it. That is going to be done first and then we've got this excellent opportunity to team up with the Student Conservation Group that is going to come in and provide fairly cheap labor and equipment to accomplish these improvements. If you have questions about that, Mr. Sullivan can explain further.

But I think the deal that the City is being presented with here is pretty much a no-brainer. The money, by the way, isn't coming from new tax money. It is money from the Conservation Fund which the Conservation Committee receives from developers who need various permissions or permits to construct projects in

conservation areas or near conservation areas. So this money is not really tax money, I know it's all in a sense all taxpayer money, but this is not coming directly from the tax base.

So I think it is a great project and I applaud whoever was responsible for teaming us up with this group. So I don't know if Mr. Sullivan wants to explain further anything about the group but that's all I have. Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Thank you Alderman Jette. Alderwoman Kelly?

Alderwoman Kelly

No question here, just wanted to comment that I am pleased to support this. I was on the Conservation Commission previously; they do a lot of great work. I think one of the gems that we have in this City is our conservation and trails. It is really an incredible system so I applaud them for bringing this forward and looking forward to having this taken care of.

Chairman Dowd

Thank you. Is there anyone else that would like to speak? Seeing no one, Alderman O'Brien, would you call the roll? The motion is for final passage of R-21-141.

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

Yea:	Alderman Schmidt, Alderman Jette, Alderman Wilshire Alderman O'Brien, Alderwoman Kelly, Alderman Dowd	6
Nay:		0

**MOTION CARRIED**

**R-21-145**

Endorsers: Mayor Jim Donchess  
Alderman Richard A. Dowd  
Alderman-at-Large Michael B. O'Brien, Sr.  
Alderman Thomas Lopez  
Alderman-at-Large Lori Wilshire

**AUTHORIZING THE INTERFUND TRANSFER OF \$325,000 FROM THE BROAD STREET PARKWAY CAPITAL PROJECT ACTIVITY TO THE NASHUA MILLYARD DOG PARK CAPITAL PROJECT ACTIVITY FOR THE PURCHASE OF PROPERTY LOCATED AT "L" PINE STREET (MAP 77, LOT 5)**

- Requires a Public Hearing scheduled for Tuesday, June 1, 2021, at 7:00 p.m.

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN O'BRIEN TO TABLE R-21-145 UNTIL AFTER THE PUBLIC HEARING ON JUNE 1, 2021, BY ROLL CALL**

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

Yea:	Alderman Schmidt, Alderman Jette, Alderman Wilshire Alderman O'Brien, Alderwoman Kelly, Alderman Dowd	6
Nay:		0

**MOTION CARRIED**

NEW BUSINESS – ORDINANCES – None

TABLED IN COMMITTEE**R-20-016**

Endorsers: Mayor Jim Donchess  
 Alderwoman Linda Harriott-Gathright  
 Alderman Thomas Lopez  
 Alderman-at-Large Michael B. O'Brien, Sr.

**AMENDING THE PURPOSE OF A FISCAL YEAR 2020 UNLIKE ESCROW FOR THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIVISION**

(tabled at 4-20-20 mtg)

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN O'BRIEN TO TAKE FROM THE TABLE R-21-142, BY ROLL CALL**

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

Yea: Alderman Schmidt, Alderman Jette, Alderman Wilshire  
 Alderman O'Brien, Alderwoman Kelly, Alderman Dowd 6

Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED****R-21-142**

Endorsers: Mayor Jim Donchess  
 Alderman Linda Harriott-Gathright

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

- Public hearing scheduled for 6/21/2021 at 7:00 p.m. in the Nashua High School North Auditorium

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

<u>Dept. #</u>		<u>REVENUE</u>	<u>Appropriations</u>
	<b><u>PUBLIC HEALTH &amp; COMMUNITY SERVICES DIVISION</u></b>		
171	Community Services		173
172	Community Health	38	179
173	Environmental Health	39	183
174	Welfare Administration		188
175	Welfare Assistance		189

ON THE QUESTIONChairman Dowd

This evening we are going to be covering 5 Departments from the Public Health & Community Services Division. The first one that we are going to hear is Department 171, Community Services. The Appropriations are on Page 173. Director Bagley, did you want to give us an introduction?

Bobbie Bagley, Director of Public Health

Yes, good evening Mr. Chair and members of the Committee. I am here with the managers of our 4 departments of the Division of Public Health & Community Services, which is our fully accredited Health

Department for the City of Nashua. Each of the managers will talk very specifically about their Departments by giving an introduction to the mission and briefly talk about the services and the function of the Department. We will start off with Community Services which one of the Departments that I actually manage. The mission of the Department is to facilitate access to programs and services to develop resiliency and promote health behaviors within our Greater Nashua Community with our partners and engagement.

Under this Department, the staff that is funded by the City is 2.88 FTE's which includes the Division Director's position along with 95% of our epidemiologists and 100% of our Health Promotion and Marketing Specialists. All of the other positions under this Department are grant funded positions. The work that is mostly carried out as chief public health strategists leading our City function in making sure that we can protect, promote and preserve the health of the community. In this Department you will find and in this budget, we did come at the percentage that was asked of us by the Mayor. And on Page 173 of the Budget Book you will see that there's not much changes that were done in these different lines here for this Department with regards to what is committed in the Budget. So it is pretty much flat funded from the previous year.

I wanted to make sure that we are able to sustain the work that needs to get done in this Department with the staffing that we do have, maintain our accreditation status which we are going into our 5<sup>th</sup> year, so that's really important for this Department. We do have a new building that we will be moving into and so you will under some of the property services, electricity the heating and the water, the numbers there are pretty much the same as well. I don't know if there are any questions with regard to the Budget; as I mentioned as far as our analysis this Budget doe sustain this Department with the staffing that we have and the support of the grants that fund the majority of the staff under the Community Services Department.

Chairman Dowd

OK is there anyone from the Budget Committee that has a question for Director Bagley? I am seeing no one. OK. We will move on to the next Department which is 172, Community Health. Appropriations are on Page 179, Revenue is on Page 38.

Director Bagley

And Mr. Chair, you will hear from the Chief Public Health Nurse, Kim Bernard who is the Manager of the Community Health Department.

Chairman Dowd

OK.

Kim Bernard, Community Health Department Manager

Hi, can everybody hear me?

Chairman Dowd

Yes.

Ms. Bernard

Hi, good evening. Thank you for the opportunity to speak tonight. So as Bobbie stated, I am the Chief Public Health Nurse for the City as well as the Manager of the Community Health Department. The Mission Statement of the Community Health Department is to lead the way in disease prevention with community outreach, education, collaboration and health services in the Greater Nashua area. So under our Department we have myself as well as three public health nurses that are covered under the City Budget. We have an Administrative Assistant and one Community Health Outreach Worker that is also covered under the City Budget. And then we have one public health nurse and one community health outreach worker that is

covered under grant funding.

Under our Department goals we have several different services that we provide for the community. Some of those include our lead program where we are testing our children in the Greater Nashua Area for lead. We also do a lot of education surrounding that in conjunction with our Community Services Department. We also have an STD/HIV Program that we were able to sustain during most of the pandemic. We have reopened our clinics back in July of 2020. We were able to set up an MOU with Lamprey Health Care which was able to give us, since we are displaced currently, was able to give us a physical building where we could have our clinics on Thursday evenings. So that partnership has been great. We also have continued our immunization program, prior to the COVID-19 vaccine coming out, we were able to really do some mass vaccinations with the flu last year as well as just continuing and trying to educate folks on having their children continue with their vaccinations that are due even though they may have been remote.

So we also had an MOU developed between us and the St. Joseph Hospital Mobile Health Clinic, that's been another great partnership that we've had. So we have been over at Elm Street Middle School. They have been very gracious to have us stay there. And we have been there on Tuesday. We have also continued our immunizations and other outreach with our STD testing over at the Nashua Public Library once a week and some other areas in the Nashua area over the pandemic. So we have really tried to continue and provide a lot of these services while we have been going through this time.

We also continue our Program which never stopped during the pandemic, we do that twice a week in conjunction with Revive and that is an overview of the programs that we are providing. Just to note a few accomplishments that are noted here, I just want to highlight that our Community Health staff worked over 6,480 hours in response to the COVID-19 effort. This was really a huge undertaking by the Division and the Community Health nurses really stepped up and did a lot with disease investigation as well as now transitioning into the vaccine response. And then those MOU's are also one of the highlights that I wanted to discuss. So are there any questions regarding the actual budget item that I can answer?

Chairman Dowd

Any questions from members of the Budget Committee? Alderman Jette?

Alderman Jette

Yes I think, I don't know if this is for you or for Director Bagley, but I am wondering about the demands that have been put on your Department because of COVID. I am assuming without really knowing, I am assuming that there was a big demand and I don't know if you had to hire more staff or if you had to use overtime? Is that reflected in this Budget and do you expect hopefully a decrease in the coming year? And what about the money that we got from the Federal Government and the State to assist us with the COVID crisis. How did that all affect your Department and is that reflected in these budgets?

Ms. Bernard

That's an excellent question, Alderman Jette. I can speak to some of it and then I'll have Bobbie speak to some of the other pieces as far as some other grants. I can speak to the pieces where we have received some funding from the CDC where we were able to hire some temporary staff 2 ½ nurse units, so 2 ½ nurses, two full time and one part time. We also are using some FEMA funds for staffing, some per diem nurses for the vaccine effort so that's rather a newer thing that we have taken on. And to answer your overtime question, our nurses are all salary, so they have not received any overtime for any of the hours that they have put in, the extra hours.

In the future, we are anticipating that we are going to need more staff. We would like to be able to have 2 to 3 more nurses on board through the City. We anticipate that we are going to be doing COVID boosters and COVID is not going to be going away anytime soon. So we will be dealing with COVID for years to come. So we anticipate those needs. Bobbie, was there anything else that you wanted to mention surrounding that?

Director Bagley

(Audio cuts out) able to add more to answer Alderman Jette's question?

Ms. Bernard

Yes, was there anything I missed?

Director Bagley

Mr. Chair?

Chairman Dowd

Yes, go ahead.

Director Bagley

So in response to Alderman Jette's question, so the funding that we have right now for the COVID response is emergency funds, it is all temporary. We have one more year of funding through some of the epidemiology and laboratory funding, we will have that for one more year. That has allowed for us to cover the cost of some of the per diem nurses that are working currently to support some of the vaccination efforts, some of the disease investigation and contact monitoring. The FEMA grant that we received that the Chief Public Health Nurse Kim spoke of, will last for the rest of this Fiscal Year and then – it ends in December so that funding is temporary. And then we also have the additional support from the CDC which they actually hire the staff for us and deployed them so we didn't actually get any money through the CDC Foundation. They hired the staff and deployed them to our Public Health Department. That contract ends on June 30<sup>th</sup>. So those 2 ½ FTE's that the Chief Public Health Nurse spoke of, they will be ending at the end of June 30<sup>th</sup>.

The work that will continue to go forth, because there's the impact of COVID and the increase of vaccination efforts that will need to continue throughout this year and the expectation of vaccination clinics going into next year where that additional staffing is going to be needed. We don't know what the funding will look like going forward, for right now there's quite a bit of funding that has come from the Federal Government to support these efforts but it is all temporary. So we will have a gap once the CDC nurses, their contract expires in June and we do have the per diem staff that we have right now that FEMA will cover the expense of that staff. The FEMA funding does not cover any additional overtime of our public health nurses which are salaried.

Chairman Dowd

All set Alderman Jette?

Alderman Jette

If I could follow up?

Chairman Dowd

Follow up.

Alderman Jette

So are you saying that the additional expenses that may have been caused by COVID were covered by the

State or Federal Governments and they were outside last year's budget and this year's budget or this coming year's budgets so they are accounted for otherwise, they are not in here and don't need to be in here.

Director Bagley

So the majority of the funding that we receive to cover the cost of the additional work is covered through grants. The City Budget does not include funding to hire any additional public health nurses.

Chairman Dowd

All set Alderman Jette or follow up.

Alderman Jette

No, I guess that's all I have, thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Anyone else have a question on this Department. OK I have just a couple of questions. Just for clarification, on Line 51 412, Wages per Diem in 2020 spent to date \$41,000.00. And I assume that that funding came from Federal Funds and if so, why would we reflect it here?

Ms. Bernard

Those were City funds and we were over budget and that was due to the COVID-19 response and that was prior to us getting all of the Federal Funds and the CDC Foundation nurses. I can tell you that the majority of those funds were used to pay nurses to do disease investigation contact tracing.

Chairman Dowd

Do you know whether that line item and also 61 110, Protective Clothing which was PPE I am sure, 1909 are being ultimately covered by funds coming into the City from the relief? Or is that a question for John Griffin?

Ms. Bernard

Could you repeat that question?

Chairman Dowd

You said the \$41,228.00 under Wages Per Diem came out of the budget and put the budget over. And also in Protective Clothing which I assume was PPE, 1909 with a budget of \$300 seems to me like that might be something that might be covered under Federal reimbursement, do we know whether it is?

Director Bagley

Yes. I am not sure that buzzing, I am not sure if you can hear but there's buzzing. But if the Finance, John Griffin can answer, but I do believe this is one that can be reimbursed from FEMA. There was some funding that went over budget that could be applied to FEMA reimbursement for the City. I am not sure if Mr. Griffin can hear us.

John Griffin, CFO

Mr. Chairman, I can check that and get you an answer for the Full Board. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Dowd

Alright. The other question I had was on disposal services. Can you just tell me, keep the question from being asked, what are the disposal services?

Ms. Bernard

That is Stericycle, that is the disposal of any bloodborne pathogens, whether it be needles or other items that are contaminated.

Chairman Dowd

So do you handle disposal for the general public if they ...

Ms. Bernard

No.

Chairman Dowd

No? OK. Do you know if they are still doing that at the hospitals?

Ms. Bernard

They are, yes. Both hospitals do accept, you are speaking of needles?

Chairman Dowd

Yes.

Ms. Bernard

Yes, both hospitals do accept that and as well as our SSANA Program.

Chairman Dowd

Alright. Thank you very much.

Ms. Bernard

You're welcome.

Chairman Dowd

If there are no other questions, we will move on to Department 172, Environmental Health. Appropriations are on Page 183, Revenue on 39. By the way the Revenue Lines seem to be staying pretty stable. So unless anybody has any specific revenue questions we will move on to the next expenditures which is Department 173, again on page 183.

Director Bagley

So Mr. Chair, you will hear from our Health Officer, Heidi Peek who is the Manager of the Environmental Health Department. She will give you an overview of the Department as well as explaining the budget line items.

Chairman Dowd

Good evening. Heidi?

Heidi Peek, Environmental Health Department Manager

Good evening, Mr. Chair, Aldermen. Thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to go over the Budget tonight. Environmental Health Department is a small department. There are six of us. Our mission is to protect the public's health by promoting best prevention practices through science, education, guidance and fostering public trust and enforcement of Laws and Ordinances. As the Chief Public Health Strategist for the City of Nashua, the Environmental Health Department protects and promotes the health of the public by defining, eliminating, controlling and managing environmental health hazards. This is accomplished through the enforcement of Laws and Ordinances that protect the public from specific harmful environmental conditions.

And I am sure that a lot of you are familiar with our programs, the largest one is Food Service. We also do some foster home inspections, some school inspections whenever they are required by Department of Education, Childcare inspections, septic system approvals and we work with the Animal Control Officer when it comes to rabies investigations. We work together to make determinations about what happens, for testing if there is a human exposure. We kind of work in two realms in that we are an enforcement agency but we also try to deliver that enforcement primarily through education. I appreciate our workforce being able to identify with our business owners, being able to handle complaints from the general public but also be mindful that a lot of what we do is talk people through things, a lot of hand-holding and explanations of why and the relevance to what we do.

Along with myself, I have a Deputy Health Officer, Ren Beaudoin, and Office Manager, Linda Alukonis and we have three Environmental Health Specialists; April Torhan, Michael McGuinness and Tim Poitras. And we are fully funded by the City of Nashua. And COVID really put ... it was a different world for us this past year and we employed throughout the Division all hands on deck approach. So that meant that when the shutdown occurred, Food Service wasn't operating and so we answered the hotline, we helped conduct disease investigations, we did contact monitoring. We were right there with everyone else and we are just now moving back to more of our routine activities.

We are always trying to improve those processes, making them a little bit more understandable for the general public. We are working now with Civicgov to get the licensing and permitting software implemented within our Department. It is a little challenging right now because our old VACS has now gone away and now we are having to manually put some things in. But we will make it through it. You will see that our performance measures are a little wonky as opposed to previous year. We didn't do routine food service inspections, we responded to complaints, we went over social distancing, we responded to the Attorney General's Office when they received complaints. We acted as the DA to HS's eyes and ears in Nashua. So we are resuming food service inspections. So it was just a very different year.

I served as the Safety Officer for the COVID activities and actually followed up with some of that work today in looking at Arlington Street Community Center and their resumption of programs and walked through City Hall with a member from Risk to assess the safety of the meeting spaces within City Hall. And we did spend a lot of time with our food service partners out there but it was in the changes to the guidelines and the requirements, it was walking the business owners through a lot of those steps and also following up with COVID positive food service workers, business workers, etc. So it was very different year. Ren our Deputy Health Officer serves as the Accreditation Coordinator and so his work on that is vital and we also took the lead of protection of food service workers in coordination with the vaccination clinics. And I know that, again, that's another of all hands on deck. We have had staff at vaccination clinics, at testing clinics and we will continue to provide support.

But we spend a great deal of time as subject matter experts if you will about ventilation systems, disease transmission, cleaning surfaces what does that mean? How can we reopen this? How can we get this other activity going within the community? So that has taken up a great deal of our time. As far as the budget

numbers, we came in where we were supposed to. There were two lines that were reduced a little bit. But I would be happy to answer any specific questions.

Chairman Dowd

OK thank you. Does anyone from the Budget Committee have any questions for Department 173, Environmental Health? Alderman Jette?

Alderman Jette

Thank you Mr. Chairman. So I noticed under the Revenue Pages we have Food Service Licenses that generate \$115,000.00 a year. Plus there are spa and pool licenses, solid waste licenses and septic license fees. I am particularly interested in the food service licenses. I know that your Department it's primary function is to protect the public and make sure that people who are in the food service industry are abiding by the various rules and regulations concerning the temperature in which they keep their refrigerators and freezers and that they cook at and different things of that nature. It is all to protect the public but it also enables those businesses to generate income for themselves and their employees and their owners, etc.

So I am wondering have looked at recently at how our fees, the food service license fees compare to other cities, towns in New Hampshire, in Massachusetts, Maine, in surrounding areas. Are we charging an appropriate amount for what ultimately is a service that enables these food service providers to run their businesses?

Ms. Peek

Thank you for your question. Our fees are very old. We haven't raised our fees in a very long time. And it certainly didn't seem like the right time to do that with all that we were going through. In comparison to other communities, that would take a little bit. I would be happy to look into those numbers and try to figure it out. I think that we are probably running a little bit cheaper than Manchester. I haven't look at Concord's for a while. I think Portsmouth might charge a little bit more as well. But I am not certain on those, those are kind of off the top of my head comparisons.

Chairman Dowd

All set Alderman Jette or follow up?

Alderman Jette

If I may follow up. I don't want to overburden you but if it is possible for you to obtain that information it would be something that I would be interested in learning the results of that. I don't want to penalize anybody, I don't want to make business any more difficult than it is. But I also think that (audio cuts out). Yes I can hear (audio cuts out).

Alderman Schmidt

New technology.

Chairman Dowd

Yeah I heard Jan.

Alderman Schmidt

Good. I'll be careful what I say.

Chairman Dowd

Alderman Jette, can you hear us?

Alderman Jette

Yes I can hear you, can you hear me? Alderman Dowd, can you hear me?

Alderman Schmidt

Apparently not.

Ms. Peek

We can hear you.

(Audio cuts out)

Alderwoman Lu

President Wilshire is there.

Chairman Dowd

Yeah she is.

Alderman Schmidt

OH we can hear you again.

Chairman Dowd

Alright we are back on. So did you have a follow up Alderman Jette?

Alderman Jette

I don't know when you lost me. I was saying that – did you hear my question to Ms. Peek about whether or not the fees that we charge for food service licenses?

Chairman Dowd

We heard that. We heard that the fees are old and I didn't know if you had a follow up to her answer?

Alderman Jette

Just to finish this off, just to make sure everyone is on the same page. So when she answered she said that she would be willing to look into that and I said I did not want to over burden her but if she could obtain that information that is something that I would be very interested in.

Chairman Dowd

I just want to reiterate that any data that comes in from questions asked at one of these meetings should go directly to Donna, the Legislative Assistant and she will make sure that everybody on the Board of Aldermen get the answers, alright?

Alderman Jette

Yes, of course.

Chairman Dowd

No I didn't know if they knew, I knew we knew. Any other questions for this area. Seeing none, thank you Heidi.

Ms. Peek

Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

The next Department is Welfare Administration. The Appropriations are on Page 188.

Director Bagley

Mr. Chair you will hear from our Welfare Officer, Mr. Bob Mack who will give you an overview of his Department, the staffing and some highlights from the program as well as go through the Budget. And Mr. Chair, I did hear that the question you asked about the overage in the per diem line for Community Health, that \$41,228.00 will be reimbursed through FEMA Funds; we did put in for reimbursement for those funds to the City.

Chairman Dowd

Thank you.

Director Bagley

Mr. Mack?

Bob Mack, City Welfare Officer

Good evening Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee.

Chairman Dowd

Good evening.

Mr. Mack

Thank you for this opportunity, I hope you can hear me OK.

Chairman Dowd

Yes.

Mr. Mack

Terrific. So the Welfare Department, again I am manager of the Welfare Department as the Welfare Officer. We are made up of a total of 6 staff; it is myself, a Senior Case Technician who operates as a backup in assisting to manage the Department. We have an intake worker and three case technicians. We operate under the mandate of RSA 165 which says that every municipality in the State of New Hampshire must

provide some form of general assistance in accordance with written guidelines to those who are eligible and in need of such assistance.

The Mission of our Department is to promote, protect and preserve the health and well-being of our community by helping individuals and families to achieve self-sufficiency through direct assistance or referrals to other community resources to meet basic needs.

So through our day-to-day operations, we spend a lot of time assessing cases, taking applications from people that seek assistance, collecting documentation and verifying documentation and need and assessing what we may assist with or what they may be able to get through some other agencies in the community. We work very closely with our community partners, non-profit organizations. The basic needs for which we look to assist with include housing, utility assistance, food, sometimes prescription assistance and occasionally burial or cremation for indigent folks. Again we work very closely with our community partners. Throughout the course of the COVID response, the Welfare staff have also been providing support and assistance to the Division in supporting hotline calls and working at some of the vaccine and testing clinics as necessary to support the other Division staff and community health.

One of the big items, if you will, that has come across the State of New Hampshire has been the Federal Funding that has helped through the COVID situation with Emergency Rental Assistance and Utility Assistance. We have referred a number of folks that have contacted the Welfare Department to those resources if they have had direct COVID related financial hardships. So in looking at the assistance I think in our part of Hillsborough County, Southern NH Services has assisted with approximately \$3 million dollars in assistance for emergency rent and utility assistance due to the COVID situation. That has helped reduce our need to help directly as it has also helped other non-profit organizations in our community to not have to spend a lot of their budgeted money actually because these other resources have kicked in. So that has been a big help to those in need in our community and it has helped us save some money as well. That is a basic summary of the Department.

We do have basically two budgets; we have our Operational Budget which had some minor adjustments with it, primarily staffing. Our expenses are related to our staffing, we don't have a lot of other overhead there. And then our General Assistance Budget which is the money that we issue out to vendors to support those in need that apply for assistance and are determined eligible. With that, I don't know if there are any specific questions, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Dowd

Are there any members of the Budget Committee or other Aldermen that have questions? Alderman Jette?

Alderman Jette

Thank you Mr. Chairman. Mr. Mack you may have answered this but I was struck by your proposed budget being approximately \$70,000.00 less than you budgeted for last year. In this climate, how are you going to be able to reduce that budget?

Chairman Dowd

Mr. Mack?

Mr. Mack

Yes, Mr. Chairman. Thank you Alderman Jette. Yes we were able to come in and reduce our General Assistance Budget by about \$63,000.00. This was partially based on some of the other emergency assistance funds that have come into the community. But it also based on what we are projecting as the potential need moving forward. To date, we have expended around \$327,000.00 of our budget of \$540,500.00 for this current Fiscal Year which is about 60% of the budget. Again those emergency funds

that are out there, they are not going to be around forever, but that being said, we do have very good working relationships with our community partners. We oftentimes will pay portions of rent due and they will cover other portions of the rent due so we plan to continue with that aspect and we will evaluate and assess this General Assistance Budget as we go through the upcoming Fiscal year. If by chance we did not have sufficient funding in the General Assistance Budget, we do have the Welfare Expendable Trust Fund which has around \$372,000.00 in it. We are hopeful that we won't need to utilize that fund but it is there. We don't count on that fund as we budget but we try to predict where things are going to go and where things are trending. It has been an interesting year to try to track that trending because we have seen significant influx of funding, both through the Emergency Assistance Programs as well as different stimulus funds that have gone directly to individuals in the community. So it has been a little tricky to try to track that and balance that out. But we are pretty confident that we should have sufficient funding with – I think we budgeted around \$400,000.00 in the shelter line itself which is the largest portion of our General Assistance Budget. I hope that addresses your question, Alderman Jette.

Alderman Jette

Yes, thank you.

Chairman Dowd

All set, Alderman Jette?

Alderman Jette

Yes, thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Alderwoman Lu?

Alderwoman Lu

Thank you. Mr. Mack, how long will the federal funds that you depended on, how long are they due to continue? To the end of the year or until June?

Mr. Mack

As I understand it, they are supposed to extend through the end of the calendar year. And I think that they may be re-evaluating these things as they go as well pending any other orders either from the President or Congressmen and Senators and Representatives.

Alderwoman Lu

OK thank you.

Chairman Dowd

All set, Alderman Lu?

Alderwoman Lu

Yes.

Chairman Dowd

Alright, thank you. And by the way we were covering both Departments 174 and 175. Does anyone else have a question? OK I just had a couple. I notice your cellular telephone expenses are tracking about right but they are double for this upcoming budget. Is that for additional staff?

Mr. Mack

Yes Mr. Chairman, this is to add the Senior Case Technician to cover the use of her phone because she uses her personal cell phone for work related calls, checking emails and things like that.

Chairman Dowd

OK the other question I have is on Line 55, 699 “Other Contracted Services” went up from \$100.00 to \$1,000.00; just curious what that is?

Mr. Mack

Yes Mr. Chair. That is to account for the utilization of the language line. If we have clients that do not speak English proficiently, we have some staff on board that speak different languages, but if there is a language that we don't have a staff person that can communicate directly with the client, we may need to call the language line and utilize that interpreter service over the phone.

Chairman Dowd

Any additional questions from anyone? OK thank you very much.

Mr. Mack

Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

That concludes the Public Health & Community Services Division. Alderman O'Brien?

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN O'BRIEN TO TABLE R-21-142, BY ROLL CALL**

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

Yea: Alderman Schmidt, Alderman Jette, Alderman Wilshire  
Alderman O'Brien, Alderwoman Kelly, Alderman Dowd 6

Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED**

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Chairman Dowd

Motion carries and R-21-142 is tabled until the next Budget Meeting which I believe is Thursday. General Discussion? Is there anyone that has anything that they would like to discuss? Alright, seeing none, public comment? Are there any members of the public that would like to be heard?

PUBLIC COMMENT - None

REMARKS BY THE ALDERMEN

Alderman O'Brien

I would like to say that it took an Old Navy guy and a Merchant Marine guy to take this out for its maiden voyage. I don't think we hit anything so I think we did alright. We had some minor glitches, but we will work it out. But my pleasure to serve with you.

Chairman Dowd

Thanks. I think that's why we wanted to get this started so we didn't wait 'til we had a Full Board in here and had all these glitches. We had a few, we will see if we can get them all straightened out before the next meeting. Alderwoman Kelly, did you have something?

Alderwoman Kelly

I did. Can you hear me, we are back to hearing buzzing on your end.

Chairman Dowd

Yes.

Alderwoman Kelly

OK, I just wanted to say that I really appreciated all of the people from Community Health who stepped forward. I know it has been especially tough year for them and God I wish I could give them all raises because we needed them more than ever in the past year. So thank you for your hard work and for coming and talking to us about your Divisions.

Chairman Dowd

Thank you, anyone else? I just want to, again, say that we – as Alderman O'Brien said – this is our first session in the new chamber. We have had a few practice rounds but this is the first real live broadcast and we are working out, we have the entire TV crew here to work through all the issues. I am going to out on a limb and say, is my microphone working better now than it did before? No? I am getting no's from all over the building. They can finally hear me they say.

Alderman Schmidt

I can hear you but I can also hear a high pitched noise and a scratchy noise over it.

Chairman Dowd

That may be your female bird there in the background.

Alderman Schmidt

No, she's sleeping like a good girl. She's sleeping.

Alderwoman Kelly

You can't blame the baby, he's not here.

Chairman Dowd

We will get it fixed.

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 Schmidt, Alderman Jette, Alderman Wilshire  
Alderman O'Brien, Alderwoman Kelly, Alderman Dowd 6

Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED**

The meeting was declared closed at 8:15 p.m.

Michael B. O'Brien, Sr.  
Committee Clerk