

BUDGET REVIEW COMMITTEE

MAY 31, 2022

A meeting of the Budget Review Committee was held Tuesday, May 31, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. in the Aldermanic Chamber and via Zoom which meeting link can be found on the agenda and on the city's website.

Alderman Richard A. Dowd, Chairman, presided.

Let's start the meeting by taking a roll call attendance. If you are participating via Zoom, please state your presence, reason for not attending the meeting in person, and whether there is anyone in the room with you during this meeting, which is required under the Right-To-Know Law.

Members of Committee present: Alderman Richard A. Dowd, Chairman  
Alderman-at-Large Michael B. O'Brien  
Alderman John Cathey  
Alderman Ernest Jette  
Alderman-at-Large Lori Wilshire

Members not in Attendance: Alderwoman-at-Large Shoshanna Kelly  
Alderman John Sullivan

Also in Attendance: Alderman Derek Thibeault  
Alderman Alex Comeau  
Amy DeRoche, OED Coordinator  
Jill Stansfield, Parking Manager (via Zoom)  
Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director  
Jennifer McCormack, Library Director  
Linda Laflamme, Chairman, Library Board of Trustees

ROLL CALL

PUBLIC COMMENT - None

COMMUNICATIONS - None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS – RESOLUTIONS - None

NEW BUSINESS – ORDINANCES - None

TABLED IN COMMITTEE

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN O'BRIEN TO REMOVE FROM THE TABLE R-22-035  
MOTION CARRIED**

**R-22-035**

Endorsers: Mayor Jim Donchess  
Alderman-at-Large Michael B. O'Brien, Sr.  
Alderman John Sullivan  
Alderman Patricia Klee  
Alderman Thomas Lopez  
Alderman Alex Comeau  
Alderman Richard A. Dowd  
Alderman John Cathey  
Alderman Derek Thibeault  
Alderman-at-Large Lori Wilshire

**RELATIVE TO THE ADOPTION OF THE FISCAL YEAR 2023 PROPOSED BUDGET FOR THE CITY OF  
NASHUA GENERAL, ENTERPRISE, SPECIAL REVENUE AND GRANT FUNDS**

DEPARTMENTAL REVIEWS OF THE PROPOSED FY23 BUDGET FOR THE CITY OF NASHUA

<u>Dept. #</u>	<u>GENERAL GOVERNMENT</u>	<u>APPROPRIATIONS</u>	<u>REVENUES</u>
131	HUNT BUILDING	62	
158	PARKING ENFORCEMENT	63	29
166	PARKING OPERATIONS	64	30
183	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	68	
4085	NASHUA RIVERWALK TIF DISTRICT	253	253
2610	SCHOOL STREET TIF DISTRICT	255	255
2506	HUNT BUILDING FACILITY RENTAL FUND	246	246
	<u>PUBLIC LIBRARY</u>		
179	PUBLIC LIBRARY	180	42

Chairman Dowd

This evening we are going to be addressing some general government items and the Public Library. The first item is the Hunt Building.

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

Thank you Mr. Chairman. Tim Cummings, Director of Economic Development for the record. So relative to the Hunt budget, very straightforward, under guideline. It is an expense side budget that just shows the expenses that we take in every year. No major changes from last year to this year. I'll note though one item I do want to make clear to everyone and it's not something we're addressing in this operating budget but it is going to have financial impact on the city in the coming years as the deferred capital maintenance on that building. It's becoming more clear to Amy DeRoche who's actually with us this evening as well and she's the administrator for the building. It's becoming more clear as time goes on some of the various capital needs to maintain that building. Whether that's windows, heating system, elevator. This is more than traditional wear and tear on the building but you know significant expenses that I want to flag for you all that you should start to be aware of that we're going to need to develop a plan for.

Otherwise Mr. Chair and through you to the Committee, this building takes in revenue through events and rental of the offices. I'm proud to report that all of the offices are rented. They've maintained their rental status even through COVID. The events fell off obviously during COVID but Amy just gave me a report that the events are picking up and they are back to where they were pre-COVID times. So we're starting to collect the revenue that we saw at pre-COVID levels.

Chairman Dowd

So we'll talk about the revenues later on. One question is capital needs in the capital improvements plan yet?

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

Not yet. Mr. Chair great question. What I would actually envision us doing is taking on some sort of capital needs assessment to specifically look at the various issues with the building. I suspect it would be very similar to what we did with the Public Health building at the end of the day but we need to go through that exercise once we have that information. I would be making the appropriate requests of the Capital Improvement Committee.

Alderman O'Brien

Thank you Mr. Chairman. Director Cummings is that anything that could help you with the capital improvements on this because the question is I don't think we've done them before through the Committee of Infrastructure and I'm making my comments with the Committee of Infrastructure in mind. Again, in charge of some of the buildings. Would this be the Infrastructure Committee's part and partial of their authority? So therefore, can we get a looksee and start to plan this. The building is an asset but if we put it on the radar, probably like you say come up with a futuristic plan.

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

Absolutely Alderman O'Brien. I think working with the Infrastructure Committee and working with the Hunt Board of Trustees that would be the first step in terms of developing a scope of work for the study and ultimately providing you with the due diligence and the information you'd need to make some decisions.

Alderman Thibeault

Yeah, so thank you Mr. Chairman. Again not part of this Committee but I have a question. I was looking at – and you said we were going to talk revenues later, but I was looking at the revenues and they basically balances out to what you're paying right on the wages. So there's no extra there. If anything right now it's a little under just because of probably, you know, people getting back to having events there. But would you say normally the events that we have there, the rent that we pay out, equals salary for the person that runs it and we don't really get any extra outside of that or am I wrong on that? Does it generate - I guess does it generate more revenue than just paying the cost of the building without the capital improvements?

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

No, I don't believe that that's accurate.

Alderman Thibeault

Okay.

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

What I would believe would be accurate is if you were to take the salary portion of it out, then yes absolutely. The rents and the events would be revenue neutral in covering the operational costs of the building. So off the top of my head, it would be your standard, you know, inspections that you get for the elevator. It would be your electricity. It would be your heating. It would be those operational type of expenses.

Alderman Thibeault

And just do you know, and maybe Amy knows, but you said she has stuff booked. Are we solid this year? Is this going to be bigger than the last two like everything's going to be booked out probably - weekends and parties?

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

So yes Alderman Thibeault. It's on a positive trend upwards. I won't say it's going to be a stellar year by any stretch but I am pleased to report that we are seeing more events than we have in the last couple of years. What I can tell you is Amy DeRoche has done an amazing job pre COVID with always booking out the building. 1, 2, 3 type of events during a week. She had set goals for herself to have an event a week and then it started to be an event, you know, two events a week. So I see us on the same type of trajectory. Unfortunately because of what happened, it's just kind of rebuilding all over again.

Alderman Thibeault

Great, thank you. I appreciate that. It's a great building.

Alderman Cathey

Yes, thank you Mr. Chair. One - I must have missed the revenue page because I don't...

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

It's a different section.

Alderman Cathey

13 – okay. I knew it was in a different section, I just couldn't find the page but okay.

Chairman Dowd

It's on the agenda - the revenue section is on page 246.

Alderman Cathey

My question though is for the capitol assessment is that part of your budget or would that be an appropriation and if so, do you know the ballpark figure for an assessment?

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

It's not part of this budget. What I would anticipate us probably doing is through the escrow process in the fall. I don't have a good number for you yet, because I haven't solicited quotations but typically something like this for this size of building would be I would think less than \$25,000. Between \$10,000 and \$25,000 is what I think an assessment like this would be. This is a very high level type of document that a building engineer would go through, look at. Really it's the mechanicals, the windows. Think of it as like a very expensive type of home inspection. It's along the same lines as that. They would write up a report and then we could, you know, get a rough sense of cost to it and then we could prioritize what it is you'd like to do.

Alderman Cathey

Okay, great. Thank you.

Alderman Comeau

I'm actually all set with Director Cummings as well. I was just gonna let you know Mr. Chair you're coming through very weak in TV land. You might want to pull your microphone down a little bit. I can barely hear you at all.

Chairman Dowd

How about now?

Alderman Comeau

Much better. Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

All right. Any other questions on the Hunt building? If none, we'll move on Parking Enforcement. Appropriations on page 63. Revenues on page 29.

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

Yes, thank you Mr. Chairman. So Jill Stansfield has joined us as well remotely. So if anyone's wondering, the Parking Manager is with us and she can participate if there's a technical question that does arise. So parking enforcement, again, this is a self-sustaining line item that or budget I should say rather that is paid for 100% through the violations collected. We typically always run out of surplus. The surplus money gets transferred into a trust fund that can only be used for maintaining the parking assets here in the city for various capital maintenance type needs. This is a level service budget. It provides the same type of service that we got last year.

Again this year, I'll note that we have a parking management study going on. This comment is also going to be true for parking operations. I fully anticipate when we have that parking study done coming back before you and having a healthy conversation about what level of service and what you'd all like to see from a professional parking department. It's a conversation I'll be looking forward to and depending on how that conversation unfolds, I just wanted to flag and telegraph for you that I would anticipate next year's operational budget being drastically different. But until we actually have those details, I am recommending to you a level service budget that is within guidelines.

Alderman Cathey

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Director Cummings I know that we talked in the parking study about the FTE positions. I see here that the wages for the part time is budgeted way up. Would it be more advantageous to flip that and have the budget have the full time or would we get dinged on benefits on that?

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

So actually that the entire department is pretty much run on part time employees. We did that initially when we brought this department over to Economic Development because we needed to stabilize the budget, this budget was not running at a surplus when we first had it. So we looked at it and basically understanding we wouldn't need to provide the fringe benefits that are typically provided and it would be direct labor, salary, costs. We basically have off the top of my head I want to say eight part time positions accounted for or that would be four FTEs if they were full time. Once you bring on a full time employee, your additional fringe benefits increases that salary by a lot. The full time wages that you're actually seeing is part of the Parking Manager's salary is picked up in parking enforcement and the bulk of the parking management salary is actually in parking operations. So that's why it's split out like that and you'll see some money in full time. Then we have some part time administrative support. I'm sorry, we have an intern that provides administrative support that gets that gets picked up in one of these salary line items as well.

Alderman Cathey

Is it your intention that you would like to keep it this way with the part time just because the benefits would then kick in if we went for another FTE or switch them over or?

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

Thank you. So I'm not prepared to make a recommendation yet. I want to have the report brought to us. I do think I'll probably be telegraphing to you all that yes we should be bringing in an FTE but I want to make sure, and it may be more, but what I want to maintain is the fiscal stability that we have here. We've worked really hard to achieve. So I want to make sure we analyze it in a way and we project a revenue so whatever expenses we bring on by incurring that additional cost, we have a strong comfort level that we will still be running at a surplus.

Alderman Cathey

Thank you.

Alderman Thibeault

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to ask Director Cummings a question on snow plowing services. So we budgeted \$40,000 last year. We came way under. Probably a good winter is what I'm guessing but instead of going back to that 40, we went up to 45. Why did we increase it? Do you know why?

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

Yes, thank you. So we wanted to have some additional money for some of the parking lots that we do and we also have taken on doing some of the trails in and along the city or some of the pedestrian pathways. The best example is actually out behind City Hall here where the Parking Department actually does the - and we want to have the ability to subcontract this out when necessary - the Heritage Trail. The Heritage Rail Trail is an example. So that's one of the reasons why we originally had the money only set aside for contracted services for X amount of parking lots. We knew that we were getting asked to do more and more.

Alderman Thibeault

It's kind of the same question with a different line item. So credit card fees - were taking in or we're paying out a lot less this year and we're back to \$14,000? Do we feel like that's going to increase this year? Have fees gone up and so we have to build that in still? Okay.

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

Yes as long as we provide this service, we know that every couple of years we need to increase it to accommodate for the merchandise and processing fees.

Alderman Thibeault

Great. Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Any other questions?

Alderman Jette

Thank you. I have several questions. The first is regarding parking violations. Line number 45400. The actual through April 30<sup>th</sup> is much higher than what the original budget was for the full year. Do you know what the explanation is for that?

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

I'm sorry, which number is it – 45600?

Alderman Jette

No 45400 under parking enforcement?

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

What's the category?

Alderman Jette

It's parking enforcement miscellaneous revenue parking violations.

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

I'm sorry. Are you under revenue?

Alderman Jette

Yes.

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

Oh, okay I'm sorry.

Alderman Jette

I'm sorry.

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

No, that's okay but that explains that. So the revenue has gone up you're saying?

Alderman Jette

Yes, it's \$419,000 through April 30<sup>th</sup> when we budgeted 350 for the whole year.

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

I believe what we did the previous years is we just held true to the numbers that we saw during COVID and we weren't obviously ticketing during COVID. Now we have reinstated a more accurate ticketing and violation process.

Alderman Jette

Okay, so can I follow up? So why are we predicting 350 again for the coming year?

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

I would have to double check with the Finance Department but I believe they always like to stay very conservative on revenue projections.

Alderman Jette

Okay. Yes, another question. Last year's, again, on parking meter fees. This is on the next page 44521. That conversely is down. The budget was 454 and we've collected 225 through April 30<sup>th</sup>. So it's much less than we thought. Was that - is that because there were fewer people coming downtown, or is it because of the barriers? Do you have any idea?

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

I don't. I would have to double check but I believe we don't have as many permits if that's what you're referencing.

Alderman Jette

These are not the permit fees. These are the parking meter.

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

This is the parking meter revenue? What I believe the parking meter revenue is actually moved from one category of revenue collection to another because more people are using the app. and the pay by phone instead of the direct meter itself. So people are transitioning to the app., which I believe is why you're seeing the revenue not collected there but collected somewhere else.

Alderman Jette

Okay, so the

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

You have multiple ways in which you can pay for a meter. The way as I understand it, people are now moving towards is the app. I still use coins for the record. I keep a coin jar in my car. I like that but people are typically either using credit card or they're using the app. on their phone but we're not seeing the direct paying by coin as much.

Alderman Jette

So where would the revenue through the credit card app. be reported?

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

I can double check and get that for you.

Alderman Jette

Okay. And one last question if I could. So under appropriations - this is on page 63, wages went from 67 and you're predicting 40s 4645? Can't read it.

Chairman Dowd

\$46,533.

Alderman Jette

So why is it so much less?

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

Again, I believe that the bulk of the full time wages in parking enforcement is really just picking up some salary, some prorated salary if you will from parking operations. So it is reflected better, more accurately in the parking operations budget if that makes sense.

Alderman Jette

It doesn't match up but I understand this is in flux so.

Chairman Dowd

All set Alderman Jette?

Alderman Jette

Yes, thank you.

Alderman Cathey

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just to clarify to Director Cummings' point when he was speaking about the picking up the different wages. It is in the FT section for the employee salaries. It's .25 for the Manager for parking enforcement; .75 for parking operations, which is why it's like that. So just wanted to clarify that.

Alderman Thibeault

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to ask Director Cummings. I want to follow up on Alderman Jette's question. So on parking meter fees, it's going to come in about 200,000 different from what we're budgeting next year. If we're saying that's just coin, or at the meter, and we're putting the app. stuff is somewhere else wouldn't we need to bring this line item down then if we're anticipating that a piece of that is going through the app., right? Shouldn't it be all in here because now we're anticipating? What we want to be conservative on the other piece, right, we're now way over what we think we're going to bring in on this line item. Do you know what I'm saying?

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

I do understand what you're saying. So if I may, Mr. Chair? So the Parking Operations Department has in the past, pre COVID, run out of surplus. We bring in more revenue than we actually expended. The way it has worked traditionally, as I understand it, this has all been explained to me is that some years ago the city decided on a number - \$728,000 to be exact and that money that was collected from parking revenue would go and be transferred into the general fund. That always was thought to be enough to cover the direct expenses and then actually also double what the department kinda does. So right, so if you will theoretically, the Parking Department paid for itself twice.

Any monies above the 728 got transferred to the Downtown Improvement Committee and that was the money available for three main purposes: downtown infrastructure improvements, beautification, and infrastructure upgrades, and marketing and promotion of the downtown. That had always over the years been somewhere between 75,000 on the low end to 150,000 on the high end. On average, between 100,000 and 125,000, is what I've seen with my years being here. Then COVID hit. So when COVID struck, the revenues fell off. The Board of Aldermen - not this body but a previous iteration of this body - elected to set aside that formula if you will and I decided to transfer \$100,000 into the Downtown Improvement Committee because this department wasn't actually collecting as much revenue as it did.

My goal has always been to try to get back to the 728 figure. I believe this year we're going to fall a little shy on that. Hopefully by next year, we will be back to full strength like the way we're kind of seeing parking enforcement. But it has taken a little bit more time.

Chairman Dowd

So correct me if I'm wrong, that was a one-time thing. If we were going to do another year, we'd have to pass similar legislation.

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

That's correct.

Chairman Dowd

The original legislation he was talking about was passed by the Board of Aldermen to upgrade the 728,000. The rest of it went to the city – where does it go to?

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

Downtown Improvements Committee.

Chairman Dowd

So that's by legislation. It still exists so if we have to do what we did last year again this year, it will be a separate legislation for one year.

Alderman Cathey

Thank you, Mr. Chair. To piggyback off of that just so I understand it, are you then saying that the reason the numbers are the way that they are - the \$400,000 is based on historical data? If you remove COVID, 400 is a pretty good, accurate depiction of where you think it's going to be now that things are back into full tilt. So it's not like you kind of hope it's 400. It's more like if we remove COVID, this should not be a hard number to hit.

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

Correct.

Alderman Cathey

Okay. Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Any other questions? One question. Are we anticipating receiving any revenue from the parking underneath the School Street?

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

Yes, Mr. Chair. When that is actually up and running, it is fully anticipated that the City of Nashua would have some sort of revenue from that facility. It has yet to be determined what that revenue figure would be. Right now, it technically would be zoned per our laws - same as the Elm Street, High Street garage. I think I would feel pretty comfortable making a recommendation to you that this one might - you might want to set a little bit higher of a rate on this one because of the bells and whistles that this one is going to have. But that is a conversation that we have not had yet and we should have because it will be a higher level of service than we're providing at the High and Elm Street garage.

Chairman Dowd

So as the old saying goes, Lord willing and the creek don't rise that building will be done in '23 but we haven't made any projections and revenues from parking at that site.

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

Correct.

Chairman Dowd

Any other questions on parking enforcement? Seeing none, we'll go into parking operations.

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

Again, Mr. Chair, and it's kind of two halves of one nut here. We talked a little bit about parking operations with parking enforcement. It's again, level service budget. Didn't want to make any changes until after that parking study is done.

Though I do want to telegraph for you all that I anticipate a conversation with you later on in the year once the study is done and if so willing, next year's budget will be different. I have heard loud and clear from lots of stakeholders, including members of this body that you want a higher level of service from parking particularly with maintenance and upkeep of the garages and the parking assets that we have. Otherwise, this budget comes in at guideline and is right now relatively level service budget.

Chairman Dowd

Questions?

Alderman O'Brien

Yeah, just as informational purposes. We own several garages and I think Director Cummings we've had the conversation via the Infrastructure Committee, again, that is with the Hunt building. It's time being a good owner of property that the city looks at these parking garages as revenue sources, but we need to maintain them and modernize them. So therefore, just make it an aware that this is an anticipated capital cost that will be coming down in the future.

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

Yes, if I may, Mr. Chair. Yes, thank you Alderman O'Brien. That is absolutely true and I should telegraph for this buddy that we finished our parking study – I'm sorry our deferred capital maintenance study on both the High and Elm Street garages. We have good data as to what it would cost to maintain those assets. I will fully anticipate coming back before you for a capital requests so we can preserve the garages. As it's been explained to me, it's cheaper to repair these structures than to try to build whole new ones.

Chairman Dowd

I had one question on the electricity. Is that including the garages?

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

Yes.

Chairman Dowd

It falls under operations.

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

Yes.

Chairman Dowd

As was mentioned before, the snow plowing, that's outside services for the \$45,000.

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

Yes.

Chairman Dowd

Is that going to be enough based on the way the gasoline prices are going?

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

Well Jill Stansfield actually brought my attention to that very issue about two hours ago. I'm gonna answer your question with yes because I have a feeling that this is going to be a bigger issue than just one individual department here for the city. I have a feeling that if we do something, I would recommend we do something city wide to address this issue as a recalibration due to the unforeseen escalation. But at this time, I think we can definitely cover parking snow removal with what we have.

Chairman Dowd

Two other quick questions. One on the credit card fees is that just the fees that we pay to the card companies themselves?

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

Yes.

Chairman Dowd

We take in a fee from the city. Is the offset that we take in from the city into this number or is it offset somewhere else?

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

No, great question actually. It's my understanding that when the contract was originally done 10 - 12 years ago, it excluded the processing fees. So the city has an obligation to pay the processing fees and we absorb that in our collection of the revenue from the rental of the space, or via meter, or whatnot. I fully anticipate when we go back out to bid for this when the contract is up, we would be looking to bring it in. We will be looking to externalize I should say rather. We'd be looking to externalize this fee onto the consumer and maybe not increase our rate as much. This is actually a conversation that's going on with the parking consultant right now is to best handle it.

Chairman Dowd

Just a question. When somebody uses a credit card to pay for parking, does the city also charge like a handling fee like you do if you pay - that's where I was going with the revenue.

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

No, we do not charge like an additional dollar processing fee. There's fees with using that type of collection that the city pays for and unfortunately, it's not accommodated in our current rate structure.

Chairman Dowd

The other question I had was other contracted fees went from 10 to 15. Did we cover what that entails?

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

I'm gonna have to double check on that Mr. Chair. I don't know what that \$5,000 change is off the top of my head. I know we have Jill Stansfield with us this evening if she can comment on that otherwise, I will get back to you with exactly what that is.

Jill Stansfield, Parking Manager

Yes I can speak to that. A few years ago took over the maintenance of the Crown Street parking ride. We do cover mowing services in that parking lot under that line item. Anytime we have to bring in an outside electrician to do any sort of maintenance, or upkeep on our parking lots, our lighting in our parking lots, we've seen the cost there go up significantly just in the last few months. So we felt that that would be the correct amount to increase that line to, to cover those services for this upcoming year.

Chairman Dowd

Yeah, I didn't notice that as of April you had spent almost your entire budget in that line. Alderman Jette do you have a question?

Alderman Jette

Yes, I do. I'm a little confused. I do use that app for parking. When I use it, it charges me the parking fee and plus there's a processing fee added on top of that.

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

Correct.

Alderman Jette

Okay so how does that reconcile with what you were saying?

Chairman Dowd

It is the fees that the credit card companies charge the city for using the kiosk, their service. The city is not collecting it somewhere else. Like if you charge something in city in the Treasurer's office or something, you get a fee from the city to pay for the fee for the card. That's not the case in the parking. It goes directly to the company.

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

If I can further just expound on that, to be clear you said the app. When it comes to the app, there's a processing fee. Fully understood but when you use the kiosk, that pay station, that is what I was referencing.

Alderman Jette

Oh using the credit card at a kiosk. Okay. So it's different pricing.

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

That correct. Thank you.

Alderman Thibeault

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To Director Cummings - do you know who our credit card processing company is?

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

That would be a Jill Stansfield question.

Jill Stansfield, Parking Manager

As far as I know, it's still Heartland. That's who the city uses.

Alderman Thibeault

Yeah thank you. You said the contract is up this year and then we'll be searching for a better maybe a lower rate or do we already have the lower rate and?

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

If I may, Mr. Chair. So this is one of the issues because when I first got here to the city, I was kind of surprised that we actually have an obligation to pay the processing fees and I want to externalize that. My understanding from the parking consultant is the best way to do that is when you adjust your rates and what you charge so you can blend it together. I'm waiting for that parking study to be done so we can actually have that conversation. Once we have that data, you know, we can look to start making the changes. I believe the contract does come up regularly. I'm not sure if we're in another three year contract, but it would be something on the shortlist we'd be looking to change over the next few years.

Alderman Thibeault

Okay, great. Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Any other questions of parking operations? Thank you Director Cummings and Ms. Stansfield.

Next is Department 4085- Nashua Riverwalk TIF District. The appropriations are on page 253 as well as the revenues.

Alderman Jette

Are we jumping over Economic Development?

Chairman Dowd

Sorry. Economic Development 183; appropriations on page 68.

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

Thank you, Mr. Chair. So again, relatively straightforward budget from last year to this year. No major changes except for two line items, which the goal of mine is always to try to provide accuracy and transparency particularly into budgeting. When I first got here, I noticed that we had been relatively routinely during the escrow process budgeting for real estate consulting services for various miscellaneous projects. That's, again, something I would recommend doing if you were doing it as a one off type of approach or you know it's for short order and you don't want to build it into your operational budget. Here I am six years and I had a conversation with the Mayor and the Chief Financial Officer and with a 4% guideline this year, as opposed to sometimes the 2% type guidelines that we do see, I thought this would be a year where we would try to take some of that money that we escrow that is outside of our operational budget and actually put it into our department budget to more accurately account for the services that this this department provides.

Throughout the year, I'm asked to provide real estate consulting services of various for various projects that various departments have and I'm happy to do that. We use that money throughout the year. Although this may look like exceeding the guideline, and it's really not when you look at bringing in the escrows that we see year over year, and putting it into the operational budget.

Chairman Dowd

So it's coming from another part of the budget into this particular department budget?

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

What it would be Mr. Chair is next year during the escrow process season if you look back at previous escrows, you'll see always that there's a real estate consulting line item of somewhere between \$20,000 to \$40,000 depending on the year. On average, its \$25,000 and that is what's being plugged into the budget for this year.

Then we have other contracted services that has gone up. Again, same thing. During the escrow process have done the Elm Street Middle School and we have done the NIMCO study. On average, I do one or two studies a year for the city to help prepare the city for various transactions, whatever they may be - 141 Burke Street, Crown Street, the railroad, Elm Street. So again, it's trying to bring a little truth in advertising into the budget by moving what has been in the escrow into the operating budget.

Chairman Dowd

Do the new Aldermen understand the escrow funding?

Alderman Cathey

No but I don't necessarily want to waste the chamber's time right this second talking about it.

Chairman Dowd

I just thought you might have a question.

Alderman Cathey

I can email him and get all the details.

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

Please.

Chairman Dowd

Any other questions on Economic Development? All right. We'll go to the Nashua Riverwalk TIF District. Appropriations on 253, revenues on page 253.

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

Yes, thank you Mr. Chair. Just bear with me for one second. So this is a little newer this year in the sense that we are now incorporating the tax increment financing districts into our budget book. It's something that I've had conversations with Chief Financial Officer Griffin on over the years in terms of trying to provide more transparency. The Riverwalk itself had been shown some times in previous years as I believe a special revenue fund. This year we're showing it a little bit differently with both the appropriations and the revenues. This is just a way to try to be a little bit more, again, reflective and accurate in how we accommodate and provide the services throughout the year.

And so we have the Riverwalk TIF District, which is a whole separate conversation in and of itself but this is the money that is essentially providing the dollars for the construction of the Riverwalk itself which is currently under design. It was started in 2002 - 2003 time period with the construction of Jackson Falls Condominiums and then about four years ago really increased immensely with lot 34. We enhanced the district to try to provide the Riverwalk that was outlined in the 2017 Downtown Riverfront Master Plan. The revenues themselves are really generated off of a district that is delineated. There's a webpage on the city's website that kind of talks about all this. It encompasses most of the frontage of the riverfront from the Veterans Memorial Parkway to be a BAE and the biggest generator of the increment that was captured was Lofts 34. Any given year, it's about \$1.2 million that gets collected and put into this separately designated account. Those are the monies we use to implement the 2017 Master Plan. The biggest thing we're doing right now is the Riverwalk between, again, the Veterans Memorial Bridge to BAE and the pedestrian crossing over by the Senior Center. We are currently in design for that. We have finished preliminary design. We are trying to get under contract for final design. Final design will take about six months. I had anticipated and wanting to get under construction for this fall but in recent conversations, it looks like we're probably going to get pushed off to the next spring because that will make the most economic sense to do it all at once instead of trying to push it into a couple early projects and then we would have to spend extra money just to say we started the project. So working through some of those details now but the project is on track and on budget. This is really just the accounting backup for the project.

Chairman Dowd

Questions?

Alderman Cathey

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Maybe I misunderstood the TIF District. So the money that we get from the property tax revenue it's just to cover the expenses rather than turn up a profit to be put back into the TIF because I'm seeing in the budget book it equals out appropriations versus revenue.

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

I'm not really sure I'm following the question. It equals out because it needs to balance but the money can carry over from year to year.

Alderman Cathey

So we could make more money, pay whatever the expenses are, but have a balance leftover?

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

Correct and then that money stays segregated in this account and then you would get an additional infusion of about 1.2 million give or take. You see that happen every November - somewhere between October and December when we set the tax rate. The State tells us how much we should be transferring into this account and that's regardless of what we've spent. So it accumulates but what we know and what we've done is we've looked at that. And we've modelled out what the 20 year bond is going to take to be able to implement the construction of the Riverwalk that we're designing right now.

Alderman Cathey

Follow up Mr. Chair. Thank you. So in the budget book right now so for under revenues that is a projected revenue for the coming year and not necessarily how much money we have sitting in the fund right this second?

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

That's correct. I would say right now in the fund off the top of my head - Amy may know this a little bit better than me - but I'm going to say we have about \$600,000 sitting in the account right now. So that \$600,000 we're going to spend through, right? We're going to spend through November if you will, but let's say we don't. That \$600,000 would be there and then it would be 1.2 on top of the \$600,000.

Alderman Cathey

Okay, great. One more? Thank you, Mr. Chair. I notice you mentioned the bond. Is the bond not here because we haven't gone out and sold those bonds yet and so it's not hitting the books yet?

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

Yes, thank you. Correct. We have not touched the bond. We haven't charged anything to a bond. We won't do that until we get through design. I actually need to have a conversation with CFO Griffin as to understand where he wants to actually show it. I have a feeling because it's a general obligation bond it will probably be shown in your debt service - in your debt service budget, but it would be paid for out of the revenues collected here with that 1.2 million.

Alderman Cathey

Okay, great. Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Any other questions?

Alderman Jette

Just to be clear, the \$1.3 million that you're proposing for revenues for next year, that's the increment - the taxes that are not the total amount of taxes that are being collected from these properties, but the increment in the taxes that have been collected over what they were when this started, correct?

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

That's correct. If I may, Mr. Chair?

Chairman Dowd

Yes.

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

So what Alderman Jette is referencing is, for lack of a better way of describing it. Back on April 1<sup>st</sup> of 2016, it may be April 1<sup>st</sup> of 2017, we basically froze the base and we basically said any of these taxing parcels in this district we know that you're going to be paying a certain dollar amount and its frozen basically - captured as the base value and that goes to the general fund. Then we said after 2017, maybe 16 I would have to double check the year, we said if you do any improvements, if there's anything that happens within this district where there's a change of value, we're going to capture that increment. In this case, I want to say it's 1.2 million that gets transferred in but it's, you know, over a million dollars. In the low 1.1, 1.2, 1.3. figure. That's the increment. The majority of that is from lots 34 but there's like 40ish other parcels in there. A lot of them are city owned parcels so they don't generate an increment but there are other non-lot 34 generators of the increment. It's de minimis though I would suggest. That is the money - the revenue - that gets collected, segregated, and transferred into this account.

Chairman Dowd

All set Alderman Jette?

Alderman Jette

Yes, I am. Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Any other questions on this TIF? Seeing none, we'll now go the School Street TIF District; 246 for revenues and appropriations.

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

Yes thank you Mr. Chair. So, again, this is very early. This is a brand new School Street TIF that we set up that is actually not even performing yet but we wanted to, again, get in the habit of getting it into the budget book. I'll also note that I have a web page dedicated to this School Street TIF that is up on our website. Much to the hard work of Amy DeRoche who actually did it. So thank you Amy. But, again, trying to provide that additional details, have it up on the website so people can look at it. This TIF is not like - how should I say this - this TIF is different from the TIF I just spoke about the Riverfront TIF. The Riverfront TIF is dynamic. The Riverfront TIF was at the time elected to be this very dynamic district where money would come in and we'd be looking to make ongoing improvements to the riverfront. That is somewhat 180 of what the School Street TIF is until such time as this body chooses to do something different.

The School Street TIF is really looked at to be what's referred to as "project specific TIF". The District is very small. It essentially is School Street, a little bit of West Pearl Street, a little bit of Main Street and really the monies have two purposes. One - the money would go to help support the Performing Arts Center at 201 Main Street and then the monies would go to the construction of a public parking facility. When the increment actually shows up, we're really not seeing the full value there yet because it's under construction but when that happens, you'll see that increment basically segregated captured here and then per the plans that were developed and on the webpage, basically get transferred on our books to differing accounts to pay debt service. What we wanted to do was really just capture the monies that were getting generated from the new construction project and earmark those monies basically to go to two very specific projects. There's nothing else anticipated to be done with those monies. The District is going to be what I refer to as very sleepy otherwise until I hear from folks that they want to do it differently. Of course you could if you so choose but otherwise, this will be a rather stagnant TIF. You'll see it kind of just stay the same as we pay the debt service for the two itemized projects that were priorities for the city a couple of years ago.

Chairman Dowd

Questions?

Alderman Cathey

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I know it's early on in the process. Do you know what the breakdown would be of how that money is going to be divided as you spoke about between performing arts, and other parking garage, and that kind of thing?

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

I would have to double check as to what the expenditures are going to be but we projected, you know, \$500,000 to \$700,000 coming in of revenue from the School Street project itself when it's fully realized. Then I would have to understand myself as to how the percentage of it to be divvied up. What I can say is, again per the plan if there's a remainder at the balance, unlike the Riverfront TIF which accrues year upon year, this TIF is set up in a way where there's a balance at the end of the year, and I suspect there would be, and it gets transferred to the general fund.

Alderman Cathey

Okay, great. Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Any other questions on School Street TIF? Seeing none is there any additional questions on building rental revenue revenues because we've talked about that already? Any other last minute questions for Director Cummings? Seeing none, thank you.

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

So our next Division is Public Library, Department 179. Appropriations are on page 180; revenues on page 42.

Why don't we start with revenues. It's on page 42. Page 42, library revenues. Any questions? Before we do that, could you please introduce yourselves so the people at home will know who we have been visiting with us?

Jennifer McCormack, Library Director

Sure. My name is Jen McCormack and I'm the Director at the Library.

Linda Laflamme, Chairman, Library Board of Trustees

I'm Linda Laflamme. I'm the Chairman of the Library Board of Trustees.

Chairman Dowd

Thank you. Do you have anything to say about revenues before we...?

Jennifer McCormack, Library Director

I was just going to point out that they're a bit lower than the revenues on Director Cummings.

Alderman Thibeault

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I got two questions and maybe even three. I don't know. We'll see. So would book fines be under revenue?

Jennifer McCormack, Library Director

No. Overdue fines go in a special revenue fund. It's not subject to appropriation.

Alderman Cathey

Okay and just to follow up on that particular question. So are we back to doing - it's all normal again? We're actually collecting fines. I know during COVID we weren't doing that.

Jennifer McCormack, Library Director

Correct. Yes we are collecting fines again.

Alderman Thibeault

Okay. I got another question. Sale of books - I know when you guys do your big book sales I see a billion people there because I always go. Some of that money goes somewhere else, right? That seems like a small amount.

Jennifer McCormack, Library Director

Right. So the big book sales are run by the Friends of the Library and they're a nonprofit. So none of the revenue here is related to that. That little bit of sale of books, that's the sale of the book about the history of Nashua that library staff wrote who has a title that I've said a thousand times. (inaudible) to make it Nashua experience.

Alderman Thibeault

Just one more question. Non-resident library cards - is that something we get - I mean that's a standard number every year we get that many people applying for?

Jennifer McCormack, Library Director

Yeah it could vary a little bit but yeah we have some faithful power users that pay for that. Pay that \$60 a year.

Alderman Thibeault

Oh it's a year? Okay, great. Awesome. Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

All set? Anything else on revenues? Going to appropriations. Appropriations are on 180. So would you like to cover appropriations?

Jennifer McCormack, Library Director

Sure. There are not too many big changes this year. So the budget proposal that we've submitted leaves library services pretty much where they are now with the same staff that we've had. It did not budget for bringing back our library pages. So if you've been here for a while, you remember we used to have seven or eight of them. We laid them off during COVID and I don't expect to hire them back. So the change in salary that you see are negotiated increases in our contract and increases for the unaffiliated that are included in the unaffiliated plan.

On the appropriation side, there's been a little bit of shifting according to just needs an actual costs of things. The most significant difference would be in building and grounds 54280. There's a \$10,000 increase in that line because we are planning to hire a landscaping service to take care of the library grounds. Previously it was our maintenance supervisor that was responsible for that and one person and a push lawnmower is not really able to do an adequate job. I'm working with the Parking Department now on awarding that contract.

Some other changes - the microfilm budget. We have eliminated because the Telegraph is no longer printed so we're not microfilming that. We do have access to full text of the Union Leader through a database company so we're not microfilming that either. Some increases in technology operations. That's just that software licensing increases. We did increase the equipment line by \$5,000. We're hoping to buy some better shelving for oversized collection. Those are the real big changes. Program expenses are up a bit. We dropped those way down during COVID and we'd like to return to some more in person programming and musical performers is subject to inflation like everybody else. So I'm happy to answer questions.

Alderman Cathey

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is more of a curiosity. I noticed under property service for electricity and heating gas it's pretty steady but with the times as they are, do you do expect that it's going to stay the same as far as electricity costs and heating gas?

Jennifer McCormack, Library Director

Well so we use the figures given to us from the Purchasing Manager. So she let us know what to expect for increases and that's how we budgeted.

Alderman Cathey

Okay, thank you.

Chairman Dowd

But it's level from last year. Less lights?

Jennifer McCormack, Library Director

We have the same number of lights. I budgeted according to what we were given and our consumption for this year.

Chairman Dowd

Just one other question. Have you ever had an analysis done and switch it to LEDs from other types of lighting?

Jennifer McCormack, Library Director

We do have some LED fixtures. We have - you know our building is 50 years old and we have light fixtures from every decade. So I think you may know Alderman Dowd that we are conducting a facility assessment this year. We just signed the contract for that and looking at our lighting and energy consumption will be part of that.

Chairman Dowd

I would suggest meeting with Doria Brown. We just did a complete analysis of the two high schools and they're in the process of changing an ungodly amount of lights to save electricity.

Jennifer McCormack, Library Director

When we remodeled the general wing downstairs, that was one of the focuses. The charming fluorescence and floods disappeared and were much more efficient down in the new wings.

Alderman Jette

Yes, thank you. So a couple of questions. The first question is I may have asked this before in previous years, but you have a room with a kind of a special collection – like historical books regarding Nashua. I often think of you know if those got destroyed are those reproduced anywhere? Do you have any plans to digitize those to preserve them?

Jennifer McCormack, Library Director

You have asked that question and I think that's a really great idea.

Alderman Jette

I don't remember the idea though.

Jennifer McCormack, Library Director

And I think that's a really great idea. I think that would be a worthy project but there are currently no plans for that. That could be a project for one of the trust funds maybe at some point.

Chairman Dowd

Other questions?

Alderman Jette

I had a follow up. So you bring up the trust funds. So I noticed on page two 311 and 312 there are a listing of expendable trust funds. I didn't add them up but there's a million dollars in one unrestricted fund. I know there are other unrestricted funds. So there seems to be a lot of money there. How is that used? Are you using that to do anything in the library?

Jennifer McCormack, Library Director

So I think the board administers 20 different trust funds. Some of them are unrestricted. The largest trusts like the Strings Trust that is actually a restricted trust. So we're only able to spend that on reading materials not normally purchased by the city of Nashua. There is the Bloomfield trust is an unrestricted trust and use that for a number of things. We're using that for the facility assessment.

Chairman Dowd

Just for clarification, all those trusts aren't in this book. They have trusts outside of the city budget.

Alderman Jette

Okay. I hope that you pursue the digitalization of those books. I think it would be great. Thank you.

Alderman Cathey

Just for clarification, did I hear you have \$1 million in a trust just to buy reading materials?

Linda Laflamme, Chairman, Library Board of Trustees

No. I believe the \$1 million was closer to the entire donor.

Jennifer McCormack, Library Director

I think the Board has around \$6 million dollars invested but we would have to ask CFO Griffin. The vast majority of those funds are restricted.

Alderman Cathey

To like library purchases or...

Jennifer McCormack, Library Director

To library materials. There's one trust that is for the purpose of purchasing art by living artists. There's another trust that is dedicated solely to the preservation of Lithuanian culture.

Alderman Cathey

Interesting. Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Okay we're gonna have an evening on expendable trusts.

Alderman Cathey

That sounds like a hoot.

Chairman Dowd

You can ask Director Griffin with more questions because each one of these expendable trusts have restrictions on how it can be spent and also has the spending authority.

Alderman Thibeault

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I assume some of those trusts as well money donated for specific purposes. So my question and library grounds, I think that's great because I know during the campaign people were really saying oh I didn't think it was that bad. I'm glad that someone's gonna be doing that this year.

I agree with Alderman Jette. I love that room. I've been in that room many, many times over the years and digitizing would be great but that leads me to the pages. So you said that you guys used to have seven or eight pages that you were able to put in a budget and then COVID hit. Is the same amount of work there pre- COVID now that COVID is kind of wrapping up that you would need that those pages or has it gone down enough and people aren't going to the library as much that you wouldn't need any pages at all? I would think if you needed seven or eight prior to COVID that they would come in handy and maybe digitize something for Alderman Jette or some other needs at the library. Especially because you guys have closed the hours a little bit. You're not open on Fridays anymore. So not open on Fridays, I assume that's some salary you're not paying so we is pages?

Jennifer McCormack, Library Director

So we had seven part time pages. They were 15 hours a week. Their primary job was putting books back on the shelf. If you look at our circulation statistics during COVID, they went way down to maybe 50% of what they used to be. They've rebounded, but I do not think that we will circulate enough physical materials to go back to needing those part time pages.

Linda Laflamme, Chairman, Library Board of Trustees

There's also been the shift to the online book.

Jennifer McCormack, Library Director

Right. So shift to digital materials and Instead of physical materials. So what we really need are to expand hours would be more bodies at the desk, more people to check materials in and out. During COVID, we added curbside pickup. So that adds an extra body every shift that we need at the front desk to run back and forth to the parking lot.

Alderman Thibeault

One more question. So you guys redid the bottom downstairs there with all nice rooms and everything. I know that like a lot of nonprofits when I had the baseball league Cal Ripken we would get a room there once in a while. Do you charge for those rooms for anything like a nonprofit organization or I mean a for profit organization or do you guys it's free if they sign up?

Jennifer McCormack, Library Director

It is free but those rooms are not available for commercial us. They're only for nonprofits.

Alderman Thibeault

I was trying to get you more revenue. Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Any other questions? I have one. Microfiche is an old technology. If you're going to be copying anything, there's much more efficient, much less costly and easier to use results. So we might investigate the different ways of copying things for historical nature.

Jennifer McCormack, Library Director

If I may, so Paul Bergeron is on our Board of Trustees and he advocates strongly for microfiche because that's the permanent - the State still considers that a permanent record. So because you can always print from it. It's an interesting conversation – digitizing versus microfiche.

Chairman Dowd

(inaudible) necessarily is ahead of the times when we talk about the State. So for instance, a lot of things coming out digitally now you can just keep a recorded copy on a computer not on a hard disk. Any other questions for the Library? Thank you very much. Thank you for coming in.

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN O'BRIEN TO TABLE R-22-035  
MOTION CARRIED**

GENERAL DISCUSSION - None

REMARKS BY THE ALDERMEN - None

ADJOURNMENT

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

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

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