

A special meeting of the Board of Aldermen was held Monday, June 21, 2021, at 7:09 p.m. in the Nashua High School North auditorium.

President Lori Wilshire presided; City Clerk Susan Lovering recorded.

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

Let's start the meeting by taking a roll call attendance.

The roll call was taken with 12 members of the Board of Aldermen present: Alderman Michael B. O'Brien, Sr., Alderman Patricia Klee, Alderman Richard A. Dowd, Alderman June M. Caron, Alderman Thomas Lopez, Alderman David C. Tencza, Alderwoman Elizabeth Lu, Alderman Ernest Jette, Alderman Jan Schmidt, Alderman Skip Cleaver, Alderman Linda Harriott-Gathright, and Alderman Wilshire.

Alderwoman Shoshanna Kelly, Alderman Benjamin Clemons, and Alderman Brandon Michael Laws were recorded absent.

Mayor James W. Donchess, Corporation Counsel Steve Bolton, and CFO John Griffin were also in attendance.

Alderman Wilshire to turn the Budget Public Hearing over to Alderman Dowd.

Chairman Dowd

Thank you. Alderman O'Brien would you like to make a motion to remove R-21-142 from the table?

Alderman O'Brien

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

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

Chairman Dowd

So this evening we have a public hearing on the budget and anything with regard to the proposed Mayor's budget. When we ask for questions or comments, you can come up to the microphone here on my right. You have three minutes. When there's 30 seconds left, I will notify you. If it's a question, I'll ask the Mayor who could answer it best. If it's himself, or Mr. Griffin, or one of the department heads, they are here.

You're allowed to ask one question at a time under the division we're covering. After everyone has had an opportunity to ask a question on that division, you could come up again if you had another question. You still have the 3 minute timing. You cannot yield any time to another speaker. Each person has only 3 minutes.

Again, I'll be going by division. I'm going at the beginning to mention which departments are in that division. You can ask a question on any one of the departments within that division. Before we get started on going through the budget, the Mayor would like to do a brief overview on the FY22 budget. Mayor Donchess.

Mayor Jim Donchess

All right well thank you very much Mr. Chair and thank you all for attending our public hearing on the Fiscal 2022 budget. So as usual, I'm going to just recap a few things that have occurred during Fiscal 2021 and then talk about the proposed budget.

So we will go to slide #1. Just to recap some of the things which occurred during 2021 which we all know was quite a year. We of course the City had our COVID-19 response. Public Health took the lead there. They did from the beginning contact tracing. Many individuals who contracted COVID-19 were treated and counseled by Public Health. They reached out to many, many people and people worked 7 days a week really for a long time. They did an extremely good job. During the course of the time up to now, they've done about 7,300 COVID-19 tests at clinics – outdoors and indoors throughout the City. Some at the Elm Street parking garage, some on the depth of winter.

More recently, the Public Health Department has been involved in administering 18,000 doses. Of course the lead response is by the State of New Hampshire so these 18,000 doses are for people who are more difficult to reach and have not come to the clinics held by the State of New Hampshire at Nashua South, at the mall, and elsewhere. For example, the Public Health nurses have gone to picnics at Greeley Park and talk to people. If they decide that they'd like to have a vaccination, a dose, they do it there. So there are many community events that they have attended and will continue to attend throughout the summer and the remainder of the year.

During the course of the pandemic, the city continued to provide all city services. Some of those in person. Some remote. Of course City Hall where we had several outbreaks of COVID was remote for some period of time but then earlier this month, we opened City Hall and we were running by appointments for vehicle registration and other reasons for quite a time. But then earlier this month, we opened City Hall to visitors. We have asked people especially those not vaccinated to consider wearing a mask but there's no requirement.

We did do City Hall renovations designed to make the building more COVID resistant, make it more disease resistant in general, and to try to address any future pandemics that we may have. To do that, we used a little over \$1 million in federal or so-called GOFFR funds which were federal funds allocated through the State of New Hampshire. Significant renovations were done in the automobile registration area, in the Assessing area, and in the tax area. If you visit now, you will see that the work is going on at the City Clerk's area and that should be done within a few weeks. The departments when the work was going on moved up to the third floor. That's where the City Clerk and her staff are now.

One thing that we focused on is in an effort to try to save money because over the period of two years healthcare costs went up \$6 million or around 20 percent in just two years. That's over Fiscal 2020 and 2021. That trend seemed like it would continue. That \$6 million increase equates to a 3 percent tax increase so we really wanted to address that rising cost. So Administrative Services and others worked to develop a new HMO plan which has been agreed to by a whole group of employee groups as well as implemented in City Hall. That has saved us about \$1 million over what healthcare costs would be for those six groups were it not for the revised HMO plan.

Other things that have occurred during 2021, we continue the paving plan of action. We paved 26 miles of streets out of the 300 that the city has. We did about 20 miles of crack sealing. This is a much less expensive way of preserving streets which is much less expensive. It doesn't certainly last as long as repaving but it can preserve a street for five years or a little longer at a much lower cost. The idea there is to preserve streets until we can get to paving them. So far after we're through this paving season, we will have paved under the paving plan of action about 125 miles of streets and many miles of the crack sealing.

One area where we really wanted to focus was particularly in the pandemic was the fact that small businesses were very affected and hurt by the pandemic by the closures mandatory and otherwise. The city assembled in various batches about \$2.5 million of federal funds and we created a COVID-19 impact fund which was used to extend loans and some grants to small businesses and to some nonprofits throughout the city.

In addition to address the closures downtown, we expanded outdoor dining. That was authorized by the Board of Aldermen very early in the pandemic – in the spring of last year April/May timeframe. I think it went into effect in early May. As a result according to at least one of the largest restaurant tours downtown, we probably saved many businesses by doing that. That has turned out to be a very popular success. We've received a lot of positive feedback on that and we have many, many more people downtown than ever before as a result of it.

Also we are about to complete Public Health building renovations. This is a project that has been discussed and in the works for at least probably a decade. It's a renovated space over at Mulberry Street. They will occupy that really within about a week.

Another project that we've undertaken during the pandemic is the Imagine Nashua Master Plan. Of course the Master Plan is a land use document required by the State of New Hampshire. So periodically it's necessary to update the Master Plan. The last one was about in year 2000. So it's been about 20 years. That was an interesting exercise, an interesting project because normally of course of all the meetings would be held in person which could not be done during the pandemic. A benefit or interesting side effect of the pandemic and the remote participate in the Master Plan is that because it was done remotely, we had a lot more public input than we have with respect to prior Master Plans. We had hundreds of people involved. People who probably might not have taken the time to go to City Hall or somewhere else to attend in person. They attended remotely and provided their input. That will eventually in the next few months result in a Master Plan document. We're still taking public input so anybody who is interested and wants to put in their two cents worth regarding any of the areas of the city that we're looking at, please we encourage you to do so.

Now let's go on to the budget that I've proposed. The budget that I proposed to the Board of Aldermen and of course the way this works is that the departments submit budgets to me and then I make changes or not and I pass it onto the Board of Aldermen – the Mayor's proposed budget. They are basically the final decision makers subject to veto and override.

So the budget is up \$7.5 million to \$290 million but I would like to stress that more than half of that increase was as a result of the State of New Hampshire's pension costs increase. Were it not for that, the city budget would be up as I proposed it about \$3.1 million or a little over 1 percent. Now unfortunately the State of New Hampshire is really going to slam the city, our city, as well as cities and towns across New Hampshire during Fiscal 2022. One could argue at the worst possible time. These pension costs are going up. Our bill will now be nearly \$29 million. This is unrelated to any increase in wages. Sometimes people say that oh well you shouldn't increase wages so much. This has nothing to do with wage increases. In fact, the State pension system will tell you that 80 percent of the money we're paying in – in other words 80 percent of \$29 million is just to just build up their assets. They were fully funded around 2001. They mismanaged the system, a big mess resulted, and now the cities and towns are being forced to pay to correct the State's mistakes. So again \$24 million of taxpayer money from the hardworking taxpayers of Nashua is going - \$24 million of the 29 is going to compensate for the State's mistakes and that will continue until the indefinite future.

The other thing that happened is that the State of New Hampshire reduced school aid by \$7.4 million. A big hit during the pandemic. Now if you total those two actions, that is the pension increase and the decrease in school aid, you come up with about \$11.8 million. A negative impact to the city's taxpayers. That equates to a 5 ½ percent tax increase. So going into the budget, we really had to take a hard look because we needed to try to compensate offset some of this increase in expenses and reduction in revenue being imposed by the State of New Hampshire.

With the budget that I have proposed if it were – and we're going to talk about more of the details in a moment – but if it were not for the State the actions that they have taken in increasing expenses and cutting revenue, Nashua's tax rate for Fiscal 2022 would actually be flat and probably down but we have to try to deal with this \$11.8 million. So at the beginning of the budget, I asked all departments but for one which I will mention to come in with no more than a zero percent increase to try to compensate for what the State is doing and because we were in the middle of the pandemic, unemployment at least at that point was very high. There were a lot of people out of work and it seemed like many people in distress. So we needed to propose a very tight budget.

I did for one department – that being the School Department – asked for a different guideline. That was without pension and benefits, I asked for a 1.5% instead of zero. The reason for that was the disruption that they suffered as a result of the pandemic, the effect on children – education for our children is a right not a privilege. Every kid deserves an excellent school and certainly the remote on-line learning was a challenge for both teachers who worked very hard and many students. So the idea there was to allow them a little more slack to try to compensate for all the disruption that had occurred. So I asked for zero. Remember that and 1.5% excluding pensions and benefits for the schools. So here's what in the end I proposed because you will see that the departments over which I have more direct control certainly complied with and exceeded the zero percent guideline. Those that run by independent commissions, or boards, or the like didn't necessarily agree or comply with the zero percent idea.

So for the City Hall departments, and Department of Public Works, and the Library, City Hall will be down 2.85% percent from the current year. We did that through the health changes, through the elimination of duplication so thank you to City Hall and all of our employees there who worked very hard and helped the taxpayers in this way.

The Department of Public Works basically the same thing. We eliminated some unfilled positions, made some economies, and their budget for Fiscal 2022 is down 1.28% below the current year. Library as well. They're down 1.94%. So thank you to all of those departments – Department of Public Works, City Hall, and the Library.

Now police and fire, and I will mention a little bit – I'll show you what the proposed increases are in a minute but the Fire Department requested a 4% increase. The Police Department about 2.6%. Now I've been suggesting to all of our outside departments and for several years that they were building in costs which were not sustainable and that we would ultimately reach the point where we would either have to cut services or raise taxes significantly. It seems we may be at that point now. I didn't feel that the – especially given all these discussions over several years, I didn't feel that we could afford those increases. On the other hand, these are very important departments. We all respect the work that our Fire and Police Departments do for the city so I proposed a compromise with each of them. Instead of the zero percent increase that I had suggest, instead of the 2.8% reduction like for City Hall I so okay look. How about a cost of living increase. Cost of living is 1.7 so for each of those two departments I proposed a 1.7% increase.

For the School Department, things are a little more complicated because although this suggests a 2.29% increase, they proposed 2.39 with healthcare. The thing you should keep in mind is that under the teacher's contract and our teachers based upon comparisons with other districts are underpaid. We're about 60th in the districts of New Hampshire. About 60 districts pay more than Nashua does. This includes the healthcare but healthcare is not resolved for our largest employee group those being the teachers because that's in negotiations now. If the teachers were to adopt the healthcare plan proposed by the city, that number would drop from 2.29 to about 1.6%. So that's in discussions in negotiation. We'll see how that comes out but unlike the other departments where healthcare is a fixed. We know what's going to happen. There's nothing agreed to on either side with respect to healthcare for the school department. Overall, they really did what I asked and without the benefits and without healthcare, they came in at 1.7. I had asked for 1.5 so there again a proposed a compromise to split the difference at 1.6. If you go to the next page which Mr. Griffin is going to get for us, this just gives you some of the detail. It just shows you what the detailed numbers are and you see the same percentages on the right-hand column that you saw

on the previous slide. Again it just gives you what the raw numbers are. Now just to review what the departments requested, again the Fire Department requested a 4% increase. My budget proposes 1.7. Police – 2.59. My budget proposes 1.7 and the School Department requested again with the assumption that the healthcare would not change but it very well might – I think it will benefit everyone if it does. They proposed 2.38. My proposal was 2.29 with the healthcare or 1.6 without it. So that kind of shows you more of the detail again.

Now I thought it was interesting to show you the six year budget analysis because I have been saying in various State-of-the-Cities, and budget discussions, and all over the place that building these budgets that are not sustainable there's going to be an end to this. There has to be. Over the last six years you can see what's happened. There is a significant difference in the amount that the budgets have been raised over the last six years. Fire Department is the most – 27% and that's if their 4 percent raise is agreed to by the Aldermen, then that will be a 27% increase over six years. If my budget held, it would be more like 25% over six years.

Police same deal – 21%. Schools – 17.9%. Again if their proposed budget is adopted not mine. City Hall almost 17 but 10% below the top. BPW 15 and the Library almost 12. DPW almost 16 but you can see that – and I had this in mind when I proposed some of these guidelines. I certainly had in mind that over time not that these percentages should be absolutely equal but we need to – all of these services are important and we need at least to have in mind what we've done in the past to decide what we can afford and where the most needs are in the future.

That gives you I think an overview of the numbers and the increase. I'd like to stress, again – oh one more thing. Fortunately for us there is funds coming through the federal government through the most recent act that was passed and so the budget suggests that we would apply about \$4.4 million to replace some of this lost school revenue. That will help us get it below that 5.5% increase imposed by the State of New Hampshire. So thank you to the federal government. The American Rescue Plan helping to rescue us. But if we left – and I'm going to stress one more time what that one slide said – if we could eliminate these actions by the State – if we could just keep those things the same without the federal government, this tax rate would be lower and probably down coming this fall but the \$11.8 million from the State of New Hampshire is a lot of money to make up and to try to maintain quality services.

Looking forward which is our last slide here, we are going to continue with the paving plan of action. The city got way behind in terms of its infrastructure, in terms of paving and we are trying to catch up and I think we've done a lot in that direction but still we have some streets that are not in good shape so we need to try to press forward and continue with the 20 to 25 miles a year threshold that we've been reaching.

Another thing we're pushing for is to try to increase tax revenues and deal with a housing crisis, a shortage of housing at all levels of affordability. So we are optimistic that we can complete the School Street housing 150 units. That's market rate housing. Henry Hanger conversion – that's 88 units. Again market rate but also a Bronstein redevelopment which we've agreed to with the Housing Authority. They've been very innovative in developing a financial plan to increase the affordable units on Bronstein and increase the number from about 48 units to something over 200 units. So I think it's an increase of about 160. That will be helpful but we still have a housing crisis. We still have a shortage of housing and we need to add housing wherever we can. There are other smaller projects that we're working on. Things that are in not quite the final stages that those are and of course we'll be talking about those in the future.

The middle school upgrade project, the expansion of Fairgrounds Middle School, which has already occurred, the work at Pennichuck which is going on now and then the construction of a new Middle School out on Buck Meadow Road which is a less expensive – still a lot of money – but a less expensive way to go than trying to refit Elm Street. That's an important project for the City, we are trying to upgrade the Middle Schools and when we finish we will have State of the Art schools, all powered electrically at least by solar. Alderman Rick Dowd is Chair of the Joint Special Building which is overseeing those projects. And we will be moving forward with the Riverfront Master Plan; that was adopted some time ago to enhance the beauty of the Nashua River which, of course, is a wonderful natural asset that the City has right in the core of downtown.

Now I think that gives you an overview and, of course, we are here to listen to comments and answer any questions. So I will turn things back over to you Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Dowd

Thank you Mayor. Just before we get going, just a couple of things. I would prefer that people restrain from using any City employee’s names; rather use a position because the Board of Aldermen can only add or cut positions, they cannot hire or fire any employees. So we are talking about the budget so let’s keep it to that. The other thing is on the 51 Accounts – the Salary & Wages – that is either by Union Contract or Non-Affiliated Legislation so those are fixed as long as it is the same number of employees. And the 52 – Fringe & Benefits – also set under the guidelines by City Hall and are not in the purview of that particular department. Again just reiterating the rules as we go along. When I open up a Division, I will mention which Departments are in that Division and you can ask a question on any one of the Departments; come up to the microphone. Please try to socially distance, six feet apart if you’re in line. You can ask one question at a time on that Division and you have 3 minutes and when you have 30 seconds left we will give you a warning. Please do not extend over that, because we have other people that wish to speak. When everyone has had an opportunity for that Division, if you have another question on a Division you can come back up and ask the question again, same thing, one question – 3 minutes. You can also not yield any time to another speaker.

Sequence in Which City Department Budgets will be Discussed:

<u>Dept. #</u>		<u>Revenue</u>	<u>Appropriations</u>
	GENERAL GOVERNMENT DIVISION		
101	MAYOR'S OFFICE		54
102	BOARD OF ALDERMEN		55
103	LEGAL DEPARTMENT		58
107	CITY CLERK'S OFFICE	30	63
108	ENERGY MANAGEMENT		68
109	CIVIC & COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES		69
131	HUNT BUILDING	309	
158	PARKING ENFORCEMENT	30	
166	PARKING OPERATIONS	31	
183	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT		
	ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DIVISION		
106	ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES		89
110	ARLINGTON STREET COMMUNITY CENTER		93
111	HUMAN RESOURCES		97
113	BENEFITS		98
120	TELECOMMUNICATIONS		101
122	INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY		107

128	RISK MANAGEMENT		112
129	CITY BUILDINGS		116
130	PURCHASING	32	120
132	ASSESSING	32	125
134	GIS	32	129
	FINANCIAL SERVICES DIVISION		
126	FINANCIAL SERVICES	33, 34	136
	POLICE		
150	POLICE	36, 300	142
	FIRE		
152	FIRE DEPARTMENT	37, 311	150
	EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS		
156	EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT		158
157	CITYWIDE COMMUNICATIONS		162
	OTHER PUBLIC SAFETY		
159	HYDRANT FEES – FIRE PROTECTION		165
162	STREET LIGHTING		166
	PUBLIC HEALTH & COMMUNITY SERVICES DIVISION		
171	COMMUNITY SERVICES		173
172	COMMUNITY HEALTH	38	179
173	ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH	39	183
174	WELFARE ADMINISTRATION		188
175	WELFARE ASSISTANCE		189
	PUBLIC WORKS DIVISION		
160	PUBLIC WORKS ADMINISTRATION AND ENGINEERING	40	195
161	STREET DEPARTMENT	40, 312	200
177	PARKS AND RECREATION	41, 301, 302	205
	PUBLIC SERVICES DIVISION		
140	PINEWOOD CEMETERY		211
142	WOODLAWN CEMETERY	42	212

144	EDGWOOD & SUBURBAN CEMETERIES	42	217
	PUBLIC LIBRARY		
179	PUBLIC LIBRARY	43	224
	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIVISION		
153	BUILDING INSPECTION	44	230
155	CODE ENFORCEMENT		234
170	WATERWAYS/HYDROELECTRIC OPERATIONS	44	238
181	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT	44, 45	242
182	PLANNING & ZONING	45	245
184	URBAN PROGRAMS	250	250
186	TRANSPORTATION	256	256
	EDUCATION		
191	SCHOOL	317 - 331	263
	DEBT SERVICE, CONTINGENCY & INTERFUND TRANSFERS		
193	DEBT SERVICE		267
194	CONTINGENCY		271
198	INTERFUND TRANSFERS		272
	CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS		
1001	CAPITAL EQUIPMENT		274
	ENTERPRISE FUNDS-REVENUE & APPROPRIATIONS		
6000	SOLID WASTE FUND ESTIMATED REVENUES	281	
6000	SOLID WASTE FUND APPROPRIATIONS		282
	WASTEWATER		
6200	WASTEWATER FUND ESTIMATED REVENUES	291	
6200	WASTEWATER FUND APPROPRIATIONS		292
	SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS-REVENUE & APPROPRIATIONS		
	<i>City Special Revenue Funds</i>		

2501	PUBLIC HEALTH CLIENT FEES FUND	299	
2502	LAW ENFORCEMENT TRAINING FUND	300	
2503	PARKS & RECREATION PROGRAMS FUND	301	
2504	HOLMAN STADIUM EVENTS FUND	302	
2505	PEG ACCESS CHANNELS FUND	307	
2506	HUNT BUILDING FACILITY RENTAL FUND	309	
2507	FIRE TRAINING FACILITY RENTAL FUND	311	
2508	SPECIAL ROAD & HIGHWAY FUND	312	
2510	PENNICHUCK ACQUISITION BOND FUND	314	
	School Special Revenue Funds		
2100	FOOD SERVICES	317	
2120	SUMMER FEEDING PROGRAM	319	
2201	DRIVER'S EDUCATION	320	
2204	SUMMER SCHOOL	321	
2207	ADULT CONTINUING EDUCATION	322	
2212	ATHLETIC REVENUE FUND	323	
2217	SCHOOL FACILITIES RENTAL	324	
2222	AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM	325	
2227	NORTH STUDENT SHOP	326	
2232	SOUTH STUDENT SHOP	327	
2247	CULINARY ARTS	328	
2252	DAY CARE	329	
2257	SPECIAL EDUCATION-LOCAL TUITION	330	
2258	SCHOOL CTE TUITION FUND	331	
	SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION		
	NASHUA AIRPORT AUTHORITY	357	
	CAPITAL EQUIPMENT RESERVE (CERF) PLANNED REPLACEMENTS	359	
	EXPENDABLE TRUST & RESERVE FUNDS-FUNDED BY APPROPRIATIONS		360
	EXPANDABLE TRUST FUNDS-FUNDED BY CONTRIBUTIONS		363

Chairman Dowd

Ok the first Division that we are going to cover is the General Government Division. It is Department 101 – the Mayor’s Office; 102 – the Board of Aldermen; 103 – the Legal Department; 107 – the City Clerk’s

Office; 108 – Energy Management; 109 – Civic Community Activities; 131 – Hunt Building; 158 – Parking Enforcement; 166 - Parking Operations and 183 - Economic Development. That particular Division has a lot of Departments but most of them are relatively small and you can ask a question on Revenue or Appropriations. Is there anyone that has any questions on General Government Division? Please give your name and address for the record?

Fred Teeboom 24 Cheyenne, former Alderman-at-Large, elected twice. First of all, where does this 3 minutes come from? I've never heard of that before?

Chairman Dowd

It is by Legislation passed by the Board of Aldermen.

Mr. Teeboom – Of Public Hearings?

Chairman Dowd

Yes.

Mr. Teeboom – Well that makes it very a very difficult public hearing. I thought there was no limit on the public hearing.

Chairman Dowd

Well we found that at all the public hearings that we've had that 3 minutes doesn't seem to limit people if they have a question.

Mr. Teeboom – We will have to change that, get around to change that. What I want to do is skip to page 54 but I want to skip to an earlier page like page 10. I know that Mayor Donchess made a presentation which I could hardly read. But on Page 10 and I think Page 10 gets interesting. He compared the departments taking out the pensions and Medicare and social security. That's a very unusual way to compare departments, maybe you do that for internal purposes, but I am a taxpayer. I have no interest, I don't have that much interest in how you manage things internally. What I am interested in is how you pay, how many taxes I have to pay. Now when I look at the Budget what I did is I took the current budget, I had to go to City Hall to get a copy of the budget, I don't see there's any of them here. And then I got my (inaudible) budget out, which is (inaudible) and I made that comparison. I come up, Mayor, with a completely different conclusion than you did. First of all, the Police Department increase between this budget and last year's budget is 6.6%. The Fire Department, 9.1% increase. The School Department a 3.5% increase. All you do is take the budget for that department this year and the budget for that department year, take the difference and compute the percentage increase. That's not 1% it's 6% for the Police; 9% for the Fire; 3% for the schools; City Hall 2% only. And DPW took a hit they only show 1%. So there's nothing equitable about this budget. The General Fund increase is 2.6% which is about the percentage over the inflation rate. There's no cap right now but I just got notice today that Governor Sununu signed the cap. The cap is back.

Chairman Dowd

30 seconds.

Mr. Teeboom The Cap is back. By the way when I come back, you've only got 30 seconds, I can come back a second time, and a third time and a fourth time, correct? The total appropriations is a combination of taxes and fees. That went up 4.7%, not 2.6% which is the General Fund but you take into account Enterprise Funds, (inaudible) funds the total appropriations went up \$15 million dollars about 4.7%.

Chairman Dowd

Your 3 minutes are up. Do you want to finish with a question?

Mr. Teeboom No I'll come back with a question.

Mayor Donchess

I don't agree with your numbers really. But the reason for segregating the pensions is that we don't control that. So we are trying to isolate and look at City controlled cost. I made it pretty clear we are being hit by \$4.4 million and that's part of the budget, no question about it. And the \$29 million dollar pension budget is part of the budget. So when you add the pension figures in, yeah those departments are going up more than the figures that look at what the City can control. The reason Public Works would be down under that scenario is that Public Works is the only group of employees that's not under the State Pension System. So their cost didn't go up equivalent to this \$4 million dollars. Mr. Griffin and the whole budget team has gone over the numbers pretty carefully and I don't think that some of the numbers you gave were accurate.

Mr. Teeboom They are very accurate (inaudible audio).

Chairman Dowd

Next speaker, name and address for the record please?

Laurie Ortolano – 41 Berkeley Street. I am here and when I come to the microphone I am going to be addressing positions. I understand your budget increase is small but I really think you have positions in this budget that need to be removed. And in the Legal Department this Right-to-Know Coordinator has got to go. It is a \$75,000.00 position that did not produce the results we had wanted. I really feel that there shouldn't of been a dedicated position for Right-to-Know and I don't think it is a viable position for you to fund. You are not going to get an attorney in there who is going to come in as a Right-to-Know Coordinator and stay. The Attorney you hired punched out after 6 months and it's going to be a roll out ground for anyone. It really is a mascaraed position if you just want to add an attorney. In the time that the attorney was here, we had 3 lawsuits on Right-to-Know largely because of his work. And I can tell you there are several more that are going to roll in. So I am not a fan of this Right-to-Know Coordinator Legal Position. I think what you want to fund is a taxpayer's attorney that is there to serve us. So that when our City wants to go after us with these frivolous lawsuits, we have some means of being funded so people who can't afford lawyers to come in on a Right-to-Know request issue which is standard Right-to-Know, basic Right-to-Know costs a citizen \$5,000.00 to take into Court. That's not cheap. So instead of using the system to abuse your citizens, let's roll it the other way. And I think this Right-to-Know Coordinator should be taken out of the budget, there's \$100,00.00 savings there, very misguided position. Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Thank you. Miss Johnson can you just lower the mic a little bit?

Paula Johnson – Good evening Mayor, Members of the Board of Aldermen and members of the City. My name is Paula Johnson, I am a member of the Board of Education and I ran this by Legal to make sure that I had the right to speak here tonight as a citizen and a taxpayer of this City. So I am going to speak here and tell you how outrageous I am about what has gone on in this last year. City Hall was shut down at taxpayer's expense. Yes, we had a pandemic. I went to work last June in retail with a mask on to make a living to be able to put a roof over my head and food on the table although the Governor deemed me non-essential; how dare he do that. And how dare you keep the citizens out of City Hall but you arrest them but they can't go in there. So I am proposing right now that the Mayor's Office loses his staff because I went there the other day and I went through City Hall and took pictures of the renovations, great job with taxpayer's money, doesn't matter which pot it comes from, it came from us the taxpayers. And you talk about people who haven't worked, that's right. A lot of us lost a job or took deep decreases in salary rather than increases. I went to your office Mayor and I had this little conversation, you invited me to come into

City Hall because I hadn't been there and I want to tell everybody what a beautiful graduation we had in both schools and I applaud that we were able to get our students graduated this year. I went in there, it's like the Taj Mahal. We have bullet proof glass and to see the Mayor I had to ring the doorbell, had to ring the doorbell.

The renovations through the Board of Aldermen, well I hope we don't have another pandemic, because there's no social distancing in there now, which it was before. You spent money after dollars after dollars. So here's my proposal, I propose we eliminate the Mayor's staff, all of them at City Hall because none of them were there during the COVID pandemic, because I asked your secretary and she told me when I came in on Friday you weren't there which I didn't expect, I was hoping maybe I would run into you at Whole Foods again but the question is, they weren't there. I made calls, none of the return calls, many people in the City still talk to me like I was an Alderman and they said nobody calls back. So if nobody can call back then we don't need them, we can eliminate your whole department. There's a big savings right there. And I am just kind of concerned and I am kind of...

Chairman Dowd

30 seconds.

Ms. Johnson - ... and don't understand what is considered fair price housing. Because when I was on the board the last time, Alderman Wilshire I am sure would tell you that when we had spoke to (inaudible) I asked what was affordable housing and the difference was like \$200.00 a month. Somebody please define what is affordable housing and what is going to be the housing for downtown. I'll come back again for more questions. Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Thank you.

Mayor Donchess

Well I would like to respond on City Hall. First of all the pandemic was real. People in City Hall got the virus, some got very sick. No one died in City Hall but someone in Public Works did and if you listen to the medical experts, public health experts, part of the reason to prevent congregation of people in a place like City Hall, it's not to protect the City Employees necessarily it is to protect the public. We had City Employees with COVID-19 and had people been flowing through the building, some of those people would have gotten COVID-19 and might have died. So this was a measure recommended by all public health experts, medical experts to protect the public and the employees from the virus. And I think it was effective because we never found a case where a member of the public caught it from one of the contagious, one of the positive City Employees.

Beyond that, all of the City Employees worked during the pandemic. You are on the School Department; the teachers worked remotely just because they weren't – and your schools were closed – and just because they were closed doesn't mean that people weren't working, in fact, many worked harder to try to connect via on-line and the internet, remotely. So I think we did a good job during the pandemic of registering cars, collecting revenue and delivering City services despite this disruption caused by a real public health emergency.

Chairman Dowd

Thank you. Next speaker?

Laura Colquhoun I would like the City to do away with the Economic Development Department. This Department is responsible for the submission of part of the bond official statement that goes to Standard & Poors in order for the City to get their Triple AAA rating. The problem here is the Economic Development Department is basically submitting the same report since 2016 and everybody knows that the City is not the

same as it was back in 2016. The report still states that Pennichuck was purchased to reduce rates but does not mention that this has never happened. It did not mention that Pennichuck has just given a 5.78 increase to their bills; did not mention that both the Solid Waste and Waste Water Budgets went up \$8 million dollars in 2022. It did not mention that the Nashua taxpayers will be paying out of their taxes \$5.7 million for the shortage of the Solid Waste Funds that is not supportive, did not mention that the sewer rates went up 35%. This report also stated that the City vacancy is 7%. I happened to call the Economic Development Department in early 2020 and they told me they didn't keep this information but apparently they can still put it in the report. The report also states that the PAC bond is \$15.5 million, I guess he didn't get the Memo that we got another \$5 million dollars.

Most importantly this report mentioned nothing about the commercial property and their submitting abatements. This is not a subject the City likes to bring up; however these abatements of 2018 and '19 and the City new this information when submitting this report but they made no mention of it. I am therefore asking the City to eliminate this Department. Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Thank you.

Paula Johnson – 15 Wesborn Drive. Mayor, when everybody had to wear masks, motor vehicle did not in August on the 3rd floor because I went up there to register my car. So when we talk about what is fair and equitable, we had and I keep apologizing for this that I didn't realize about Executive Order 74 and I am a member of the Board of Ed that's been fighting to get these kids back in school, to get the masks off these kids in school to try to get some normalcy back to these kids in school, but Executive Order 74 and I read it that night at the meeting, nothing in this order shall be construed, and I know we are not wearing masks anymore, but this is the point to prevent municipalities within the State of New Hampshire from enacting their own ordinances related to the wearing of masks or face coverings that contained stricter provisions than those contained within the order. This order shall not apply to the following, shall not, we know what shall not means. We write it in every piece of Legislation just about "shall", that word "shall" educate a student and staff within K through 12. Any person with a medical condition or disability that prevents wearing masks or over the face or covering.

It talks here about physical activity, but the bottom line is really the killer and also I am trying to find out from Risk Management, you have all these barriers downtown, all of them. Where's the handicap parking under ADA? And that's really this last paragraph says, any person who declines to wear a mask or face covering because of a medical or developmental issue or difficulty breathing shall not, shall not be required to produce documentation which is unlawful, unconstitutional, and so is six feet evident verifying the condition. So I ask here when I was in City Hall and we had to wear masks, your employees didn't wear masks up in motor vehicle. And you are dictating to the citizens of this City and most of us had lost their jobs and couldn't afford anything, and you are dictating to us about masks when Executive 74, this order here said that people who couldn't wear it, couldn't wear it and you made your businesses become the nasty ones here. The Police, wrong.

Chairman Dowd

30 seconds.

Ms. Johnson And I am glad I got 30 seconds less because I am going to bite my tongue on this one, thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Name and address?

Dan Richardson 70 Berkeley Street, Nashua, New Hampshire. First I want to comment that the Mayor made the assertion that there was a lot of public input on the Master Plan. I would like to challenge that

assertion. I believe that he would hard pressed to provide any evidence of that at all. I watched several of those meetings and I know that there were very few participants on line. Moving on to Page 9 it's essentially here saying backward that the Mayor put on the screen however it was hardly legible. Fire, over 6 years 27% increase over 6 years. 21% increase for the Police. 18% for school. City Hall 16%. DPW 15%. During that time the past 6 years essentially this Board of Aldermen has essentially been the same, essentially the same people, there are a few changes. But these are the people that have been approving these increases all the while people have been losing their jobs, people have been actually not looking for jobs anymore because they could not find one. These are people that can't pay their taxes and yet over the past 6 years, we have been hiding the cost of government. I'd like to tell you that local government is not an aristocracy. You don't deserve it. You are public servants. And this Board of Aldermen has been negligent in controlling the costs of City Government. And also it is the Mayor's budget, you bear some of that responsibility.

Now we have a correction in the State Law which reinstitutes Nashua's spending cap, thank god, we have some means of controlling this at least limiting the amount since the Board of Aldermen and City Hall does not seem to have the capability...

Chairman Dowd

30 seconds.

Mr. Richardson ... to limit its spending. Thank you.

Mayor Donchess

Now the reason I say that there was more participation in the Master Plan is, you can get the details and the numbers from Community Development Director Sarah Marchant. But we have 1,000 people registered that have put input, it might even be 2,000 but she can give the exact numbers. But that's why I am saying that. We did not have that level of participation in the past. People could participate remotely outside the public meetings.

Chairman Dowd

Next? Name and address?

Gary Hoffman 38 (?) Street, Unit D. A couple of things I just wanted to point out. First of all, I did participate in the Master Plan and was one of those 1,000 people and I have to say it was more accessible. I had never actually participated in it before and I think it is something the City should certainly continue. I also want to stick up a little bit for the employees in City Hall. I registered my car recently by appointment and I think that it was actually the smoothest that it had ever been. I made an appointment online, I got right up there and it was actually the quickest it had ever – the process had ever been and I think it might be something the City should really continue.

As for the tax increase, I understand it is a steep increase but we – and I agree people should be upset and angry about it – but I think we are picking the wrong people to be angry about. I think we should be angry at the State. They are the ones that are choosing to fully fund the pension system at 100% when almost every expert out there says 80% is fine. If they did that, we would be – the last time we checked the State Pension System was close to 70% funded – they did their investments a little bit better, you know, probably it would be even more than that. They are choosing to downshift this cost onto the Nashua taxpayers and every other municipality in the State. So I guess my question Mayor Donchess is the City of Nashua joining with other municipalities in this State to kind of bring this issue forward to the State Legislature so they don't keep doing things like this.

Mayor Donchess

The answer is yes. I mean our delegation, five members which are on the Board of Aldermen advanced various Bills to try to change the pension situation in various ways. All were unsuccessful largely on party line votes. Going back, I should have made it clear that as a result of these actions taken at the local level to cut costs, I mentioned despite the \$11.8 million dollars imposed by the State, the taxes – if this budget is adopted – we don't project will go up 5 ½%, it will be more – somewhere in the 3's probably. More than we'd like, again, if the State would leave us alone it would actually go down. But we think we can deliver something in the 3's despite the hosing we are taking from the State of New Hampshire.

Chairman Dowd

OK.

Laurie Ortolano 41 Berkeley Street. I just want to address the Economic Development position in budget. You know, I have a lot of concerns about this position. It seems to me City Hall is run by three individuals; Economic Development, Community Development, and Administrator / Director of Administrative Services. That's our trifecta, that's our brain trust and honestly I think it's missing a good bit of the brain side. It is a disappointment to me across the board and it's because these are appointed positions largely by the Mayor. And I am underwhelmed by these appointments because we seem to pick people who don't have qualifications and we promote them into positions that they are really overdone on. And the one thing I would say with the Economic Development position is my interface with this individual is they are very non-responsive to public issues. And as Ms. Colquhoun said, they produce reports that are just made up information that go out to Standard & Poors typed in, 7 years old telling us we don't do numbers to get vacancy rates. I have been after vacancy rates for well over a year because it is a legitimate concern for what is going to happen to the tax rate when we run the new assessment next year.

What happened in 2020 to these commercial properties is relevant because the model run by Vision is being based on 2020 and 2021 sales on commercial properties – 2 years. And I am not certain that it is weighted and if it isn't then you have to look at what the distribution is going to be and the weight that residential properties are going to carry if there's a shift off of the commercial properties because of what happened in the pandemic. And I haven't been able to get anyone to answer that or speak to the vacancy numbers. I have been told you would, I have been told there would be a discussion and there was no discussion. And when I see the Economic Development Director producing reports that are largely false and when you send a Right-to-Know to him you get snubbed, treated rudely, doesn't e-mail it, sends it through snail mail and mails it back to you so you've got a 10 day waiting period. He's the only individual I ever knew to do that. I am not overly supportive of that and I am really tired of seeing positions promoted with people who are not qualified. I am underwhelmed by your picks Mr. Mayor. And you can bet your bibby I am not stoked about your picking Commissioners.

Fred Teeboom – 24 Cheyenne. All the figures Mayor I have checked, double checked, (inaudible) the spread sheets and I will send you my spread sheets and I'll send Mr. Griffin my spread sheets. I would like to say to the Aldermen spending is going in the wrong direction. The Mayor did an interesting thing, he did a six year average. Well I did a six year average also the traditional way, taking the budgets of six years and compare with the budgets now, not taking out any amounts for pensions. The Police over six years have an average of 4.4% a year. So now it's 6.6% this year. Fire, had an average of 4.6% over six years, because now we are 9.1%. And the School Department had an average of 3.1% over six years, 2016 2022 same years as you used Mr. Mayor. And the School was up 3.1% to 3.5%. It's going in the wrong direction. Now everybody keeps talking about pension funds. Let's have a look at the pension funds. It's true that the State mismanaged over a billion dollars, they mismanaged by a billion dollars a few years ago. They are trying to make that up. They also tried to get 100% vestings, this is madness. If the Federal Government did 100% vested, they would owe over \$130 trillion dollars. Nobody does 100% vesting, especially the government, it makes no sense. Why this (inaudible) system is beyond me. Nashua delegates the 30 representatives you can make a change, you made a change in the spending cap and went back to the State and said the State did something wrong, they have got to correct it. It can be done, you can't keep making excuses and say, taxpayers we tried, go pay the bill. There's another reason but

(audio feedback). I won't mention the name as you asked, Mr. Chairman. There's an Alderman, as an example, just an example, this particular Alderman retired in the year 2015.

Chairman Dowd

30 seconds.

Mr. Teeboom – I'll come back if I can't finish this. He got a severance of \$65,000.00 and annual retirement of \$94,000.00. His final salary was \$93,000.00 his annual pay the first year he retired was lower than his annual salary, \$94,000.00 an guess what? The following year 2016 he got \$121,000.00.

Chairman Dowd

Time has expired.

Mr. Teeboom I'll be back.

Mayor Donchess

Let me just say I agree with you definitely that the pensions don't need to go to 100% that things have been mismanaged and I think our analysis of the pension situation is similar or the same. But our delegation did work hard to change those things. There is whole another facet to this we haven't gotten into. The State agreed always to pay 35% of our cost and they broke that promise a few years ago that's who they got us into this whole system. There were Bills to restore part of the 35%, Bills to push off the deadline by which 100% had to be reached. Bills to address the so-called assumed rate of return. All those Bills were defeated but our delegation supported all of them and we've got 27 members out of 400 but that's it. Those were party line votes actually. They did their best but there was a solid majority in the Legislature that just said "absolutely not we are not going to help the cities and towns – period". And discipline was enforced and the cities and towns lost out.

Chairman Dowd

Next? Name and address?

Christina McKinney 6 Southgate Drive. My overarching question really is this, what exactly does we are all in this together mean to our City employees? And my comments are to follow, all of this in together kind of implies I think that we are sort of sharing the suffering. But to the best of my knowledge there's not a single City employee that lost any money over the last 2 years. There was no salary reduction, people weren't let go. None of those things happened to anyone in the City. So exactly what was the shared suffering? And if we are now looking at what is now no longer a State Funded Pension what percentage of the people who have been for decades paying for City Employee's pensions, what percentage of those people have pensions themselves? So we are continuing to ask City residents to make sacrifices beyond what they have for their own coverage, be it health care or pensions and I again ask where is the shared suffering? Where is this we are in this together? It would seem reasonable to me at this juncture given that we are now responsible for those pensions, that City employees to cover their pensions, it's not my pension, their own pensions that they take salary cuts over the next decade in order to cover their long-term benefits. This should not be left up to citizens who don't have those pensions, it should be covered by the people who are going to benefit and that is certainly not most of the citizens in our City.

I spoke with John Griffin on March 25th, had a wonderful conversation, quite a lengthy one and it is my understanding ...

Chairman Dowd

30 seconds.

Ms. McKinney ... that in September you look at surplus relief. And that you have an opportunity to make changes. I hope you will and I hope you will consider what I just said.

Chairman Dowd

Thank you.

Daniel Richardson 70 Berkeley Street, Nashua, New Hampshire. Getting back to Page 9 which shows the exorbitant increases over the past 6 years. It is a slap in the face to the citizens of Nashua. I've known that for a long time, but I am glad that you put that in the budget book so that everybody who wants to can look at Page 9 of the budget book, it's on line too, to see what has been happening to wages and costs of the different departments in the city. It is outrageous. Given that, I would still like to know, just the same, about Human Service Agencies. In here it shows the funding from last year for a number of Human Service Agencies in Nashua.

Chairman Dowd

That's not part of this Division.

Mr. Richardson It's not. I will save it.

Chairman Dowd

Thank you.

Paula Johnson 15 Westborn Drive. I have just got to bring something up here. Listening to this whole thing about insurance and pensions. Alderman Wilshire can attend basically with me when we have meetings with then back then Mayor Streeter and probably Attorney Bolton back then, when we were talking about the rising costs of healthcare, this was back when I was on the Board, I got on the Board on 2002 when I stepped down from the Board of Education to become an Aldermen. So we are talking about the same things we talked about in 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, about the rising cost of health care. And at this point in time, 2021, we are still talking about the rising cost of healthcare, because we the public always paid for employee's healthcare and they always had better healthcare than we the taxpayers do. They are just now getting the high deductibles which my husband and I had for years and years and years prior to.

And also, what we talked about back then was not just the healthcare, when I stepped down from the Board at the end of 2005 when I chose not to run again, I came into the Chamber and I don't know, Ms. Lovering might remember but you probably can find the minutes buried somewhere, I came in and talked about that the baby boomers, like I am, although I don't like to admit it sometimes but I am a baby boomer. When the pensions had to be paid that local state and federal were not going to have enough money to pay out baby boomers because the money was mismanaged and not funded correctly. Isn't this what we are hearing right now about mismanagement from the State or whatever. Whoever mismanaged it, why don't these people ever be held accountable and we the people, remember it's always we the people, we the taxpayers whatever level because we pay taxes to the federal government they bring it back here and then we still pay more taxes locally but we pay taxes. We the people, literally, get screwed in this City on these taxes. So it wasn't funded properly and it wasn't always a Republican held House between now and when this management, because I remember Mayor I had that conversation with you that in 2005 / 2006 it was 2 prominent Representatives that asked me to run for the State House...

Chairman Dowd

30 seconds.

Ms. Johnson ... and I was at the State House as a Democrat on that side of the aisle. And so it wasn't always and that's when the Democrats held the House. So it wasn't always just the Republicans, so what has the Democrats done to correct this when they held the House. Thank you.

Mayor Donchess

Well I certainly agree that those responsible should bear the burden but you need to tell the majority in the Legislature that now because that's a hard sell apparently and they haven't been willing to take responsibility. These pensions are a matter of State Law, you know, we can't change them. They dictate all of the details, how much we pay, what the rates are. All the details are determined at the State level. There are various things they can do to help us but they have chosen not to do that. I agree with Mr. Teeboom that there's no need to go to 100% especially for the government, we could explain why. But even at current levels, they are never going to run out of money. So we are paying hundreds of millions really into the State that probably aren't necessary.

Chairman Dowd

We are still in General Government.

Laurie Ortolano 41 Berkeley Street. Does General Government include the City Clerk's Office?

Chairman Dowd

Yes.

(Audio feedback)

Ms. Ortolano. OK. I guess I have a question then. I am wondering why were unable to hire a City Clerk that had experience being a Clerk. This is a big issue for me and it's not personal but I don't understand a City of 90,000 placing somebody in the Clerk's position that had no experience. And we are paying to certify this individual in their 60's so for the next 4 years they can work on certification to become a Clerk and then retire. It makes no sense at all and it is a huge deficit. I had problems at that office as well. And it just seems to me we could have recruited somebody and gone out and actually hired and not made this an appointment of yours, that is just picking from somebody within. It's not fair to the citizens when we don't look for the most experienced people to come in here and do the jobs that need to be done. Thank you.

Mayor Donchess

Well I don't really agree with that. First of all the City Clerk did a fantastic job during the most difficult election year there has ever been. And I guess we disagree about the approach which should be taken but I think it is best to appoint someone that you know, that you know can do the job, that has ability, intelligence, will work hard and to the extent they don't know the job will learn it. As an example, we had a former Deputy City Clerk who had Clerk experience but she ended up leaving or being let go because she couldn't do the job. So at least in my judgement, intelligence, willingness to work hard, diligence and a strong work ethic are the most important things. And the current City Clerk had been around City Hall for a long, long time and understood well how to run the elections and all the other functions of the City Clerk's Office. And, again, I go back to the beginning, there has never been a more difficult election that was held in 2020 with all of those absentee ballots and all of the State red tape regarding each ballot, keeping track of each ballot at every stage. And the City Clerk and her staff did an excellent job. So if you are criticizing what they did in that election, I definitely disagree with you.

Chairman Dowd

I'd like to wrap this up for the next two speakers and then we will move on to another division.

Christina McKinney 6 Southgate Drive. Just a question about the actual numbers. I don't know is correct. I don't whether he is, whether you are. What I do know is I spent some time trying to calculate things and my recommendation for a budget that is meant to be clear to citizens who are not spending all day working on the budget would be to include what the actual percentage changes – a column that tells me this is what

the percentage change is exactly. That way I am not trying to figure out based on what the original budget was, what the Mayor proposed budget is because frankly what I calculated doesn't match up with what you just told us. So I am willing to guess that I am perhaps wrong. But because of that I am asking that a column for next year with a percentage change be included, that makes it clear. And if that were the case, and if my numbers are correct, there are some of these numbers that are so astonishing how much the increases have been that I am sort of sick, it just makes me ill. So I am hopeful I am wrong, but it would be clear if you had that percentage right in the book. Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Thank you.

John Griffin, CFO

Mr. Chairman?

Chairman Dowd

Yes?

Mr. Griffin

Maybe I could respond. John Griffin, Chief Financial Officer. There's no question a \$290 million dollar budget is complex and difficult to understand. We try to demystify that as best we can. We have tried in the past, some of you may remember, we put percentage increases on the right hand side. And to the extent that in any given year there's collective bargaining agreements or contingency for negotiation, it tends to make that calculation difficult. I would be more than happy to further discuss. But we found that putting increases and decreases even on line items where there is a collective bargaining agreement that might have been not settled over 2 or 3 years very difficult.

So as an example, those unions that have not settled their contracts for Fiscal '22, those monies are not in the departments in which they work, they are in contingency with negotiation. That in and of itself makes it difficult but when I arrived a few years ago, the logic was – which is interesting – we don't really want to let the various unions know how much we put aside. The reality is you can figure it out. But we do move the contingency for negotiation down in contingency and it takes Legislative action by the Board of Aldermen to move it into the departments in which those employees work. So that alone would tend to skew the numbers. So what I try to do under the Mayor's direction is at the Budget Review Committee Meetings and we will have one next week with the recap is to make sure everyone understands the increases and decreases.

Page 9 and 10 was an effort that I put forth trying to isolate on things that could be controlled by the City but most importantly things that aren't controlled by the City which is the pension discussion we have. So that's why it is a difficult budget to look at, but we try to make sure and all of my colleagues try to make sure when they are before the Budget Review Committee they answer every and all questions that they can. So I just wanted to share that with the group. Thank you.

Fred Teeboom I have no difficulty reading the budget, I read it like a book. It has taken me 5 years to learn to do it. Here's an additional percentage number for the lady that wanted to know percentages. The pension fund, (audio feedback) a 6 year average, same years...

Mayor Donchess

Excuse me – the what? There's an echo, I can't always hear what you are saying, the what funds?

Mr. Teeboom The 6 year average for the pensions – the increase is 7.9%. It is now 23.5% if you look. We mentioned a billion dollar mismanagement of the investing, but here's another way to really look at it. I see

an Alderman I won't name, 2015 retired with \$65,000.00 in severance and \$94,000.00 in annual retirement. The following year his annual retirement went up to \$121,000.00 because there was retroactive pay that hadn't been paid yet. And today, this Alderman makes \$111,844.00 / \$112,000.00 a year. In addition, this Alderman gets \$7,349.00 in checks for his medical subsidy paid directly to the City of Nashua. So the total retirement cost this year is \$119,200.00. Compare that to social security to see how really bad it is. The average social security recipient for all beneficiaries is \$18,170.00 a year. \$18,000.00. The average age 65, some of you retire for social security this year 2021, \$15,582.00, compare that with the \$119,000.00 I just mentioned. You want to know the maximum social security, the absolute maximum you can make...

Chairman Dowd

30 Seconds.

Mr. Teeboom ... enormous earnings is \$27,862 so \$46,700 if you retire at age 70. This Alderman was a lot younger than age 70 making now \$119,000.00. That is the problem. You can't just sit there and say we can't help it, it's the other guys. That's your job to fix it Mr. Mayor, I don't know how you do it, but if you can fix the spending cap you can fix this problem. Thank you.

Mayor Donchess

There is a lot of focus on pensions for good reasons, but I wanted to state the converse before we leave the subject. This issue doesn't have to do with the employees. I already said that 80% of the money is going to build the assets which means only 20% of the money we are contributing year by year is necessary to cover pensions for the current employees 20%. So if we did not have to deal with the State's mess, the pension bill would not be \$29 million; it would be about \$5 or \$6 million. But \$24 million is going to build up the assets with Mr. Teeboom and I agree isn't really necessary but that's what they want to do. We don't have a choice, this is a State Law and until the Legislature changes it and yes this time it was certainly a party line vote, but 10 years ago or whatever, it has been a problem created by 10 years ago both parties in the Legislature.

But the fix this time, you know, was clearly party line issue as it was last time. So again this doesn't have to do with the current employees, if we could just pay for the current employees, your taxes would go down over 10%, over 10% of your money every year is going to build up the assets of the State Pension System based upon first the mismanagement and then the dictates of the State Pension System and the State Legislature that the assets should be increased above \$7 ½ billion dollars. And I'll repeat it a third time the problem is not the current employees it is the mismanagement of the State System, the dogmatic approach taken by the Pension System in the Legislature in requiring that these assets that billions of dollars be added to the assets even though Mr. Teeboom and a lot of others, Brian McCarthy the late – also the same thing there's no need to do this. But, you know, until the majority in the Legislature decides otherwise, this is the system we are stuck with.

Chairman Dowd

Excuse me, you cannot make comments from the audience. Next we will go Administrative Services Division, Department 106, Administrative Services; Department 110 Arlington Street Community Center; Department 111 Human Resources; Department 113 Benefits; Department 120 Telecommunications; 122 Information Technology; 128 Risk Management; 129 City Buildings; 130 Purchasing; 132 Assessing; and 134 GIS.

Laurie Ortolano 41 Berkeley Street. Let's start with the Administrative Services position. I am all for removing that office. I've seen a lot of what it has done and it has run costs up very high on this City. I had the pleasure of spending 7 hours with the Director on Friday gathering information about how business is done in the City and I have to tell you I was disgusted and underwhelmed. If you all recall this picture that ran in the newspaper a while ago when I was working on Assessing issues, it is a picture of the Director and her staff with thousands of property record files out on the photo with the Mayor saying that I was retaliating against the City by doing my research. And that is was costing us \$100,000.00. I then learned in

a Budget Committee Meeting when Ms. Wilshire showed a great deal of sympathy to the Director because we had to hire a \$50,000.00 contract to get permits addressed because this citizen was taking so much time of the Assessors.

I learned on Friday that what happened here with the Director, Ms. Kleiner in these boxes, is she ordered anything that I requested to see by placed in a special office and ordered the assessors to research what I was looking at without ever knowing what I was looking at. In other words go figure out what she thinks she's looking at and report back to me. And that was very difficult for them because they had no idea what I was looking for, the tune of probably spending well over half a million dollars. That's absurd that kind of tracking of a citizen. It's absolutely absurd. And that is what we call retaliation from a citizen? I call it retaliation of my government. She was completely unqualified for this position, another special assistant to the Mayor that got promoted to Department Head of 6 Departments, including becoming an acting chief essentially. This Department should be eliminated and we should go back to the individual departments we have. This is wrong. And I will be addressing Assessing, GIS and a couple of others. Thank you.

Mayor Donchess

Well I disagree with the analysis regarding what has happened. First of all, we have attracted one of the most qualified assessors, Chief Assessor, in the State of New Hampshire and if he's allowed to do his job he will do a very good job on behalf of the citizens of Nashua. Secondly, the Administrative Services Director has made a lot of reforms and saved the taxpayers a lot of money in IT in other areas, in assessing, there's many more records on the internet that can be obtained, now many, many more than could ever in the past. So a lot of changes and reforms have been made; services to the citizens have been improved and I think most people would agree with that.

Chairman Dowd

Next?

Dan Richardson 70 Berkeley Street. So is 109 part of the discussion, Department 109?

Chairman Dowd

No that is Civic & Community Activities.

Mr. Richardson That was the previous one? You told me I had to wait.

Chairman Dowd

I wasn't quite sure – go ahead you can ask your question on that one.

Mr. Richardson Alright. So Human Service Agencies OK. So I was looking through here at the number of Human Service Agencies that are funded by the City. The City gives it a certain amount, it's community care I guess. And it is a good thing, it is a good thing we do that. We have a lot of needs in the City and it is good for the City to share of its annual budget. But I am going through here and I am looking that this year the Girl Scouts of Green & White Mountains were cut out, they were zeroed out. And you know, I do want to know why they were zeroed, what did they do that was wrong that would cause them to be zeroed out? And also the Salvation Army got zeroed out. So why would that happen in favor of adding in other agencies that had not been there before, Caregivers, I don't know who they are. I have no association with them, no familiarity. But why were these very good agencies cut out of the City providing a certain amount of – a certain level of funding to them. Girl Scouts is a very good organization and so is the Salvation Army and there was a few others in there, but in particular, why pick on the girls?

Mayor Donchess

Well the process that is used is that there is a Citizens Advisory Council which meets with all these agencies and makes these recommendations. I mean there is no input by me as the Mayor or from the Aldermen. The Citizens Advisory Counsel, it has become a group of citizens headed by a guy who is very dedicated and they all are. They meet with all the agencies or at least they take applications from all the agencies and they make recommendations to the City based upon what they see as the needs based on the presentations made by the various agencies. Now those amounts go up and down. Sometimes somebody gets a lot more than they did before; sometimes they get less. But has not been my habit nor the habit of the Aldermen to question these recommendations because we are trying to make it non-political. They way this got started believe it or not, when I was Mayor before we put this system into effect. And the point is so that is not, you know, who knows the Mayor or who knows the Aldermen or whatever. It is based upon and certainly reasonable people can disagree as to the best allocation and certainly maybe you are right, maybe the money should have gone somewhere else than what it did, but this is a group of citizens, volunteers who are giving their best effort to try to come up with a series of recommendations that meets the needs of the community and responds to the applications and presentations made by these various agencies. So it is not political, it is not the Aldermen, it is not the Mayor, it is a group of citizens who make these recommendations. And we generally just follow them and enact them. I don't necessarily agree with everything that they have suggested but I don't change it because the idea is we want the citizens to decide and not inject any kind of special influence. I haven't changed anything for the years that I've been Mayor even though maybe I didn't agree with some of it. But I don't know, they are the ones that listen to the presentations. Anyway so they do their best and we try to follow their recommendations.

Beth Scaer 111 East Hobart Street. Last year, Mayor, I called into your virtual budget hearing and you said that you cut everything to the bone and then I asked about the Arlington Street Community Center which was closed at the time and you said it was absolutely necessary. Well it is still closed, it is going to be closed for 18 months according to your budget and the Director is getting paid in your budget \$84,000.00, \$84,152.00 and what is she doing? She's providing virtual programming, the internet is flush with virtual programming for kids, we don't need to pay anyone to provide that. She's making some kits, that's nice but that's a lot of money \$84,000.00. The Emergency Management Director who I assume must have really been straight out this year gets \$95,000.00; the Chief Public Health Nurse \$95,000.00; the Waste Water Project Engineer \$85,000.00; Plant Operations Supervisor \$83,000.00; Fire Training Officer \$90,000.00; Fire Mechanic \$78,000.00 and she's working from home making virtual programs for kids. Meanwhile she is serving Crown Hill, those kids need programming. Their parents were at home with them because you know school wasn't in session because you know everyone was virtual. The Boys & Girls Club was taking these kids in. The Arlington Street Community Center could have taken them in but it is still closed. This is a huge waste of money, It shouldn't have been in the budget last year, it shouldn't be in the budget this year.

I filed a Right-to-Know request to get all the details and I am still waiting for that, you know, her emails, her reports, because it is hard to know even what she has been doing. And Mayor I would ask you to find out what she's been doing and how she earned this salary. I don't think it was deserved. Thank you.

Mayor Donchess

Well certainly we agree that the Crown Hill neighborhood, a traditional neighborhood in Nashua is a neighborhood that has a number of families in economic distress and needs support. And we opened the Arlington Street Community Center to help them. Now the salary is not \$84,00000 the salary is actually \$58,000.00 but like the schools, most of the service has been from online. But those services are still helpful for the children involved. Just as a testament to some of what has been accomplished, the Director of the Arlington Street Community Center has been working with a lot of the families at the housing at Marshall Street and East Hollis which is affordable housing. And they were so appreciative of all of the effort and help that the Center and the Director had given to their tenants that they donated a basketball court to the City paid for it completely by them in back of the Arlington Street Community Center. The idea that nothing is happening because it is online during the pandemic I don't think is correct.

Paula Johnson again. I am still here in Nashua. I want to go back to the General Government because I thought you said that you couldn't do that before because I have a question on that. And my question is Great American Downtown, that used to be \$40,000.00 now it's \$50,000.00. What exactly is Great American Downtown doing with that \$50,000.00?

Mayor Donchess

Well they are supporting our efforts to create activity and expand the tax base downtown. Now please keep in mind that the downtown is a profit center so-called for the City. The City is 31 square miles, one quarter of that, one quarter mile so less than 1% is the central business district, Main Street and the Mill Yard area. That area of the City generates \$6 million dollars in tax revenue. That's far more than the services that are generated downtown. Now wait, there's virtually no students, a few students but not very many, no garbage collection it's all commercial so there's plowing, police and fire. So if we through creating new activity downtown can bring more people down there, can make people enjoy it more, can increase the strength of those small businesses and grow the property tax base, maybe the \$6 million will become \$8 or \$10 or \$12 and we can pay for schools in your neighborhood or police or fire or whatever it is using the money that is generated there. So keep in mind that area generates a lot of money that helps pay for services through every neighborhood.

Ms. Johnson That sounds good for paying schools in my neighborhood. I live in Ward 5 but my kids went to school in Ward 4 so which one was my neighborhood, where I lived or where my kids went to school? So I mean six and one half a dozen of the other but anyway, let that be.

Chairman Dowd

Your time was up, you asked a single question, you got an answer.

Ms. Johnson OK I'll get back in line. That's OK.

Laurie Ortolano 41 Berkeley Street. Onward to the Assessing Budget. Mr. Mayor, I think you really misrepresented the improvements that have gone in Assessing. It has been an enormously painful process. And you don't understand what citizens are trying to get at with information when you look at the improvements that were made by the Director. Property record cards that were ordinarily available to the public in November did not become available until the end of January. I had to send emails into a chief to request probably over 200 property record cards for him to email them to me because I had no access to help with abatements. It was absurd and frustrating. And any email to the Director to say when are these property record cards coming on line, we are 3 months late, there was no answer. Nobody could figure it out. The software update which was supposed to take a few months took 16 months and we had a lot of trouble with the software. There were a lot of errors and things that didn't work well. We instituted a new policy in there where records aren't open despite our Charter saying that we can come to City Hall and inspect records that are readily available. The Director put a 5 day Right-to-Know standing on open records so you couldn't go in and look at a property record file anymore and I believe that remains. I think that's actually illegal and that may be something I go to Court on. It's ridiculous, you took it away. So when you say there's tremendous improvements down there, I think it has been hair pulling. Have you looked at the new computer systems that are up down there, the two at the cubicles? The software is so complex that I don't think that any citizen is going to ever figure out how to print a property record card. I'm going to have to spend 5 or 6 hours figuring out the menus myself; it's not simple, no instructions at the counter. Have you looked at how the office space is set up for citizens? You took 45 square feet of countertop that the public could come in and use and reduced it to about 6. Where does the public put their papers, their notebooks, their drawings, their information they want to share with an assessor, you took it all away. You took away the research space so people like me could never go back in. You didn't leave a computer in an open area where a citizen like me could research away from the cubicles, you reduced the computers from 3 to 2. I am not happy with what you did in there and I don't think you made it better or easier or simpler for property owners.

Chairman Dowd

30 seconds.

Ms. Ortolano I think it was a disaster and next I'll come back on IT.

Laura Colquhoun 30 Greenwood Drive. I am speaking against the Assessing Budget. The Assessing Department is currently hiring a commercial appraiser for \$150,000.00 to do commercial appraisals. The sad part is the Mayor and the other city officials are trying to hide this expense from the public by putting this expense against an asset account. In 2011, there was an account that residents could see to see how much money was being returned on abatements, however the City no longer shows that item. Both the Mayor and the Assessing Department knew that they needed a commercial appraiser before the budget was finished, however, they chose not to include it in the budget. Just like the City is not telling the residents that the City has already returned over \$3.3 million dollars to commercial property owners and that does not include interest. It also has brought down the commercial property assessments by over \$65 million dollars. Nashua residents must realize that what the commercial properties do not pay in property taxes, the residential property taxes must pick up the tab. The City needs to be upfront with the residents and therefore the additional \$150,000.00 should be charged to Assessing. If the City wants to change the budget to simply eliminate maybe the \$150 that's going to Downtown Improvements and the \$50,000.00 going to Great American Downtown, that would keep the budget flat. Thank you.

Beth Scaer 111 East Hobart Street. So again the Director of Arlington Street Community Center was out for 18 months and you are correct Mayor the salary is \$58,488.00 plus her benefits to come to about over \$80,000.00 and she is going to be out from 18 months. All the other City employees were called back to their positions, she wasn't. I don't understand. This is like a school teacher not teaching her kids. I mean these school teachers work insane hours teaching virtual classes and later in person combined with virtual and here she's at the Center putting together kits and putting on videos. When you say you cut the budget to the bone, this is just one example and I am sure, I am guessing if people comb through this they could find a lot of other ones but this is just really ridiculous. I don't understand, you know, you said you hired your friends and then you were telling Mr. Richardson that you didn't want to have your influence over the donations to the Human Services organizations. Well I think your influence, your friends, shouldn't be involved in any of these decisions. These should be made based on what is good for the City and I don't think this is good for the kids of Crown Hill to have the center closed for 18 months. It was created for a reason and it's not fulfilling that reason. Thank you.

Paula Johnson Nashua, New Hampshire. Risk Management. I've got a concern and this has to do with the downtown with the eating out, the dining out on Main Street. I have a problem with that. I have a problem is that you have eliminated again, I am going to talk about it, you eliminated the handicapped parking. I have gone back and forth with Legal and Risk Management said – I had a chance to walk Main Street this afternoon. There is currently 1 handicapped space in front of Persian Rug Gallery and 1 almost directly across the street in front of St. Patrick Catholic Church. The only other space posted was in front of San Frisco Kitchen which there was more on the other side because I've got a handicapped plate so I know where I would park on Main Street when I would go down to Wingates and other places. Concord block which is currently blocked by Jersey Barriers. There very well may have been more spaces located near ongoing construction, PAC, I believe there was down there, the Performing Arts Center, isn't that the same building that was a non-binding referendum on the ballot and somehow we the people are going to pay for this? Although I was unable to access this area during my walk, last year I remember there being concern regarding transition and accessibility from the sidewalk to the extended dining area which was rectified with the use of portable ramps allowing for a smooth transition to the street. Again, handicap, I know in parking lots it is 1 per 25, 2 per 50 because when I was an Alderman that \$250.00 fine if you park in a handicapped spot and you don't have the placard or you don't have a plate, I did that to help the people who have a disability because some people are just lazy and they would just park there. I attached last year's downtown dining revision which I don't care about. I am unaware of the amount of the spots that needed to be provided versus what is available for the on-street parking. Given the current expansion for outdoor dining and ongoing construction, I have reached to my ADA contact with the State to obtain some

clarification on numbers specific requirements given our current circumstances. Once I have the information I'll update you and this was June 15th.

Chairman Dowd

30 seconds.

Ms. Johnson I complained about it before and I think all of you as Aldermen should really take a look at making sure that your constituents who have a walking disability are able to be able to park downtown and visit downtown. If you want to build it then you have to give the parking for the people who are disabled. Thank you.

Mayor Donchess

Well we will check that. Now my understanding is we have the same number of handicap spaces as we did before, but we will check that if it's not correct. You are right we should have enough.

Laurie Ortolano 41 Berkeley Street. I want to address a reduction in the Assessing Budget. I believe all of the commercial activities and business should be subcontracted out. We continue to have some really big issues in our commercial side and you know that there is an assessor over there that under performs consistently. And I've grown really tired of it. We are in abatement season, we have abatements, we are going to hit the deem deny date on June 30th and this assessor once again has not delivered a single abatement to the table. I had two property owners email me this week that told me he was on vacation. It is absurd. Why are commercial assessors not able to handle the mom and pop businesses and get us through them in 4 months? We do not have the horsepower on the commercial side to handle this aspect of our City business. And we are probably paying \$300,000.00 or \$400,000.00 grand into that. I really think you should look at subcontracting out the commercial side and getting people who really know what they are doing with that part of the business.

Secondly, that Assessing Office should have had a lot of furloughed workers during COVID. They could not do inspections, they were not doing permits and they were not doing their work. And we kept them on with full salaries despite that. That was not fair to the taxpayers. It's not like Public Works that had to go out there and do the job. Assessing did not and they did not do the job. And we paid full boat for that. If I have time – IT. You really need to restore your IT Director. I am very concerned that you fired the IT Director and you are leaving the position blank. The City is too large and has too much stuff going on in the digital world to not have a director. You are doing all these digital upgrades. You know, you have a big email problem. And I just filed a law suit yesterday pro se, over emails. I would way prefer not to do that. I would love to have a discussion with the City about what's going on with emails, but I can't. The only way you can do it is through a lawsuit. I asked for 2 months of emails, January and February, for Assess help. I didn't really get January's. I asked in March, it took 25 days for you to recognize the Right-to-Know and then you failed to deliver January's records. What are you doing with the emails? Why are they all missing?

Chairman Dowd

30 seconds.

Ms. Ortolano Those are official documents for the furtherance of City business. And in there were my emails with the abatement applications that I had done for senior citizens that I came to City Hall on the 22nd, on the 17th – the 22nd to get stamped and ended up 28 days later arrested. You didn't get my email on the 17th, you didn't get my email on the 20th, they weren't in there and apparently you didn't get my phone call. What is going on with our data.

Chairman Dowd

Time has expired.

Ms. Ortolano Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Last question on this Division?

Dan Richardson 70 Berkeley Street, Nashua, New Hampshire. I am not sure where it occurs in this book so you might help me with it. What I am looking for is the financial payments that were estimating for lawsuits this coming year, Fiscal '22. We have to provide for that so if you'd be kind enough to tell me where in the Budget Book, under what Department that I'd find that number.

Mayor Donchess

Legal Department.

Mr. Richardson That would be under the Legal Department. That would be on Page what?

Chairman Dowd

Mr. Griffin? That actually was in the previous section, the Legal Department. I am not sure they are found there anyway.

Mr. Richardson Page 63 someone said?

Chairman Dowd

Corporation Counsel is going to answer the question.

Mr. Richardson I'd be interested in the amount; hopefully it shows that.

Steve Bolton Corporation Counsel

Steve Bolton, I am the Corporation Counsel for the City, essentially City Attorney and I am seeing a person in the Legal Department. I am not sure I fully understand the question. Most of the lawsuits we handle with the lawyers who are on staff so there's no, in most cases, there's no outside legal fees that we are paying to deal with the situation when the City gets sued. Now in what I hope is the very unlikely event that there's a judgement against the City, it would depend on the circumstances what the alleged wrong doing is on the part of the City where the judgement would be paid. So for example, if a paving contractor who we hire to do the 25 or so miles of paving of streets each year, if one of those contractors were to say that, OK the contract called for payment of \$100.00 per mile for certain quantities and there was a dispute over whether that contract provided 10 miles of paving or 15 miles of paving, when that dispute got resolved the payment would come out of the paving account so somewhere in the Public Works' Budget or in an Special Bond Proceeds Account where the money for the paving program was held.

Other types of judgements against the City would come out of other accounts. So a tax abatement appeal that results in a refund of taxes paid to a taxpayer would come out of what is called the overlay and that's money in addition to the budget that is added in to the amount to be raised in taxes for the express purposes of paying the expenses of dealing with tax abatement appeals and any refunds that are ordered or agreed to in a settlement. As I say, different types of litigation judgements can be funded from different sources depending on what the nature of the case is.

Mr. Richardson OK I think I understand what you are saying. You are saying for whatever Department that it is associated with that money would be coming out of that Department for payment of judgement from a lawsuit?

Attorney Bolton

There are all sorts of situations but to be overly simplified, yes it would be the Department involved.

Mr. Richardson Is there anywhere in this book where it shows the summation of the proceeds for law suits?

Attorney Bolton

When you say "proceeds" you mean where we have sued someone and got money from them?

Mr. Richardson No, where the City has had to pay.

Attorney Bolton

Yeah I would not refer to that as a proceed. So I am not sure I understand. I don't believe there's any one place you find that.

Mr. Richardson Mr. Griffin?

Mr. Griffin

John Griffin, CFO. There is not one place in a budget book. There are obviously contracts, bonded, indebtedness, Risk Management.

Mr. Richardson Do we make any preparation in a budget for any suits? Is that something that can be foreseen and then budgeted?

Attorney Bolton

The overlay account is a good example of that. The whole function of the overlay account is to pay for refunds and expenses of litigation concerning tax abatement appeals. So in the case of the overlay we take a look at the pending abatement in any given year, what the trend has been for the prior years, how many remain pending, what the volume of those are, the total volume. So for example, a few years ago we had several years backed up on Public Service of NH's abatement appeal. And the total exposure there was just over \$3 million dollars, not the difference in the assessment what they were claiming they were owed by refunds. We had some concern about that and we were trying to provide for that in overlay if it turned out that we had to pay more, there's a State statute about how that gets added into the budget and has to be appropriated in order to satisfy judgements. Happily in the case of the Public Service Company's appeal we were 100% victorious and ended up refunding a total of \$0.00. That doesn't always happen, we are happy and satisfied when that does happen.

Mr. Richardson OK thank for answering the question.

Chairman Dowd

Yeah I wanted to wrap this area up because it's 9:00. I want to move on, we have got a lot of divisions left. If you have short questions?

Gloria (unknown spelling of last name) Not a short question just a comment; 3 Roedean Drive, Nashua, New Hampshire. I would like to state that we should keep the Director of the Arlington Street Community Center. The fact that it has been closed is inaccurate. We just, a couple weeks, opened Arlington Street Community Center on the Memorial Day Weekend with the Director there. We have 150,000 boxes of food that we distribute from the Arlington Street Community Center as well as a lot of other programs. So to say that the Director is useless or we don't need it, that's simply not true. Anything you want to talk about or know about the Arlington Street Community Center, you can get that information from the Director as well

as she is open for every single Nashua citizen and accessible as well. And I know that for a fact because we use her for many, many things. So that's just my comment. Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Thank you. This will be the last one in Administrative Services.

Beth Scaer 111 East Hobart Street. I am asking about IT. There was a phishing attack where an employee of the City sent tens of thousands of dollars to a scammer. And I was wondering what the outcome of that was and what we are doing to prevent it because I am worried about the City's cyber security measures. Thanks.

Chairman Dowd

Thank you. We are going to now move on to Financial Services Division - Department 126 Financial Services. Financial Services is the next Division.

Inaudible talking

Chairman Dowd

I didn't hear your question.

Beth Scaer You want me to repeat it?

Chairman Dowd

Yes.

Beth Scaer A scammer convinced a City Employee to send him tens of thousands of dollars on a contract. And I am wondering what the City is doing to protect our cyber security, the IT Department. The Mayor reported this in one of his speeches and we never heard the outcome of that.

Mayor Donchess

Well there is no outcome yet, we haven't paid the money. The hacking actually occurred on the vendor. Someone hacked into the vendor and meaning not us, but the other party of the contract and posed as the vendor. And there's not been a resolution in this instance, but I don't think we paid the vendor for that money. There's just ongoing discussions about the problem. But again the hacking didn't occur in the City's system. And we could get Ms. Kleiner to talk about all the IT security that there is but again the hacking the penetration was not of the City's system it was of the vendor system and the crook or hacker posed as the vendor.

Ms. Scaer Yeah and the City employee fell for the ruse that was created by the vendor system being hacked.

Chairman Dowd

Alright, Financial Service Division?

Laurie Ortolano 41 Berkeley Street. CFO Griffin, I think you have some terrific people in your office, I am particularly appreciative of Rose Mary. When I went to her, she was always very forthright in addressing my issues and getting me answers very quickly and it is very appreciated. And I look forward to having that opportunity to work with her again as soon as some of you other people lighten up and let us citizens have that access. Thank you.

Dan Richardson 70 Berkeley Street, Nashua, New Hampshire. It shows wages in the Mayor's proposed budget of basically \$1.5 million dollars for the Financial Services Department. I'm not sure if that's the complete Department. So Mr. Griffin, I would like to ask you for that particular account, full-time, how many people does that represent, that \$1.5 million dollars of wages?

Mr. Griffin

John Griffin, CFO. If you look at page 134 we list the position distribution which in Fiscal '22 is going to be 23.6 individuals charged to the General Fund portion of the Financial Services Budget.

Dan Richardson 23 people?

Mr. Griffin

23.6 – there are fractions of people some of the team are charged to other areas.

Dan Richardson So you are saying 23 people are paid by the \$1.5 million dollars?

Mr. Griffin

That is correct.

Dan Richardson Didn't expect that. Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Ok if there's nothing else on Financial Services?

Fred Teeboom So Mr. Griffin, we used to see the budget book, either in the budget book on taxes a little booklet, a breakdown of the salaries category. You'd give a Director, Associate Director, Lieutenants, Sergeants (inaudible) individual that broke down the categories. Unless I missed it, I don't see any breakdown of salaries in this budget book. Is there a reason they are deleted.

Mr. Griffin

Mr. Chairman, I can respond. John Griffin, CFO. Mr. Teeboom if you look at Page 333 this particular document begins a series of staffing positions.

Mr. Teeboom OH OK.

Mr. Griffin

Mr. Teeboom's been at these budgets since I've been here and before. This is an example of an area that if you put more than one year in and there's bargaining units that haven't settled and some of our colleagues used to look at a position and wonder why there was a 30% increase or a 20% decrease. So what we wanted to do here as far as informing the public, these are all the positions that are funded in this particular budget from a General Fund perspective.

Mr. Teeboom Outstanding.

Mr. Griffin

Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

OK that's all for Finance. We are going to the Police Department, Department 150. Any questions on the Police Department Budget?

Unidentified Speaker Is this Police and Fire or just Police?

Chairman Dowd

Just Police.

Unidentified Speaker I asked this question I think in, I don't know, several years ago. And I think I repeated it another year. And I am going to ask it again. In the budget it shows a million dollars planned for overtime. I don't know exactly what a sort of average police salary, but I am pretty sure we could hire an awful lot of policemen for \$1 million dollars. So if we are on a regular basis, and it was \$1 million dollars I don't know, 4 years ago when I brought this up. If it is still \$1 million dollars we clearly should be able to plan for having an additional policeperson or two so that we are not running overtime. It would seem to me that is a smart choice, it saves money and we are not budgeting for unpreparedness. But I see it every time and I see it frankly for the Fire as well only it is worse. I just don't understand why we don't decide to hire appropriately rather than plan for overtime, except that what I do know because I live next door to a fireman, I know that the plan is to beef up your last hours so that you get the highest possible retirement. That's not good for the City taxpayers.

Chairman Dowd

Mayor, do you want somebody to answer? I don't know.

Mayor Donchess

Well the PD would answer that, but I don't if it was really a question. The short answer and I am sure the Department can answer more fully, but the short answer is it is a 24 hour Department and you can't function without overtime. I mean there are crimes, there are accidents, people are held over, it just is not something you can just send someone home. But the Chief is there and he can answer in more detail.

Michael Carignan, Chief of Police

Thank you. Michael Carignan, Chief of Police for Nashua. It is a pretty complicated question that you asked. I have Karen Smith with me, our Financial Director. Like the Mayor just said, it is a 24/7 operation. We can't predict necessarily when homicides will happen, when major incidents will happen. We also have training that is mandated by the State by the Federal Government so we have to account for that and when you have those mandatory trainings, you have to take Police Officers off the street and you have to hire overtime to replace those positions on the street. So I will have Ms. Smith explain a little bit more about the overtime and how it is broken down. But I will also say, regarding the pension cost, those pension rules have changed and that overtime no longer factors into the State Pensions. So the Police Officers as of 2004 I believe no longer get that benefit. So I'll have her explain the overtime, the shortfalls of the overtime and kind of what that means.

Karen Smith, Police Business Manager

Karen Smith, Business Manager. We have payroll that covers that normal day to day payroll and then we have the overtime account. And the overtime account is broken up into different categories. We have training, witness, investigative and coverage. And the amount that we are probably going to have the most of is going to be on coverage because we have shift work. So you have first, second and third shift. There's going to be numerous amount of overtime for covering those 3 shifts. Investigative is another category that is not fully funded. What we do right now, it has been quite a few years that they have split the amount of overtime from our payroll – excuse me – the overtime is not fully funded. We are actually

compensating from our payroll account, so when we have vacancies that's actually funding part of the overtime account.

So I can give you an example on our overtime. We now have a \$1.2 million dollar current FY '21 overtime account. We spent \$2 million dollars on overtime because we are actually paying for our overtime through attrition, through our vacancies, we no longer have the vacancies we are fully staffed right now. So there's a very complex budget, it is not straight forward when you would think of a normal probably non municipal budget where you put a line for your payroll, you put your line for your overtime. That's not what we are working with on our municipal budget. It's a little bit different in the fact that we are offsetting our overtime through our payroll and the uniqueness of law enforcement being shift work, having investigative, having coverage. As the Chief mentioned, having trainings and there's other miscellaneous overtime that could be civilians, there's just different types of – overtime is the nature of law enforcement. It's not the exception as you would have in private industry.

(Inaudible talking)

Chairman Dowd

Excuse me, you cannot ask questions from there, we can't get you on the recording. You have to come to a microphone and it is not your turn.

Mayor Donchess

And the answer is yes, it is at a higher rate.

Chairman Dowd

Are we done with the Police Department.

Unidentified Speaker

So if it's at a higher rate, (inaudible). If it is at a higher rate than wouldn't it make sense?

Chairman Dowd

Could you state your name and address again, please?

Christina McKinney 6 South Gate Drive. Wouldn't it make sense given as I said, I've seen the same million dollar figure for years. Wouldn't it make sense to hire in advance so that we have people available at a regular rate rather than a higher rate to support when you are doing training, to support when there are things which clearly happen, you know they do because you've had this million dollars for years. So wouldn't make sense, I mean I don't know, somebody back here said an average police officer is something around \$70,000.00. Well that's 14 or 15 police officers. Surely we could add a few permanent police officers that gives everyone a preparedness for training opportunities and every other kind of unexpected thing at the regular rate and benefit everyone; benefit the Police Department, benefit the people who need the extra help for training and all the rest of it which I think is important. I am all for the boys in blue but it is absurd that we pay twice as much or whatever their excess rate is because we don't prepare for what is obviously needed year after year after year given that this in the budget every year that I have looked at this. It makes no sense and it doesn't support our policemen in the way they should be. They shouldn't be scrambling for someone to fill in unless the purpose is to create higher pay and if that's the case that's not good for the citizens who are paying salaries.

Chief Carignan

Hold on one second please. I'll answer that question.

Mayor Donchess

While the Chief is occupied I could give a short answer and hopefully Skip is, the Chief is going to help him so I will just answer. But let's see if this does it. It has been looked at many times. There are additional costs associated with hiring an additional officer which aren't associated with overtime, now you pay an entire whole benefits package and healthcare plan, etc. etc. In addition, it's just not as easy as that. Like if someone is on a crime what are you going to do? Go home and bring someone else that knows nothing about the crime? Even if you could interrupt the investigation which probably you couldn't. Someone is at an accident you know hey you go home, come and get someone else. It is not so easy to interrupt an operation right in the middle like that. So there are various reasons why overtime is required and I am sure it is more complicated than I've just expressed but those are a few of the reasons. But again when you hire someone new there are costs associated that you are not calculating.

Chief Carignan

And I would just like to echo, as much as I would love to have 100 new police officers it is unrealistic due to unpredictability of police work. So the reality, it is actually cost effective to pay a certain amount of officers overtime rather than hire new officers and pay the full benefits package. So it is a fine balance, I would be happy to sit with you in our Finance Office to explain that to you at a later time if you wanted.

Paula Johnson 15 Westbourne Drive. Alderman Wilshire and I were just shaking our heads because when I was on the board too we talked about adding more police officers versus overtime and benefits and sometimes it does work out better that you are paying the overtime than bringing an officer in because if I remember correctly it is not only just the benefits it is the uniforms and everything else that goes along with the whole job description. But while you are here Chief I just want to let you know last year when everything was happening in this country, Beth Scaer set up for us to do our Back the Blue and we stood outside in front of your Police Station and we were waving our flags and our banners and we were letting everybody know in this City that we were backing the blue and we want to thank you for everything you've done for this City. And I remember even going home last year, I don't live that far from the Police Station and I wanted to say that I felt very safe in the community going by. The National Guard was there and you were there and we all felt safe, I did in this community and I just want to give a heartfelt thank you to our men and women in blue here in Nashua. Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

OK if there are no other questions on Police we will move to Fire – Department 152, Fire Department. Thank you Chief. Are there any questions regarding the Fire Department? Seeing none? Name and address?

Christina McKinney 6 South Gate Drive. I just want to call attention to the fact that what I see in the Budget Book is \$2.5 million planned for overtime.

Chairman Dowd

Mayor, do you want somebody to answer that? Good evening Chief.

Brian Rhodes, Fire Chief

Good evening, Brian Rhodes. I have the pleasure of serving as your Fire Chief. Again, everything the Police Chief said and Ms. Smith said I echo all of that. We would love to have additional staff. We have been trying to get 1 additional staff for the last four years; 1 – it hasn't happened. The overtime happens because of training, injuries, sickness, vacation. This year the overtime budget was extremely high because we had 4 firefighters at the State Vaccination site 7 days a week. We assisted Public Health with their vaccination sites. We assisted with testing at the City sites. We are getting this money back from the government, from the State and the Federal Government. But on a regular basis, this is as the Chief said, we don't know, I can't pull people away from a fire. We had a 3 alarm fire 3 weeks ago at 11:30 at night.

We had one a week and a half ago at 3:00 in the afternoon. We have what we have, we have the insurance service rating, ISO Rating of Class II because of the force we have.

Yes, in a perfect world for us to hire more people and call that the relief factor that would be great if we could do that. But it is just something I think at the end of the day where you look at what we are talking here about pension costs. We are talking vacation, health care all these benefits, I don't think it is cost effective to do that.

Chairman Dowd

Is this a follow up to the same question?

Ms. McKinney It's just a comment that perhaps I am from the small business world and I can guarantee you, each and every one of you I can guarantee you that there is no small business that doesn't look at a budget and make decisions based on what they anticipate. They do not plan year after year to pay higher costs overtime because they didn't hire someone. It just doesn't happen in small business, we'd go under because we don't have an endless resource of citizens picking up the tab. Maybe I am missing something here, I get what the explanations are. But from a small business person's perspective, it's a bunch of hooey.

Chairman Dowd

We are on the Fire Department Division.

Daniel Richardson 70 Berkeley Street, Nashua, New Hampshire. Thank you. I want to draw your attention to Wages & Salaries in particular Wages Full-Time. The 2021 Budget was \$12,500,000.00 and the proposed is \$13,700,000.00. So I was looking at earlier the Page 9 again it shows a table for Fire Department not just this is like the total amount going up by 4%. So I am looking at this Wages only going up from \$12.5 to \$13.7. That looks almost like a 10% or greater increase in wages. Am I correct?

Mr. Griffin

Mr. Chairman I may be able to help with this question and this again explains why things can't be, percentage increases, but Mr. Richardson if you look at line 51900 last year. For comparative purposes I would simply take that number.

Mr. Richardson I can't find it.

Mr. Griffin

Are you on Page 150?

Mr. Richardson I am on Page 150.

Mr. Griffin

OK 150 below the subtotal of overtime as you approach fringe benefits there's a 51900 Salary Adjustments of \$1.146 million in Fiscal '21.

Mr. Richardson I see it.

Mr. Griffin

The reason why the Wages Full Time last year was \$12.5 million is they were waiting for their Collective Bargaining Agreement to be approved by the Board of Aldermen. That number 1.146 that was a contingency for negotiation that I spoke of earlier, that number needs to be added to the \$12.5.

Mr. Richardson So really the budget book is showing on that Wages Full Time line is before the award of the contract. Is that correct?

Mr. Griffin

The \$12.5 is before the award. The \$1.1 is a combination of two fiscal years.

Mr. Richardson So once that has been awarded what would this percentage increase be for this year?

Mr. Griffin

For Fiscal '22?

Mr. Richardson Yeah.

Mr. Griffin

Subject to check it might be 3.5%.

Mr. Richardson So there was a 4% last year.

Mr. Griffin

Close to 4.

Mr. Richardson When I took a look at the contract to be awarded, is like a 4 year contract. Total of 17% over that period of time.

Chairman Dowd

Time is up.

Mr. Richardson That's outrageous.

Fred Teeboom 24 Cheyenne. I have a question, I think I know the answer for the Fire Chief. You don't have to get up. You mentioned overtime, let's say for example you have a half a million in overtime, you are giving people vaccinations and the Federal Government gives all that money back. Meanwhile you got paid overtime with the City's Budget. What happens to the money Mr. Mayor that the Federal Government reimburses the Fire Department?

Mr. Griffin

So Mr. Chairman to the extent – John Griffin CFO – to the extent we are able to get reimbursed, this budget once we are confident that FEMA and other funding sources will reimburse us, we reduce this particular expense. It wouldn't reduce the budget it would reduce the actual expenditures.

Mr. Teeboom Wouldn't you count that as revenue, so wouldn't the foul up the budget. The Fire Department the budget changes from year to year. Sometimes I go back to previous year's budget and I find the report has changed slightly. Wouldn't you take a reimbursement from the Federal Government as a revenue.

Mr. Griffin

When we make the filing for the FEMA reimbursements we have to provide all the backup documentation. What you are suggesting is do you keep that excess cost in the budget and take in revenue so on the tax

basis it is tax neutral. It would seem to me – well we have two problems – one is if the numbers are significant enough the budget for the particular division we are talking about would be overspent.

Mr. Teeboom. I am not trying to do your job Mr. Griffin. I am just suggesting that this year in particular the Federal Government has showered the State, they showered the City with money, COVID reimbursement money, COVID relief money. Millions upon millions the State doesn't even know how to spend the money. What I am suggesting if the Fire Chief puts in overtime, fine put in the overtime, when the Federal Government reimburses you put it in as revenue.

Chairman Dowd

30 seconds.

Mr. Teeboom And in this budget and the next budget but don't change the overtime numbers because it can't be tracked from budget to budget otherwise. Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Alright, we will move on to Emergency Preparedness. That's Departments 156 and 157. Emergency Management, Citywide Communications.

Beth Scaer 111 East Hobart Street. I read or I received an email from an anonymous source that the entire CERT team quit last year. What is that – Emergency Response Team because of abuse from the Public Health Department with the testing, I guess it was for the COVID testing. You know, they were working under insane conditions, it was a really bad situation. So I was wondering what is happening with the CERT Team. Thanks.

Chairman Dowd

CERT Team? Justin? Is that part of Public Health?

Mayor Donchess

Justin can you answer that. Is Bobbie here, I don't know.

Ms. Scaer The Community Emergency Response Team is CERT.

Mayor Donchess

Yeah I realize that but I didn't see Bobbie. Do you want to answer that Bobbie? This is Director Bagley of the Public Health & Community Services.

Bobbie Bagley, Director Public Health & Community Services

Good evening, Bobbie Bagley from the Division of Public Health & Community Services Director. CERT is the Community Emergency Response Team and after the incident during the summer the CERT manager decided they were no longer going to participate in public health events after that event. So they haven't been on board with us since then.

Chairman Dowd

Thank you. Is this a follow up?

Beth Scaer Yeah Beth Scaer, 111 East Hobart. So I was wondering if the CERT Team was working with Emergency Management still? If they are still helping with the City.

Chairman Dowd

No.

Ms. Scaer They are completely not helping at all. OK. Sounds like a great loss for the City. I am sorry to hear that but glad to hear more.

Justin Kates, Emergency Management Director

So the CERT Team would support any of the City Divisions during an emergency; Fire Department, Police Department, Office of Emergency Management. The Administrative Management of that group is under Public Health so we don't manage the day to day operations or the training or anything like that. But what we would do is if Emergency Management or if another agency requested their support, we would reach out to Bobbie, Director Bagley for support in whatever task was necessary and whether they were available or not they would perform an assessment to see if they would be able to provide that service or not. So that's the current status of other Department's use of that CERT Team.

Ms. Scaer Follow up. So that means that since they are not working with Public Health they are not working with anyone? They are not available to us as a City? Is that correct.

Director Kates

Yeah if there's no leadership within CERT then I am assuming that they are not available to other Departments same as they wouldn't be available to public health.

Ms. Scaer OK. Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Alright we will move on to the next Division, Other Public Safety, Department 159 – Hydrant Fees Fire Protection and 162 Street Lighting. Are there any questions on that? Seeing none we will move on to Public Health Community Services Division. Community Services is on 171, Community Health 172, Environmental Health 173, Welfare Administration 174 and Welfare Assistance 175.

Beth Scaer 111 East Hobart Street. I am concerned because the Public Health Department has on their website that they welcome all gender identities. And I saw it on the Public Health Van too. I know the Public Health Director has been very concerned about, according to her newsletters, that the Nashua residents are following the science, the science about COVID, the science about vaccines, the science about other public health issues. But when you are saying that you welcome all gender identities that is...

Chairman Dowd

Excuse me, is this a specific budget question?

Ms. Scaer Well I mean I am just questioning the running of the whole Department. I think the Department is being mismanaged when I see these kinds of issues.

Chairman Dowd

So you have a question?

Ms. Scaer Yeah I want to know, you know, I just question whether this Department is being properly managed when we have the Director they welcome all – we are up to 112 gender identities, it's just mumbo jumbo and our whole public health is branded with these messages about the gender identities when we have actual public health problems that need to be addressed like COVID and you know lead poisoning and a gazillion other serious health problems. But we are going rogue, our public health department is

going rogue and reaching out to gender identities like non-binary and I don't even want to begin to list them all, it's ridiculous. And I am just very disappointed to see how this Department is being run. And especially now, we've lost our CERT Team. This is a travesty. Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

OK we will move on to the Public Works Division. That's Department 160 Public Works, Administration, Engineering; 161 is Street Department; and 177 Parks & Rec.

Paula Johnson Good evening, Paula Johnson again still here at Nashua at the High School. I've got a couple of questions here on Public Works. This Budget isn't the easiest one to follow. Because it used to be that you had the Director, the Superintendent of Streets and everything. Now you've got to keep flipping through pages here and trying to figure everything out. Director of Public Works, she spends sometimes – it's all mumbo jumbo here. 20% of the time she spends Waste Water, trying to find all this. Executive Assistant 15% of the time in Waste Water. I dropped all my papers here. This is only half we will wait until Wednesday come for my Board, I've got a folder full of stuff. Let me put this down before I drop it. Sometimes I wonder why I do so much research on stuff. Let's see I am trying to figure it all out too this whole budget. Superintendent of Streets I see is \$106,343.00 that person just stays in the Street Department it looks like. Operations Supervisor that one I am trying to look across, trying to figure out if that person stays all the time in that Department. So maybe I can ask the questions to the Directors and then if I give up my 3 minutes I'll just back in line and I'll go behind Ms. Ortolano to ask some more questions because I am kind of confused here because it looks like the Director of Public Works 70% of the time I guess she's the Director of Public Works; 10% she's someplace else for \$10,888.00. 70% she's \$104,216.00 and then there's 20% for \$29,776.00 in Solid Waste Streets for \$148,880.00. And then the Director of the Street Department, I want to know if that person is in charge of the plowing because I want to complain about, this year the plowing was pretty bad we didn't get out there when we should have. And I just want to know how many of these Directors actually were working from their office during the pandemic. Because people have offices like you do Mayor that you are not directly with people.

Chairman Dowd

30 seconds.

Ms. Johnson So I would like to know even in the Street Department how many people were actually at their desks working the whole time that their employees were out there working also doing their jobs? I guess this really applies to the whole City. So if the Mayor is not in his office, why would his employees be in the office.

Lisa Fauteux, Director of Public Works

Mrs. Johnson the majority of my Division worked through the entire pandemic with the exception, there were a few people that worked remotely for a very short period of time and also in Engineering & Administration, some of those folks worked remotely because they could. But the vast majority, including myself and the Assistant Director were here throughout the pandemic.

Ms. Johnson I remember I had to call Engineering and I had to call to get some information and nobody got back to me because Engineering was not in the office. And I can't remember what it was because last year was – I don't want to remember it very much. So you were in the office every day?

Director Fauteux

Yes I was.

Ms. Johnson And everybody else was in the office every day, except for Engineering.

Director Fauteux

Well there may have been a few exceptions where we may have been working remotely but by and large, yes we were there.

Ms. Johnson Everybody was there. And why was last year winter, the streets weren't plowed as well.

Chairman Dowd

Your time is up and you have asked more than one question.

Director Fauteux

I am surprised to hear that Mrs. Johnson, I've heard very few complaints about plowing, in fact, I've heard many compliments about the work that the Street Department did.

Ms. Johnson No this past year was pretty bad, pretty bad thank you. She's answering a question for me, then it would be rude for me to leave. Thank you.

Laurie Ortolano 41 Berkeley Street. I am going to be brief here but in looking at the staffing in Public Works my concern is you really don't have the Engineering staff that you should have. I think you are missing on people who are more qualified to address the road issues and design issues and new projects. I look at the positions and it just looks like we are missing some positions. And I've watched, you know, projects get done where to me the analysis and the engineering work on the roads isn't there to support the project that's being done and I look over at the Henry Hangar Development. I think we had and have more road issues over there that got swept away and not addressed because we didn't either listen to our engineer or we didn't have the engineering support we needed. And I think it is a real weakness in this Public Works Budget and I think it ends up costing us a good bit. I would encourage you to strengthen your engineering personnel and improve those qualifications and the analysis that you are getting when you take on these projects. Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Alright, seeing no one else we will go on to Public Services Division; Pinewood Cemetery, Woodlawn Cemetery, Edgewood and Suburban Cemeteries. Is there anyone that has a question? Thank you Director Fauteux. Seeing none, we will go on to Public Library, that's Department 179. Any questions on the Public Library?

Beth Scaer 111 East Hobart Street. I just wanted to speak on management of the Library as well. My compliments to the Public Library Trustees and the Public Library Director, you know, they've been listening to me and responding, well not just me but our concerns about the Library and in making book purchases that I request. But I am still very concerned, I went in there to look for books about transgender children, believe it or not and teens. There was a huge stack and I just wanted, you know, warn the City residents that the Library...

Chairman Dowd

Excuse me. You're not asking a budget question. You are commenting on something outside of the City Budget. If you have discussions about what is in the Public Library you need to talk the librarian.

Ms. Scaer I just wanted to say, I am very appreciative of the management of the library. But my concerns are the book purchases that there's much harm being done to children if they are reading these books and teens. And I just wanted to make the City residents aware of the dangers of what the library is promoting to the kids of our City and the teens. Thanks.

Chairman Dowd

We will move on to Community Development Division, Department 153 Building Inspection; 155 Code Enforcement; 170 Waterways Hydraulic Operations; 181 Community Development; 182 Planning & Zoning; 184 Urban Programs and 186 Transportation. Are there any questions? Seeing none we will go on to Education – Department 191 Schools.

Daniel Richardson Berkeley Street, Nashua, New Hampshire. On Page 263 one line item here, longevity. So for Fiscal Year '21 it was \$385,000.00, so far of that \$385,000.00 of budget, you spent \$439,000.00 through March. So it has got to be a lot higher than that. So you spent more money than you had and now you are proposing \$570,000.00 an even higher number. So it looks like it went up say about 40% in longevity. So my question is what is that you did not plan for on that line item?

Mayor Donchess

The School Department would have to answer that question.

Chairman Dowd

They negotiate their own contracts, they handle their own funds so that's a question for the Board of Education. We only give them a bottom line number.

Mr. Richardson That's great. I'd like to hear from the Board of Education.

Chairman Dowd

They are not here this evening.

Mr. Richardson Isn't the Superintendent here to defend the budget?

Chairman Dowd

I don't see him. And the Superintendent is an acting Superintendent at the moment.

Mr. Richardson It's a Budget Hearing and you don't have the Superintendent here. It's a major failing.

Chairman Dowd

Alright we will move on to the next Division, Debt Service Contingency and Interfund Transfers, Department 193 Debt Service; 194 Contingency and 198 Interfund Transfers.

Unidentified Speaker So we are past education? I just got out of my seat. Can I make my comment here?

Chairman Dowd

Go ahead.

Christina McKinney 6 Southgate Drive. I am sure this was intended to be a positive but I just thought it was utterly sad. This is Page 280 I believe. 260 a picture our budget, our education budget went through pre-school looking at screens, on Page 240 little kids wearing masks. We have Page 91 little pre-school girl looking at screens. What I do know about education I started my career as a teacher many decades ago and I sure as heck know based on any parent I have spoken to, that particularly the little kids this has been a disaster for them. You can put a bow on it any way you want but teachers should have, in my opinion, been in school. And had we all behaved in the same way that many City employees did, including teachers, had our grocery store workers decided to not show up.

Chairman Dowd

Excuse me, is there a budget...

Ms. McKinney Had our pharmacy workers decided not to show up.

Chairman Dowd

Excuse me, is there a budget related question because you are talking of things that are controlled by the School Department and the Board of Education.

Ms. McKinney I am talking about the 53% of my taxes go to schools. So this is a budget issue. If I am paying for something that I didn't get the service or effective service, 53% of my taxes went towards that service. If I walked into Home Depot and bought a refrigerator and what was sent to me was a box with no doors I wouldn't pay full price. So what I am suggesting is a School Budget should in my opinion...

Chairman Dowd

30 seconds.

Ms. McKinney we should have a rebate because the vast majority of children did not, could not have gotten the education that they should have, could have over the last 18 months. So yes it is a budget issue and it is a budget issue in my household because 53% according to John Griffin on March 25th in our conversation, 53% of my taxes go to education.

Chairman Dowd

Your time has expired. OK. Next item is Capital Improvements, 1001 Capital Equipment. Seeing no one. The next Division is Enterprise Funds Revenue & Appropriations; 6000 Solid Waste Fund estimated revenues and 6000 Solid Waste Fund Appropriations.

Fred Teeboom 24 Cheyenne. This is another one I broke out I did the six year projection of the Solid Waste and Waste Water. I understand you did not do the projection Mayor because these are fee based as opposed to tax based. But I can claim the fee, the tax and the fee all money we pay to the City. So this may be a question to Public Works Director I am not sure. Solid Waste, the average annual for 6 years of 7.6% it is now 3.9% increase; that's Solid Waste. But Waste Water which had an average annual increase over 6 years of 6.9% is now 38.7% - Waste Water 38.7%. I didn't go through the details of the budget this time, I didn't look at any details this time. But can somebody explain to me why Waste Water went up 38.7%?

Mayor Donchess

Well we have the Superintendent here, but the bottom line is Waste Water is heavily, heavily regulated by various environmental agencies including the EPA and DES; EPA at the Federal Level, DES at the State Level and these expenditures are required. We have a consent decree with the Feds. There's increasing requirements, there's the issues of the sewers and the separation or the non-separation. All these things were we to refuse to undertake some of these things, which cost more money, we would be sued by these environmental agencies. So the smartest thing is to comply with the regulations even though it cost more money.

Mr. Teeboom I understand that. That's a general question. I have a specific question. Why did it go up 38.7%? What made it go up 38.7%? Can the Director, is the Director still here.

Chairman Dowd

30 seconds.

Mayor Donchess

Mr. Boucher is here. Now he hasn't been here the entire 6 years so Ms. Fauteux will come up as well.

Mr. Teeboom Well I hope he knows how to spell CSO.

Mayor Donchess

He does, he knows how to spell it, he wishes he didn't but he does.

Mr. Teeboom So the question is when the 6 year average for Fiscal '16 to Fiscal '22 was a 6.9% over six years. Why is it suddenly (inaudible) to go a long time. She's been gone for decades, why is now 38.7%.

Dave Boucher, Waste Water Superintendent

We have had studies done throughout the facility. Like the Mayor said, we are heavily regulated by the EPA and the State. We do have a consent decree. We have a permit to discharge into the river. We have permits for air, permits for sludge, all these things, more regulations are coming down to us. PFAS or polyfluoroalkyl substances, it's a big concern. For the Waste Water Facility we have a management company that takes care of our sludge, it's a byproduct of the waste water. So the concern is right now we have beneficial reuse of our sludge, it goes to farmlands; that might not be an option in the near future. So we are looking at different ways of treating our sludge. Some other things we have to look at in our permit that is currently in a draft form for phosphorous for instance. If we have to meet the limits that the EPA is imposing on us it is going to be an additional build on to the Waste Water Facility to meet those regulations. Plus we have, the facility dates back to the '50's there are still parts of the facility are aged. All the waste water that comes to the facility is corrosive.

Mr. Teeboom I am still looking for a specific answer. Maybe the Director can answer.

Mr. Boucher

Right. So part of our study some of these things come out, unfortunately they come out all at once. So we are trying to prepare for all these regulations that are coming down and still maintain our process to meet our current permit.

Mr. Teeboom It's up by almost \$8 million dollars this year. The average in previous years I mean like \$1.4 million. So what made it go up.

Director Fauteux

We did a very extensive presentation to the Board of Aldermen that explained in great detail all of the projects that we are working on including our COGEN Project that is almost completed. We have embarked on our pump station upgrade, we've already done half of the pump stations, we are now doing the other half of the pump stations. We had primary tank upgrades. There's a number of projects that we have done and will be doing in the near future to contribute to the increase. And the vast majority of that is permit. There are things that are required by the EPA.

Mr. Teeboom But typically you bond these big projects.

Director Fauteux

Yes.

Mr. Teeboom And bond things are – the purpose of that is to spread the costs over 20 years or 30 years. So I still don't understand. Is there a single line item that made that made this thing go up \$7.8 million dollars.

Director Fauteux

There's not a single item. There's many capital projects and they are listed in the debt service schedule in the budget and there's also in the capital improvements it will show you all of the projects that are being funded by the Operating Budget and being funded by bonding. It is in the budget and it does show everything.

Chairman Dowd

All set Mr. Teeboom?

Mr. Teeboom I guess I have to read the budget but it seems like an awful lot of money in one year.

Mr. Griffin

Mr. Chairman, maybe I can address this particular issue as well. Mr. Teeboom on Page 294 is the Infrastructure improvements that are going to be funded by bonding which are listed on Page 296. 294 as Director Fauteux just indicated. So that's the Infrastructure improvements funded by bonds. And she indicated the projects are clearly articulated as shown on Page 296. So that's on the expenditure side. And if we take a look at the revenue side on Page 291 you will see general obligation bond proceeds of a like amount. So in this particular case, the cost of the operation went up but so didn't the revenue and it's a self-contained enterprise fund.

Mr. Teeboom Well I see on Page 296 you've got \$11 million dollars of capital improvements in '22 and it shows 0 in '21.

Mr. Griffin

So Mr. Chairman if I may? A lot of the amounts in '21 were funded by cash and as Director Fauteux indicated there was a comprehensive presentation made in the January / February timeframe to the Board of Aldermen.

Mr. Teeboom I'll let the Aldermen figure this one out. Thank you.

Mr. Griffin

Thank you.

Daniel Richardson 70 Berkeley Street, Nashua, New Hampshire. I have a commentary on the Waste Water situation. With all polyanna view the Board of Aldermen purchased Burke Street property \$4.5 million dollars several years ago and everything was going to be hunky dory, expansion of the Waste Water Treatment Plant and then they realized that they didn't really do the homework. It was going to cost a lot of money to fix that place up. So they put it on the market and we had some Purchase Sale Agreement. That fell through. So we've got an asset sitting there. What are we doing with that? How is that going to be used with the Waste Water Treatment? How is that asset going to be contributing to the benefit of Waste Water financially?

Mayor Donchess

First of all this was purchased under a previous administration.

Mr. Richardson I am not blaming you. You were an Alderman though.

Mayor Donchess

I was an Alderman. There were some projections given which turned out not to be true or accurate, let's put it that way. So what has happened is several acres, 2 or 3 acres were subdivided off of the Burke Street property and added to the treatment plant property area so that if this phosphorus treatment is required, there would be room to accomplish that. And there is a closing, the purchase price was not \$4.5 it was \$4.1 or \$4.2 something like that or even \$4 million; we would have to get the exact number. But there's a closing scheduled which was supposed to take place today and we think will occur, there was a death of somebody instrumental in all this, we expect it will occur within the next week or so which will realize \$3.7 million. So in the end getting that extra land cost like \$300,00.00.

Mr. Richardson So you are talking about this net sale being a smaller footprint, smaller number of acreage.

Mayor Donchess

Yeah it is a little smaller than we bought.

Mr. Richardson So the amount that is going to be used for Waste Water Treatment purposes is how big?

Mayor Donchess

What is 2.5 acres.

Director Fauteux

2.5 acres.

Mr. Richardson And that is sufficient for our purposes?

Mayor Donchess

Yes.

Mr. Richardson I have another question but I'll let someone else talk if anybody else wants to talk? My turn again. On Solid Waste, so I am looking at Page 284. Down at the bottom Solid Waste Appropriations \$10 million dollars in change, less Revenues minus \$5 million dollars and change. Amount subsidized by the General Fund, \$5 million dollars. This has been going on for a number of years. I always ask the question why don't we increase the tipping fees? Why are we having this coming out of the General Fund? I don't believe that people coming, contractors coming and dumping in our landfill are paying their fair share. And I've heard the excuse that say, well it's market rate. I don't believe it. So maybe you could have an explanation of that.

Director Fauteux

Sure.

Mayor Donchess

I'd love to get more money out of that. Maybe we could justify more but I have to listen to the experts.

Director Fauteux

Our tipping fee is above market rate, OK? Market rate at landfills is somewhere between \$65.00 and \$70.00 a ton. We are at \$80.00. We are getting very little to begin with of the waste. A lot of it is being taken to the hauler's own transfer stations. So if we increase the rate above \$80.00 we wouldn't get any.

The reason that we need to subsidize is because there are really three profit centers. There's the Recycling Center, there's Collections and then there's the landfill, ok? All of those are within Solid Waste. If we were trying to run the Recycling Center as a true Recycling Center, in other words we didn't charge \$5.00 for a permit and took everything else in for free, if we were charging for everything and we were operating the landfill then the taxpayers probably would not have to subsidize. OK? But because collections is involved in that it comes at a cost and that's about \$5 million dollars and that's what it averages.

Mayor Donchess

She's saying that it costs money to pick up the garbage and that's part of the cost of the subsidy. You know, they pick up – the garbage trucks, the garbage crews.

Director Fauteux

Soft yard waste pickup.

Mayor Donchess

Soft yard waste all that stuff is included in that cost. So there is a service, it is more than just the cost of the landfill proper- it's the pickup operation.

Mr. Richardson Back a number of years ago when we had ...

Mayor Donchess

Also recycling. So it is recycling, regular garbage, soft yard waste...

Director Fauteux

And bulky items.

Mr. Richardson So when we first opened up this landfill it was projected to have over 40 years of life to it. That's a cost, that's (inaudible). So how much is left.

Chairman Dowd

You have exceeded your time but you can ask that last question.

Mr. Richardson Thank you.

Director Fauteux

I estimate we have roughly between 40 and 50 years left if we get, right now we are in the process of permitting Phase 4 which is the final phase of the landfill. If we are successful in getting that permitted, which I believe we will be, then we will have another 40 to 50 years.

Mr. Richardson Which phase is that?

Director Fauteux

Phase 4. We are currently operating right now in Phase 3 and we are in the process of permitting Phase 4.

Mr. Richardson That's the last phase isn't it?

Director Fauteux

Yes it is.

Mr. Richardson So the clock is ticking and that's a cost.

Paula Johnson 15 Westborn Drive. Question on the landfill. How come and I've thought about questioning this I think for years. How much does it cost to get a sticker to go into a landfill?

Director Fauteux

For residents?

Ms. Johnson \$5.00. I don't like to raise anything but there's 12 months in a year why wouldn't you just charge everybody \$12.00 to help cover the costs another way. I don't like to raise anything and how many people sneak into the landfill that don't belong that take a sticker from somebody else?

Director Fauteux

While that may happen I think we are doing a pretty good job of preventing that from happening. We do have two scale operators now and they have been very diligent in watching.

Ms. Johnson And all your trucks that are the green deal trucks and when their lifetime is gone, what do we do with those trucks?

Director Fauteux

We either take them as back line trucks or we trade them.

Ms. Johnson You trade them? And what are we getting for trade on them?

Director Fauteux

It all depends Mrs. Johnson on what type of truck it is and how long we have had it, its condition, that varies.

Ms. Johnson What about the trash trucks? How many have we turned over lately, how many have we sold at auction?

Director Fauteux

I don't think we've sold any at auction recently but we can bring the Superintendent up to speak to that.

Jeff LaFleur, Superintendent of Solid Waste

Currently everything that we have purchased in the past 3 to 4 years we have them on backline trucks right now. We are saving them so we can use them when other trucks go down.

Ms. Johnson OK and how about older trucks? Dump trucks and all those trucks, what is happening with them? Have we kept them all, are they done with, that they rotted away the under carriages?

Mr. LaFleur

We currently saved a bunch of them in the back. We were taking parts off of them and anything that was unusable or rusted out we sold as scrap metal.

Ms. Johnson OK and what is the return on the trash trucks because they are more of a green truck am I correct, like the gas that we are using?

Mr. LaFleur

All of our trucks right now are green. We had two that we sent out to scrap metal because there was no interest in buying them.

Ms. Johnson So on the green trucks to do a trade-in can we do it or are we better off with a diesel truck on a trade in?

Mr. LaFleur

It depends on the market. A lot of companies are now switching over to CNG right now. So there's a market out there, but right now we haven't had any need to trade any in as of right now because we are keeping them all on backline.

Ms. Johnson And so when is the next time that we have to buy trucks?

Mr. LaFleur

I currently think I have 1 or 2 on this year but those will become backline trucks for repairs and our busy times of the year.

Ms. Johnson Thank you.

Fred Teeboom 24 Cheyenne. I think I figured out the \$8 million, I'd like you to just confirm on this Waste Water, you can probably answer it. I see on Page 294, let's go to Page 296. I see on the Fiscal '21 \$3.3 million. And that is for capital improvements. I see for Fiscal '22 \$11 million, I'm rounding it off capital improvements. When I go to page 294 I see that \$3 million dollars under 2021 the left hand column and I see the \$11 million dollars on the 2022. What I don't understand now is it says debt proposed. What exactly does that mean?

Director Fauteux

I didn't, I am sorry, I didn't understand, towards the end what did you say? What does what mean?

Mr. Teeboom So you've got the \$3 million on Page 296 for 2021 and there's \$11 million dollars for 2022 for capital improvements. It is brought over to Page 294, we see the \$3 million dollars on the left hand column for 2021 but on the 2022 instead of saying that's an expense it says "Debt Proposed". What does that mean "Debt Proposed".

Mr. Griffin

I can answer that Mr. Chairman. John Griffin, CFO. This is the array of projects that instead of paying cash for any of them, we are going to bond them. So it's just a choice of words that we will be bonding this?

Mr. Teeboom You are going to spend \$11 million dollars on bonds?

Mr. Griffin

\$11 million is the proposed bond amount over time it will be depending on the years.

Mr. Teeboom Wait a minute, that's not the one-time payment that is the total debt.

Mayor Donchess

It's not the payment, it's the amount that will be borrowed to do those projects.

Mr. Teeboom So you are going to bond \$11 million.

Mr. Griffin

Correct.

Mr. Teeboom Then why is it shown as an expense of \$11 million? Bond only should show for the payment for the year you spend that bond. Why it showing as an \$11 million dollar expense?

Mr. Griffin

We decided as the presentation to couple the \$11 million of infrastructure improvements to be bonded with the – as I mentioned earlier in the revenue – bond proceeds Page 291 so they offset. We are not going to have any capital projects paid by cash.

Chairman Dowd

Your time is ended.

Mr. Teeboom I am totally lost on this. I don't understand how you can take debt payment which is \$11 million dollar total debt and put it in as a one year expense.

Mayor Donchess

But he's saying there's an offset. He's saying that elsewhere there's a revenue item of that same amount showing money coming in so that it balances out.

Mr. Teeboom The problem with this kind of approach Mayor and this is a real defect, this can't possibly pass (inaudible).

Mayor Donchess

This can't pass what?

Mr. Teeboom That's why you have made a million dollar difference, because you are bonding \$8 million dollars more, you are bonding \$8 million dollars more this year than last year of capital improvements. But at \$8 million dollars more it is going to be spent over let's say 20 years period of payback. You are showing it as a one-time expense.

Mayor Donchess

There's an offsetting revenue.

Mr. Griffin

Yeah as the Mayor indicates you have a choice. You can either leave the two lines blank, in other words have 0's where the \$11 million is....

Mr. Teeboom What you typically do is you have and look at Solid Waste, typically have a table of all the bonded expenses – the years you paid them, what the payments are in any particular year. And for 2022 you show the total payments for a bond. You don't say the face value for the bond, you show the payment

structure, the schedule. I think this cannot pass an audit; I can let the Aldermen figure it out but they can't figure it out later. I think you need to take a look at that.

Chairman Dowd

Alright. We are going to move on to Special Revenue Funds, Revenues and Appropriations, City Special Revenue Funds and School Special Revenue Funds. Are there any questions on Special Revenues. Seeing none, we will go on to Supplemental Information which includes the Nashua Airport Authority, the Capital Equipment Reserve Plan Replacements, Expendable Trust and Reserve Funds funded by Appropriations and Expendable Trust funds funded by contributions. Are there any questions.

Mr. Teeboom Just a comment. It's a very happy comment. Under the Special Contributions, there's an item 7579. I am surprised it is still there. The Memorial donated about \$4,000.00 or \$5,000.00 and (inaudible) because those papers are put in. It shows a balance of \$671.00 remaining, that's amazing. It's a good thing to have I just wondered if that a true number. The other thing I would like to recommend is somewhere you look into taking the \$32,000.00 that's for (inaudible) Common, that's been sitting there for years, the Rotary (inaudible) money has been sitting there for years and years and years. Why don't you take that money and combine my Memorial money and build a bridge from one side of the rotary to the other side of the rotary and I can cross (inaudible). I asked Mayor Lozeau and she almost did but I am asking you again Mayor Donchess take a look at that. That money just sits here year after year and is doing absolutely nothing.

Christina McKinney 6 South Gate Drive. Just a final Budget comment and it is really more to do with who is here than actual numbers. I would hope that for any budget that your office would work harder to reach out to regular citizens who are paying the taxes to support the budget. Most of the people who showed up are all City employees. Very few people here are not and I think it's a reflection of either disinterest in our City or just feeling beaten down that the taxes are just going to keep going up and up. Either way it is not good that we have this few people who aren't City employees listening, interested, and hopeful that you are interested in what we have to say.

Chairman Dowd

OK that wraps up the Divisions. Alderman O'Brien do you have a motion?

MOTION BY ALDERMAN O'BRIEN TO TABLE R-21-142

MOTION CARRIED

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION BY ALDERMAN O'BRIEN TO ADJOURN

MOTION CARRIED

The meeting was declared closed at 10:29 p.m.

Alderman Michael B. O'Brien, Sr.
Clerk