

BUDGET REVIEW COMMITTEE

JUNE 21, 2023

A meeting of the Budget Review Committee was held Wednesday, June 21, 2023, at 7:05 p.m. in the Aldermanic Chamber.

Alderman Richard A. Dowd, Chairman, Chairman, presided.

Members of Committee present: Alderman Richard A. Dowd, Chairman  
Alderman-at-Large Michael B. O'Brien  
Alderman June M. Caron  
Alderman Ernest Jette  
Alderman-at-Large Shoshanna Kelly  
Alderman John Sullivan  
Alderman-at-Large Lori Wilshire

Members not in Attendance:

Also in Attendance: Alderman-at-Large Melbourne Moran, Jr.  
Alderman Thomas Lopez  
Mayor Jim Donchess  
John Griffin, CFO/Tax Collector/Treasurer  
Cheryl Lindner, Treasury Management Officer  
Steve Bolton, Corporation Counsel

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ROLL CALL

PUBLIC COMMENT - None

COMMUNICATIONS - None

WRAP UP SESSION

UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS – RESOLUTIONS - None

NEW BUSINESS – ORDINANCES - None

TABLED IN COMMITTEE

**R-23-118**

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

**INCREASING THE MAXIMUM ALLOWABLE AMOUNT IN THE SNOW REMOVAL EXPENDABLE TRUST FUND  
AND EXPANDING ITS USE**

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN O'BRIEN TO REMOVE FROM THE TABLE R-23-125  
MOTION CARRIED**

**R-23-125**

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

**RELATIVE TO THE ADOPTION OF THE FISCAL YEAR 2024 PROPOSED BUDGET FOR THE CITY OF  
NASHUA GENERAL, ENTERPRISE, SPECIAL REVENUE AND GRANT FUNDS**

Chairman Dowd

This is the wrap up session. We've heard all the individual departments go through their different departments. We've had a public hearing on the budget last night and heard comments from the public. This evening the Budget Committee gets to take actions to either add to or subtract from the Mayor's budget. Each motion will be made separately. I handed out sheets so we can make it easier for everyone, including Mr. Griffin and the Clerk. The motion that's proposed, made by which Alderman, discussion notes, and then a vote, and we record the for and against the whether it passed or failed, and its impact on the FY24 budget.

Are there any questions relative to that? Nope. Okay.

Mayor did you want to say anything before we get started or?

Mayor Donchess

Well I'm just here, Mr. Chair, you heard the discussion of the budget we had last night obviously and the presentation at the beginning if you can remember back to that. Budget up 4.4%. I know you've gone through every department and may have various ideas. So I'm really here just to answer any questions that any members of the Committee have or give you if you want my perspective on anything to give you that.

Chairman Dowd

A few of the Aldermen on the Budget Committee called me today. They would like to know what the impact of the added money for schools is, where it goes, how it's addressed in the budget, and how it may help us.

Mayor Donchess

Well I think I can answer it although I would ask CFO Griffin to make any additions. We don't know yet how much money it is so it's hard to put anything in the budget. It depends on how much it is as to the impact. When we first began to look at the tax rate, we were thinking that or the State was projecting a reduction of \$2.7 million I think in school aid. Now that's not going to happen. There will be some level of increase which is very good news. The tax rate that we were projecting with that reduction and with a loss of \$2.5 million of pension costs was not a great one. So we now are still going to lose the \$2.5 million in pension costs - meaning we got \$2.5 million last year which we're not getting this year – or its \$2.2 million which basically pushes taxes up a percent before we get to the budget. We can also count on getting more school aid than we did last year. We're just not sure how much so to the extent that we get more than last year, each \$2.5 million helps us to the tune of about 1% on the tax rate.

Chairman Dowd

So in previous years when we got money and it solves the case, we get money from the State after the budget is passed. That comes in as revenue, correct?

Mayor Donchess

Correct. So that gets factored in. So the DRA ultimately calculates having we given CFO Griffin and his knowledge, we know, we think we can approximate to very close degree what the DRA will establish as the tax rate but they ultimately do it. Before they do it, they include in the assumptions the revenue that they know is coming from the State. So before the tax rate is set when they set the tax rate, they will plug the school revenue into the budget - well into the tax rate calculation so it will definitely be reflected in the tax rate. If it's different than an assumption we make, then that will mean that the tax rate is lower. If it's different or higher than the assumption we have made, then that will reduce the tax rate from what would be projected based on the assumption the city have been making.

Chairman Dowd

And just for clarification, we come up with what we feel is an estimate of what the tax rate is going to be but the tax rate is actually set by the State.

Mayor Donchess

Correct.

Chairman Dowd

Okay. Any questions for the Mayor?

Alderman Jette

Thank you. So Mr. Mayor during the previous sessions when we had the different Division Directors come in and present their budgets to us, some of us Committee members invited them to tell us whether in the budget book it showed what they requested, and what you proposed, and in most cases what the book said that they requested was the same as what the book said you proposed. It came out that - some of them said well it really wasn't what it shows in the book is what the Mayor's proposing. We kind of encouraged them to tell us what more they would want. So some of them did. I wanted to give you a chance to respond to some of their requests. Like the Fire Department - the Fire Chief said that one of the things that he wanted that wasn't in the budget was \$50,000 to do a building assessment. He explained to us that this had gone before the Capital Improvement Committee and was approved by that Committee and that it's kind of a necessary step for the repair of existing Fire Department buildings and perhaps the building of a new fire station. So he kind of made a compelling argument for the need for that \$50,000 for that study. He didn't put it in the budget and I'm wondering how you feel about that.

Mayor Donchess

I think the Amherst Street fire station, you know, needs to get fixed because the floor is cracked and apparently it's not an imminent threat but not a wonderful situation. So especially given we might get some more school aid, I was trying to keep the tax rate with the projected rate we were looking at was not great. So I was trying to get that money anywhere we could. This was not really a cut in the sense that there's a list of possible capital improvements you could put in the budget and I didn't put that in. There's a lot of other stuff I didn't put in. You can look at the capital improvement list.

If you said you thought that was a good idea, I mean I can't really argue with that. I mean we should know what the condition of the stations is. I assume one of the things they're going to look at is, although I think the Fire Department actually has a fairly solid estimate, but one of the things they're going to, I assume, look at is Amherst Street. There's probably more work than just the floor but that is the most imminent issue at that station I assume.

Alderman Jette

Okay. One of the other things he mentioned was an Assistant Fire Chief. I think you already provided for that in your budget but you're starting in April.

Mayor Donchess

Now I thought we had discussed this and agreed on it. He wanted to start at – the Chief says the position is very necessary. My initial inclination was well we can't afford to add people to the budget. But the Chief makes the argument that the position was very necessary and proposed at six months - halfway through the year that the Assistant Chief would be hired and then would be carried forward into the next budget.

In order to save a little bit, I thought we had talked about doing it three quarters of the way into the year to save \$30,000 or whatever it is and that's what I did. So I guess I would say look I mean the important thing I think from the three months will go pretty fast. The important thing is to get it - if you're looking for a new job, new position, to get it in the budget so it's established before the next fiscal year.

Now while you're asking me that, there's one thing I should have mentioned. The budget suggests that Great American Downtown would get \$25,000. Now that was actually a mistake in the sense that I wanted it to say 50,000 which is an even, you know, the same amount as last Fiscal Year but somehow the budget team is using this new software and somehow the amount that was originally proposed for Fiscal '23 was carried into the budget, which meant that number being 25,000 rather than the 50,000 I had intended. Last year what happened is I had proposed 25, the Budget Committee and the Board voted 50. So my intention was to just carry forward your number from last year this year but for whatever reason, only 25 appears in the budget.

Chairman Dowd

Follow up question?

Alderman Jette

So on last - I'm sorry, it's not the last but another item that the Chief mentioned was I think it's a Captain for the medical team. I'm forgetting the title.

Mayor Donchess

Yes, I know the position you're talking about. So my understanding was that the department felt okay they'd like that but it's not absolutely necessary this year. So that's why I cut it out. I mean obviously they want it because they put it in a budget. So the question is really how essential is it during Fiscal '24? My understanding just from talking about it was that, you know, it would be not the end of the world to cut it out but I don't want to speak for the Department because maybe I'm miss characterizing.

Chairman Dowd

Follow up?

Alderman Jette

And another. The Chief also talked about an IT person. I think Mansfield for radio communications. Mr. Mansfield talked about I think the same person.

Mayor Donchess

Yes.

Alderman Jette

I think it's a part-time position at \$32,000. How do you feel about that?

Mayor Donchess

The position would take care of the fiber optic cable and try to include proof the network that we have that allows various departments to communicate with each other. The request was for \$65,000 but that is a part-time job maybe 25 hours a week. So in talking with our IT people, it seemed that probably that's more than the market we think. You could get a person with this type of expertise for less money. Since it's a part-time job, we didn't really think the full time equivalent of, you know, \$100,000 plus really was necessary and therefore reduced it to a figure that we thought we could get someone qualified, a wage, salary that we thought someone that's qualified could be hired for.

Alderman Jette

So are you saying that you provide it for that position in your budget?

Mayor Donchess

Yeah it's there but it's a reduced number. So the Mr. Mansfield budget is the City Wide Communications. Mr. Griffin can correct me but I think it's in the City Wide Communications budget. It's not technically in the Fire budget but the Fire Department is interested in that function but it's in the City Wide Communications.

Alderman Jette

Okay. Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

All set?

Alderman Jette

Thank you yes.

Chairman Dowd

Question for the Mayor? Okay.

Alderman Sullivan

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Mayor I wanted to go back to the school aid, the State aid because I have the general fund detail revenue report through May open in front of me. I see that this year we got just under \$44 million in State adequacy aid for the city.

Mayor Donchess

Yes.

Alderman Sullivan

And going back to your earlier comment, we would get that plus, correct?

Mayor Donchess

Yes.

Alderman Donchess

Okay because in our - I just lost the page - but I want to say you had budgeted for about \$37 million. You forecast and about \$37 million in revenue.

Mayor Donchess

Well there was also an offset of an increase in a different category of school aid. So the net loss - we didn't just pull these figures out of the air. This is what we were being told by the finance people at the School Department and what they were being told by the State of New Hampshire we would get. So Mr. Griffin can give you where the net comes from but there was that reduction but another addition. So the net loss that we were being told we might incur or suffer was 2.7 – 2.5 somewhere in there. It's pretty clear we're going to get more money than what we were told at the time we prepare the budget. So instead of the net loss of 2.7 or 2.5, we will get more in total than we got last year. Maybe Mr. Griffin can tell us about the net - how that net situation the gain and the loss worked.

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Certainly. A little bit complicated because last year there was a movement to reduce what's called "SWEPT" which is the State portion of the overall education aid. Mr. Donovan, as the Mayor indicated, this year he was projecting total \$57 million. So \$57 million minus a \$21 million SWEPT is the \$36 million that he is given us to put in the budget.

Now the combination of the SWEPT this year and the State adequacy aid in this budget of \$57 million is less as the Mayor indicated that we got last year. Last year, they reduced the SWEPT it was down from \$20 million down to 14 and then they added not only additional State adequacy aid but a couple of categories like really, really needed aid. I'm trying to remember what the number was.

Mayor Donchess

It's a weighted amount based upon the percentage of free and reduced lunch.

Chairman Dowd

So the bottom line is the extra money that we're getting from the State just passed. I believe the Governor signed it yesterday?

Mayor Donchess

I think he signed it yesterday.

Chairman Dowd

So that money was just recognized in the State's budget. It takes a while for it to get to Nashua. So we don't know exactly what the number is yet.

Alderman Sullivan

So the bottom line do you feel that we will get at least the 40 - let's call it \$43 million. Do you feel we'll get at least that amount?

Mayor Donchess

Yes.

Alderman Sullivan

Okay. All right. Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Are these questions for the Mayor that can wait because I was asked to have Attorney Bolton here to describe the tax cap numbers and then I promised to make it leave unless you want to stay for the whole meeting. So could you explain - a question came up last night about the tax gap. Could you just give us an overview where you feel we sit relative to the tax cap?

Steve Bolton, Corporation Counsel

We're doing it correctly. The Superior Court last year when one time Alderman Teeboom brought an action against the city he lost. So as far as I know, we're doing it the same way this year as we did last year and the court upheld it.

Chairman Dowd

Any questions? I'm gonna go with Alderman Jette because he's the one that asked to have Attorney Bolton here.

Alderman Jette

Okay thank you. So I know that - I think there's been a lot of confusion and at least in my mind probably other Aldermen are also uncertain. So, you know, we had the Charter provision which is Section 56-c outlines the so-called tax cap, spending cap. There was a lawsuit, not this most current one, but the one that ended up going to the Supreme Court.

Steve Bolton, Corporation Counsel

The other one that I won.

Alderman Jette

Right.

Steve Bolton, Corporation Counsel

And won in the Supreme Court. That one, right?

Alderman Jette

Where the court determined that the tax cap was, I think, invalid because it did not contain an override provision. So that, I think, left us without a tax cap and the legislature amended the law to provide that tax caps or spending caps that had been enacted before some date were now validated. I think you said before and I think again last night that the...

Steve Bolton, Corporation Counsel

I didn't say anything about it last night Alderman Jette.

Alderman Jette

Okay well maybe it was the Mayor and you said the Mayor was correct so.

Steve Bolton, Corporation Counsel

I would be going out on a limb if I said anything else I think.

Alderman Jette

So the Mayor last night, thank you for the correction, said that the provisions in the ordinance Section 5-145 - I know you know this but for other people, there's the Charter Section 56-C and then there's your Revised Ordinances Section 5-145 which talks about the preparation of the budget. It's got a bunch of rules that the Mayor referred to last night about what can be included in calculating the tax cap, and what can't be, and different ways of handling it. He said that as a result of the court action that we're the legislature, I'm not sure, but that those ordinances, the Charter rules. The Charter can't be overturned or overruled by the ordinances. The ordinances are subject to this Charter and that those ordinances talking about what's in and what's out as he put it were no longer valid and that what we're left with is just the Charter provision. Could you comment on that? Are we bound by 5-145 or not?

Steve Bolton, Corporation Counsel

To the extent it differs from either State law or the Charter, those ordinances are not valid because you cannot provide by ordinance something that is contrary to either State law or the City Charter.

Alderman Jette

Okay so where does that leave us as far as – what guides us tonight as we try to adopt a budget that complies with the law? So in 145 it talks about the proposed budget has to state, you know, what the gross domestic product implicit price deflator for state and local government consumption expenditures and gross investment is for the what was the average for the last three years and how this proposed budget either complies with that or not? Do we still follow that?

Steve Bolton, Corporation Counsel

I believe the Resolution before you does do that.

Alderman Jette

Okay so we can feel the budget that's been proposed by the Mayor your telling us it complies with the law and that as long as whatever additions we make to it if we make any additions as long as they're under the number that Mr. Griffin has provided us that we're fine? We don't have to worry about any violation of the law.

Steve Bolton, Corporation Counsel

Well that's my opinion. I don't profess to be infallible but as you pointed out, feedback challenges previously.

Chairman Dowd

I think even former Alderman Teeboom said last night no matter what we do with the budget this year, no matter how we calculate the cap, the budget will still fall under it because the cap is so high.

Steve Bolton, Corporation Counsel

Well yeah but if you wanted to appropriate \$500 million to build a stadium and try to lure the Patriots to Nashua, I think we might run into a little difficulty with the numbers. But failing something that dramatic, I think you can be reasonably confident. Mr. Teeboom I'm sure thinks he's correct but he has found in the past that when he goes to court, it's a little more complicated than he anticipated.

Chairman Dowd

All set.

Alderman Jette

Okay, thank you.

Alderman Sullivan

Yes I think I was just reviewing the City Charter and it seemed that the sticking point last night was the word “revenue” and really was just an open ended question that I think that the speaker Mr. Teeboom last night was commenting about how they used to do it and now how it's done now. The sticking point was all about revenue. It's a pretty broad term. I was thinking to myself last night the only way that we would be able to go back to specifically outline what would be in the spending cap under revenue would be to really change the Charter to really - I mean it would have to specifically say revenue to include item, item, item, item; not to include grant funds. I think that was a sticking point last night because we consider that to be an expense because money comes in and it goes out. So it's still an expense which I understand.

Steve Bolton, Corporation Counsel

If there's a question for me here...

Alderman Sullivan

My question is if we want to get specific, then we would have to do a Charter change, correct?

Steve Bolton, Corporation Counsel

In my opinion, we are following the Charter as it exists. If we want to do something else, we would have to change the Charter.

Alderman Sullivan

Okay. That was my question. Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Anyone else for Attorney Bolton?

Alderman O'Brien

I just have something for the Board of Aldermen. In my time here, eight years, I don't think we even though we lost a cap, I don't think we really went above it. We always as a Board used it as a guide and try to get for our taxpayers something that is prudent.

But I would like to say what this is in the complexity of the issue. That issue was brought up on the floor of the State House. People who are not associated with Nashua, Berlin, Farmington, you name it, they got the vote. You know who didn't get to vote, the citizens of Nashua whether they wanted the cap or not. Maybe getting a Charter change which would be very complex and it will have to go to a vote. It might not be out there. They do say every community has had a tax cap. It's called elections. So the thing is I thought that was kind of underhanded. I mean I've heard testimony in different other items that come up because a train was making too much noise on the tracks overnight, why couldn't they solve that in that community with an ordinance? Why you coming up and asking us to write State law? That should never have been done in my opinion. If it's a Nashua problem, it should have been solved by the Nashua residents. I'm kind of happy to say, I think the majority of the representatives from Nashua did not support that resolution at the Statehouse.

Chairman Dowd

Any other questions for Attorney Bolton? Yes.

Alderman Lopez

Okay so I want to make sure I'm not getting confused Attorney Bolton because I think I just heard the topic of being discussed as a tax cap and before that it was very heavily emphasized that revenue was the issue. The spending cap as it is identified in the Charter, my understanding from what Mayor Donchess was saying last night was that the Charter



actually really only identifies expenditures and that's why if we receive a grant that we're likely to spend, we have to account for it so we're able to spend it. Am I accurate or am I getting confused?

Steve Bolton, Corporation Counsel

No, I think you are accurate. In fact, the Charter doesn't call it a tax cap or a spending cap. The Charter calls it budget limitation. The Charter doesn't say much in this regard about revenue. It talks about the expenditures, the total expenditures, and that the next year's budget can't exceed the total expenditures of the prior years. Much of the discussion, much of former Alderman Teeboom's focus was on grants. The fact is when we receive grant money, it is almost 100% of the time contingent upon us spending it for the purpose for which it is gift. We make an application for the grant. We say we're going to spend it for this which meets the qualifications of the program for which the money comes in and we agree to spend it for that purpose. We agree to spend it.

Now it's State law in New Hampshire that you cannot spend money without an appropriation. So when we get a grant in unless we've provided for it in the budget that we have money if it is authorized to be spent when it is received from a grant, we accept grants that are unanticipated when the budget is adopted. In the course of the year, we say you've seen all of you I believe, I've seen many resolutions that will say to accept and appropriate a grant from the federal government pursuant to the such and such a program for police officers, or for violence against women, or for a myriad of other things. So that is a further appropriation of an appropriation is to authorize the spending of money and that's what happens.

So there was a lot of talk about you don't know whether you're going to get it. You apply for the grant but you don't know if you're gonna get it or you don't know you're gonna get all of it. You asked for \$200,000 and maybe you only get \$150,000. Well if that happens, apparently you don't spend it right because you only have to spend it - you're only allowed to spend it for the purpose for which it is given. The fact is all our revenue and all our expenditures are estimates. The fact that we're estimating what grant money might come in is no different from we're estimating what revenue we're going to get from the motor vehicle registrations. It's no different from we're estimating how much revenue we're going to get from the building permit fees, or the tipping fees at the landfill, or the wastewater billings for the water usage in businesses and residents in town. So all of these are estimates. So the fact that we don't know for certain whether we're going to get this much money from this source, or that much money from the source, or we're going to have that exact expenditure of X dollars for paving so many streets, we're going to pave 20 miles of streets this year. Well until we put that out to bid, we don't know exactly what it's going to be. Frankly even when we don't put it out to bid, we don't know exactly what it's going to be because there's always contingencies that are things that can go wrong, there are things can make it more or less expensive in any case. That's a lot of what management is all about. The fact that you don't know exactly doesn't make any difference for your revenue calculation or your expense account calculation. You do the best you can. That's what it's all based upon.

Now there is in fact a State law that talks about spending caps or tax caps and said those provisions in a City Charter can exempt grants from the calculation. They can if your charter says the grants are accepted and won't be counted in the calculation that has to be approved by a two thirds vote if your charter allows for that. Our Charter doesn't so grants have to be included. Pretty much that simple.

Chairman Dowd

Any other questions for Attorney Bolton? All right. So we're now ready to make any potential motions. I think I'm gonna go around counterclockwise. I flipped a coin earlier.

Mayor Donchess

Well Mr. Chair does anybody have any additional comments or questions for me?

Alderman Moran

Thank you. Sorry. I'm not on the Committee but I just had a question. Actually more for CFO Griffin, unless the Mayor knows every line item like CFO Griffin does off the top of his head, which I'm very impressed by, by the way. Director Fauteux had mentioned not refunding two and a half positions in DPW. Could you point me to the page number for the appropriation details there that cuts those positions?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

So what I have in my information is one and a half truck drivers in the Street Department. So that would be line number 51100 - full time wages one and a half, roughly \$75,000 in salary reduction. She may have referenced two and a half

individuals because she was already assuming she didn't fund but the cut itself - the reduction itself was one and a half.

Alderman Moran

Follow up?

Chairman Dowd

Follow up.

Alderman Moran

Does that other position just not being - it's been open and not being filled as that right?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

So subject to check, they didn't include one in the original submission then when they thought about their needs, they came back with one and a half positions. So she would know that there's two and a half but one and a half was a reduction.

Alderman Moran

So we're looking at one full time person kept for \$75,000.

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

It would be one and a half, so 50 and 25. It's just not funded. They might fund it next year as more funds become available.

Alderman Moran

Yes. My reason for asking is because I'm working with a handful of folks trying to figure out best ways to support DPW in school sidewalks, streets, and various other things. Actually, you and I had had several conversations about it. It seems like every time DPW comes to the Board, they're always mentioning how much work they're doing, and how they can't find people to fill positions, and that they have a lot of work to do, and now we're not having an opportunity to hire those that one and a half person making it worse for them when they do have a potential applicant. You're obviously not Director Fauteux and I'm not on this Committee so otherwise I make a motion to refund to put those back in to restore. Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Restore not refund. They're not gonna give us a check.

Alderman Moran

Restore that position or both positions in order to not kneecap them any more than they already are and this is just the last year or plus now I think I'm on year two of just hearing every time DPW comes down here how much work they have and that they have the same guys to shovel streets, do the trash pickups, mow the grass, everyone's doing the same thing and they just can't get people to hire but there might be opportunity to hire them if those positions are...

Chairman Dowd

One of the problems that DPW is having right now they're in competition with a lot of other entities for people with a CDL - commercial driver's license. Some places, I think, there's even some in the State that when they hire them they pay for their commercial driver's license. I'm not sure whether DPW has that set up in their budget or not but they're competing with the Fire Department, the Police Department, the Park Rec – well that's part of the same division - but there's particularly bus drivers. Bus drivers got a big bump because they didn't have enough bus drivers to bring kids to school. So for a student up their salaries and everybody that had a CDL went over driving buses. So at the moment, they can't find people to hire. I think if they had an abundance of people they can hire, they probably would have gone in for more people. If you can't hire them, they can't hire. We can put it in the budget all we want but it's just gonna sit there unless they all of a sudden have a profliery of people that have CDL licenses but even the State's after them.

Alderman Moran

So I hear you on that and I think then what's the harm then re-adding it back in if they're never going to be filled because maybe there is an opportunity for them to be filled, especially if a recession comes and someone comes to a safe city job when they lose their private job when the (inaudible) is cut back?

Chairman Dowd

Well as I understand it, correct me if I'm wrong Mr. Griffin, that they're keeping the positions in their budget - the fiscal positions. They're just not funding the salaries. Is that correct?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

That's correct.

Chairman Dowd

So if they found people all of a sudden during the year, we could add that money back into their budget. Supplemental.

Alderman Moran

Yes but when speaking with DPW, they said they can't do anything in regards to advertising for those jobs if there's no money there to say hey, we can actually hire you.

Chairman Dowd

If all of a sudden people became available, they could come to us and ask us to fund the position so they could advertise.

Alderman Moran

Seems like seems like a circle.

Chairman Dowd

It's a budget thing.

Alderman Lopez

I have a question I think to the Mayor but maybe CFO Griffin is better. We see a lot on the Human Affairs Committee that like money gets approved, budgeted, put in the budget, and then like the Executive Committee marinates it or barrel ages it and then we suddenly have it available like three days before we're supposed to vote on it or whatever. Do you anticipate anything like that happening with the education increase that we're hoping that we're gonna get? Would that have an effect on the city budget if the city had to cover money that was promised but wasn't actually a lot like made available?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

So if I may. With regard to the State adequacy aid that the Mayor talked about and I talked about this with the timing with when Alderman Jette had some excellent questions. I think we're kind of fortunate in that we're closed this year, figure out what the surplus is, learn about the State what they're going to provide us so by the time we get to the tax rate setting, we're gonna have a lot of this information. As a matter of fact when the Mayor was talking about the tax calculation, the DOE - Department of Education - communicates directly to the DRA and when we get their tax forms that we fill out - the city portion, they've already populated that 43 million whatever the number is, is going to be on a line item. Which is a good thing and it comforts the DRA that they have control over the monies that the State legislature is providing to the city. So I don't see it being like a time crunch that all of a sudden we're gonna have two or three days to react.

The Mayor, and I, and the other members of the budget team - and this is why on May 9<sup>th</sup> he explained some of the revenue potential shortfalls trying to let you folks know that it could be a 3% increase without even looking at this budget. What we're here to report tonight is we don't know the exact figures but it's not going to be that and then you get to the budget increases itself and you can kind of have a manageable tax rate. We are in – I'd just like to suggest because there

was confusion about these rates we're dealing with. We had a 7% increase in 2022. CPIU northeast. We have a three year average that affects the Mayor's increase and other things - 4.1%. Three year average inflation because three years ago, there was a 1.3 and then incline.

The 5.9 that former Alderman Teeboom was talking about is the three year average of the State and local government implicit price deflator. As I reported during my comments when I was here was 9.1 last year. So obviously if we had a 1.3, a 5.5, and a 9.1, and the average is 5.9, it's going to come down with a three year average rather slowly, right? So that's why everything was kind of confusing last night and some of the residents were like I don't know what the number is. We were facing 7% inflation in 2022. We hope it's not that this year. We're getting reports that it might be in the 4% category and heading down depending upon recessionary pressures. What the fed does with interest rates, it's gonna hover around 5% but it's a three year average. I wanted to clear that up while you had those questions but again, I don't think we're gonna get last minute things from the State, especially if they've approved the budget was most recently as yesterday. Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Any other questions? Yes.

Alderwoman Kelly

I had some questions for the Mayor so that he can go home.  
So question one was around the GAD funding. Do you know where that is in the book so I can make...page 40.

Then the second question I had I actually appreciated you had announced that you're promoting from within your team earlier this week and I'm wondering if that allows us to potentially reduce your budget for your staff as someone's moving up and that current position wasn't one that you typically had.

Mayor Donchess

Well, of course, that person's former job is open now and we intend to find someone for that. So my answer would be no, we can't do that.

Chairman Dowd

You all set?

Alderwoman Kelly

Yup.

Chairman Dowd

All right. With no objections, I'm going to flip the coin earlier and I'm going to start to my left.

Steve Bolton, Corporation Counsel

Mr. Chairman if I can be excused, I have to be in court tomorrow morning?

Chairman Dowd

Yes, you can be excused and the Mayor can be excused.

Steve Bolton, Corporation Counsel

Thank you.

Mayor Donchess

All right well good luck. I will see you next week for sure.

Alderman O'Brien

Thank you Mr. Chairman. I do have a motion and let's start off with an easy one what I hope.

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN O'BRIEN UNDER CIVIC AND COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES, PAGE 40, GREAT AMERICAN DOWNTOWN, TO INCREASE THE AMOUNT TO \$50,000**

ON THE QUESTION

It seems to be as the Mayor has explained that there was a little bit of mistake that was made. Last year we did increase it last year something similar and we gave them \$50,000. So this is basically keeping with last year's zero increase so there's no percentages or anything else.

I don't think I need to mention too deeply on the good things that the Great American Downtown does. Of course, we're all familiar with it and the Holiday Stroll and everything. So I hope you support me with it and I'll share this motion with Alderman Kelly because I think that's where she was...

Alderman Kelly

No I have another one so you can have it.

Alderman O'Brien

Okay. Thank you Alderman.

Alderman Kelly

But I fully support it.

Chairman Dowd

So just for information right after the budget books came out, the Mayor pointed out to me that they had made an error and it should have been 50k and asked that we do something during the budget process. I just wanted to go with that piece of information. Any questions?

Alderman Sullivan

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So on that same page, I just noticed that there is \$25,000 allocated for Great American Downtown. Aldermen O'Brien mentioned that we would up to 50 to pay for the Holiday Stroll. However, there is a line item in their Holiday Stroll - \$30,000.

Alderman O'Brien

I think you misunderstood me. I said in my lead in that some of the things that, you know, Great American Downtown does is the Holiday Stroll. I'm not saying this had any particular funding to the Holiday Stroll.

Chairman Dowd

Just so you know, I think that other \$30,000 for the Holiday Stroll are other departments Mr. Griffin. Is that Police, Fire, DPW? It's not GAD.

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

That's correct. Any personnel that need to be paid or other expenses would be paid by that \$30,000.

Chairman Dowd

We also charged GAD \$50,000 to have their office in the Hunt Building which I think should just be swapped so we don't have the budget book but evidently we don't do that. So it goes in one pocket and comes out the other. Yes.

Alderman Lopez

I've worked with a lot of nonprofits and even giving them free rent doesn't mean that they can generate revenue. So for them, it might be more valuable to have an Executive Director that's paid consistently and able to generate the revenue they need to pay us the rent back.

Chairman Dowd

That too. I mean I was just using that as an example but they raise other money because it costs more than 50K but we've always, at least in the last three, four, maybe five budgets, we've given them 50k at least I think. Maybe more. Any other questions, concerns? Being none.

**MOTION CARRIED**

Alderman O'Brien

Mr. Chairman, I do have another motion.

Chairman Dowd

Okay. You're also keeping track of all of these, right?

Alderman O'Brien

We're also keeping track of all of these. Yes, I am regrettably. I'll yield. I do have another motion.

Alderwoman Kelly

Maybe this is the same one.

Chairman Dowd

It would go next to...

Alderwoman Kelly

Maybe this is the same one.

Alderman O'Brien

Oh do you have something with the Great American Downtown? Okay, I'm going to a different line item. Okay.

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN O'BRIEN FIRE GENERAL FUND LINE 51, PAGE 109, TO INCREASE LINE ITEM 51 \$34,812.23**

ON THE QUESTION

Alderman O'Brien

This would include the new Assistant Chief's position. Even though it isn't clearly identified, it's under salaries and wages.

Chairman Dowd

He's adding money to the salaries line of the Fire Department for the new Assistant Chief going from a half year instead of just a quarter year. I believe that's...

Alderman O'Brien

Right half a year.

Alderman Kelly

Alderman O'Brien could you repeat the amount again?

Alderman O'Brien

Yeah, that is \$34,812.23. Okay. The proposal would be the Fire Chief did ask for a total of \$69,624.50. It was halved at the level of the Mayor with a quarter start date towards the end of the, you know, the beginning of the fourth quarter. I think Chief Buxton is looking to move the Fire Department in a new modern direction mostly with some of the objectives of working to attain that ISO rating that we all kind of want ISO-1. To do any changes or structural changes such as this, what you need is good management in the top before you start filling the positions in the bottom. So this won't throw a hard start July 1<sup>st</sup>. This will start in January which will give enough time for the budget to catch up and everything but enough time to start with the new position and that way Chief Buxton can work and get this solid up so we can go on but the future plus the other restructuring needs that he has. Thank you.

Alderman Wilshire

That's the position that the Mayor stated tonight that he only funded for three months?

Alderman O'Brien

That's correct.

Alderman Wilshire

Okay. Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

I think he might have slightly indicated that he wouldn't be overly upset with the half year because when we ended up with the school money we're so far we're not adding a significant amount to the budget that would have any major impact on the tax rate yet. Any other questions and concerns?

Alderman Jette

Yes through you to the maker of the motion. Is it your intention to make any additional motions to add any other position to the Fire Department?

Alderman O'Brien

Oh, you can't wait til you shake your Christmas presents on Christmas Eve? Alderman Jette yes I do have one more yes.

Alderman Lopez

Some people do do that.

Alderman Jette

Would that be the...?

Alderman O'Brien

The IT position.

Alderman Jette

The IT not the EMS whatever that...

Alderman O'Brien

No Sir.

Alderman Jette

A medical person?

Alderman O'Brien

No, Sir.

Alderman Jette

Okay.

Chairman Dowd

Yeah these motions have guilt by association.

Alderwoman Kelly

If you would indulge me for a moment. I know that Chief Buxton is here. I did miss the fire evening so I just wanted to hear his perspective on starting a Chief in January if that's going to support his needs.

Chairman Dowd

I know he would have felt left out if he didn't come up since here's here.

Steve Buxton, Fire Chief

Good evening. Steve Buxton Nashua Fire. So to start off in full transparency, the conversation I had with the Mayor when we were adjusting the budget, he did indicate to me that he would be adjusting this to a quarter year outside of my half a year request. While it didn't light my world on fire so to speak, no pun intended, I was happy with the fact that I was getting my foot in the door.

Upon further consideration and discussion with my staff, the intent of this position within the Master Plan is to develop the professional standards within our organization. This position will oversee the recruitment and hiring of our firefighters as well as the promotional processes. All those things take place in the springtime at Nashua Fire Rescue. So onboarding a new Assistant Fire Chief in the springtime when you're trying to hire people and run promotional processes which are very competitive within our organization. We are very lucky. It's not the best setup necessarily. That's why I really appreciate your consideration to increase the funding or restore some funding to the budget so we could start this position in January.

Chairman Dowd

Chief just for clarification, you used to have another Assistant Fire Chief and it was cut during the Mayor Lozeau era.

Steve Buxton, Fire Chief

That is correct.

Chairman Dowd

And correct me if I'm wrong but I believe one of the duties of this new Assistant Fire Chief is to work with the ISO One Certification, which by the way as was pointed out by somebody in the public last night that will lower the city's people's insurance on fire because a department with an ISO One rating is very high thing as far as far as insurance companies. Is that correct?

Steve Buxton, Fire Chief

That is correct. We would be the first Fire Department in the State of New Hampshire to achieve the ISO One rating. We are operationally I would say we are right there. We're just a few points away. Last time they evaluated which was two years ago, we can call them back to reevaluate the city at any point in time but unfortunately, right now we don't have the administrative bandwidth to undertake that project.



Chairman Dowd

Questions?

Alderman Jette

Yes, thank you. So I happen to be speaking to a constituent and I made the argument that you just made. The constituent asked me did I know how much in dollars and cents this was going to save people in the city as far as insurance costs are concerned and whether or not that would offset the increase in this additional...

Chairman Dowd

I don't know if the Chief knows but if I knew, I'd certainly be in the insurance business.

Steve Buxton, Fire Chief

I can't provide you a direct answer to that question. I will tell you that when you achieve an ISO One rating, the insurance savings is mostly seen on the commercial side of the house policy wise. So the normal residential insurance is probably not going to see much impact. It'd be more on the commercial side.

Chairman Dowd

But the cumulative savings for residents of Nashua and businesses of Nashua would offset the increase in the price in the budget. I think that's what your question was or Alderman Jette, right?

Alderman Jette

Yes.

Steve Buxton, Fire Chief

I think that would be fair to say yes.

Chairman Dowd

All set Alderman Jette?

Alderman Jette

Thank you.

Alderman Sullivan

Thank you. Just to clarify, I'm in the supplemental information on the Fire page. Assistant Fire Chief right now is listed at 1.25 positions \$179,758. That will go up to 1.5 because we're adding another quarter to it, correct, bringing that to a grand total of about \$215,000. I just want to make sure that we're only adding a quarter to that position.

Chairman Dowd

Correct. To the current budget, we'd only be adding \$34,000.

Alderman Sullivan

I understand. I'm trying to make sure. It's an add of 35,000ish. I'm an ish guy.

Chairman Dowd

Any other questions for Chief Buxton? Thank you Chief.

Steve Buxton, Fire Chief

Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Any other questions on the motion? Seeing none.

**MOTION CARRIED**

Alderman O'Brien

Alderman Dowd if I may, I do have one final.

Chairman Dowd

I'll give you one more.

Alderman O'Brien

Thank you so much. I would like to propose on and this would come under now Fire and we'll discuss that at length. Fire general fund, line 51, page 109, \$32,000 for the new IT Division and to speak briefly on it.

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN DOWD TO ADD TO FIRE GENERAL FUND, LINE 51 PAGE 109, \$32,000 FOR THE NEW IT DIVISION**

ON THE QUESTION

Alderman O'Brien

Not to take anything away from our wonderful IT Division that we have in the city, I have worked with those guys. They're phenomenal but however, the Fire Department now is getting much more complex. It's no longer Fireman Fred that you see in the episodes of Leave it to Beaver. What Nashua is going to is a new radio system. They'll be putting a new alerting devices within the fire stations. So therefore, this would come under the Fire Department's IT Division.

Now taking that into account, we in the Fire Department sent people out to get trained and everything else like that. This won't have to be done. There seems to be a candidate that is recently got to be retiring that works within the Fire Alarm Division that is extremely well versed on all the needs. He's worked on the fiber optic cables before, knows how to do it and everything else. So therefore, I think it would behoove us while he's still within the working ability to hire this particular person to make these - what they are is kind of dramatic changes. My son who's a Lieutenant on the Fire Department, I've only been gone eight years, and he says Dad you won't even recognize the place because of the newer technologies and the different things that these guys are facing. I think we see that with everything else in the world. So I hope you support me for an IT position within the Fire Department. Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

And by the way, this afternoon I checked with several people. This is not part of the IT structure that we were talking about relative to what happened in the School Department. This is city wide communication - the tour apples and oranges. So it's not part of IT.

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Yeah, Mr. Chairman I think you want to add these dollars to city wide communications not Nashua Fire Rescue. Is that what you want to do?

Alderman O'Brien

I'll yield to the Chairman on that.

Chairman Dowd

Maybe we can if we pass it here after this budgets over, you know wherever they end up, you can make sure the monies

follow the person.

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Well just for the practicality of it, the half of the salary is in Citywide Communications.

Chairman Dowd

Which is part of the Police budget.

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Which is part of Citywide Communications.

Chairman Dowd

It's never been clear exactly where they fell.

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

But from an accounting perspective and paying the person instead of paying them half out of the Fire Department and half on a Citywide Communications...

Chairman Dowd

Would it be appropriate for him to change his motion to just say to add this person to Citywide Communication and...

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Correct.

Chairman Dowd

...where they get placed is, you know, they can...

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

I think the intent, my understanding is the person is going to work with the two folks that are on that team and they're going to enhance as Alderman O'Brien said, all the related fire things that are specific to the knowledge of the person that's earmarked for the position. So if you could, I would recommend you increase part-time wages, which is on page 122, account number 51200. You can increase that by \$32,000 and then the person can get paid appropriately out of the literally the place where he's going to be reporting to. That would be most helpful. Thank you.

Alderman O'Brien

Yes, I'll stipulate that. Could you repeat that? I have on page 122 and that will be department Citywide Communication.

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Correct.

Alderman O'Brien

Can you just bear with me? I talk faster than I write.

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN O'BRIEN TO INCREASE ACCOUNT 51200 PART TIME WAGES, PAGE 122, CITYWIDE COMMUNIATIONS TO \$32,000**

Alderman O'Brien

Okay. This will be Fire Department It. Would that work for you Mr. Griffin?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Citywide Communications.

Alderman O'Brien

Citywide Communications. All right. I amend that motion. Does everybody have that?

Chairman Dowd

Any other questions on this motion?

Alderman Sullivan

Thank you. So we set aside \$32,000. Does that include salaries, benefits, pension, the fringe benefits? Is that all rolled up in there or is there going to be costs on top of that?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

There'll be cost on top of that. That's the person's wage is going to be the combination of \$33,000 and \$32,000.

Chairman Dowd

But as a part time person, the amount's not the same as a full time person. He's already retired.

Alderman Sullivan

I understand but it's still going to be more than \$32,000.

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Just to be specific, he'll have the FICA and Medi because the federal government is going to be interested in receiving that amount and...

Chairman Dowd

You can't get away from FICA or Social Security.

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Correct.

Chairman O'Brien

Any other questions?

Alderman Sullivan

Thank you. I thought about this in a split second since you made the motion. I can't support it at this point. We have \$300,000 set aside in a contingency fund. I think its \$300,000 to establish a cybersecurity fund. I understand that this is IT, that's cybersecurity. I'd like to see that person come in, get a foothold on it, take a look at the entire department, and then make recommendations from there as opposed to adding people in.

Chairman Dowd

It's a completely separate thing. They're not even associated. They're not doing anywhere near the same things. One is installing radios and keeping radios and communications up. The others are dealing with cyber security and computers and stuff. They do different things and they don't report to the same people.

Alderman Sullivan

With all due respect, information technology, cybersecurity, and everything are all intertwined today as we go forward. That to me is something that I'd like to see the cybersecurity person come in and say this is how we want to build out the department. I think this is the way to go. Just my opinion.

Alderman O'Brien

Mr. Chairman, if I may. I think everybody would appreciate since we do have Chief Buxton here because I unfortunately disagree with Alderman Sullivan because the intentions that I had was in your presentation what does he understand about the alert system for dispatching at two o'clock in the morning? Possibly nothing. This person does understand the requirements. So through the Chair, can we have Chief Buxton give us a brief explanation of what would be expected of this new position?

Chairman Dowd

Chief do you want to make another approach to the podium?

Steve Buxton, Fire Chief

Good evening. Steve Buxton Nashua Fire. So this position is something that Bill Mansfield and myself worked in collaboration on to establish some needs within both vital organizations. Currently, there's nobody filling the IT need within the Fire Department. IT on a city level as far as the desktop computer, phone lines, and some of our MDTs are handled through city IT. Outside of that, we have filled up level devices, tablets MDTs, costs are getting shifted to the Fire Department. Our software upgrades for our mechanics, our software platforms we utilize within our Fire Alarm Division and so forth are also getting shifted to the Fire Department. Through the ARPA funds when they were awarded, the city is investing in a new fire station alerting system that comes with a software platform. We have a training platform. Everything is cloud based now and this position, we would have oversight and management in working to build an IT management program within the Fire Department which currently doesn't exist and is spelled out in the Master Plan of one things that we need to do.

In addition to that, the individual that Alderman O'Brien specified does have significant, intimate knowledge of the fiber network within the city. They do have specific intimate knowledge about the radio system and the bi-directional amplifiers that with all the building that's going on in the city, we are now requiring to be utilized and not only in new construction but also some of the older, larger buildings such as our hospitals, our schools, and so forth. Those need to be overseen when they're being installed as well as annual inspections. I think that that is really what Director Mansfield is looking to utilize this position for.

Alderman Sullivan

Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

All right. Any other questions? Okay, seeing none. You all understand the motion.

**MOTION CARREID**Alderwoman Kelly

Thank you, Chairman Dowd. I have a number of motions in front of me. One is a fairly easy one. We had a clerical error that we needed to adjust so I'm proposing that we reduce line 556 to zero on page 99, software subscriptions to \$25,700. We talked about that during the budget as I mentioned before - that it was just a clerical issue.

**MOTION BY ALDERWOMAN KELLY TO REDUCE LINE 556 TO ZERO ON PAGE 99 AND SOFTWARE SUBSCRIPTIONS TO \$25,700**ON THE QUESTIONAlderman O'Brien

What department is that again?

Alderman Kelly

I'm sorry. That is in Financial Services.

Chairman Dowd

And Mr. Griffin you concur with that motion?

John Griffin, CFO, Treasurer/Tax Collector

Yes, I do.

Chairman Dowd

Any questions on that motion?

Alderman Sullivan

How much are we reducing it?

Alderman Kelly

150,000.

Alderman Sullivan

Down to 150 or by 150.

Alderman Kelly

We're reducing it by 150,000 to 25,700.

Alderman Sullivan

Thank you.

Alderman Kelly

The impact is a negative 150.

Chairman Dowd

Everybody understand the motion?

Alderman O'Brien

So as to reduce, correct Mr. Chairman?

Chairman Dowd

Yes. Any other questions, concern? No. All right.

**MOTION CARRIED**

Alderman Kelly

Yes, please. So my next motion is in the Welfare Department on page 139. We had a good conversation with Mr. Mack. I would like to see the funding restored for him. It was a historic year. He talked about it so I would like to propose that we

amend the budget for his Division to I'm sorry, I'm not seeing that line. I want to give \$50,000 more.

Alderman Wilshire

Welfare Administration or Welfare Services?

Chairman Dowd

Which line?

Alderman Kelly

I know. This is through another Alderman so I'm trying to figure out the line myself. Just give me one second.

Alderman Lopez

I put it under the shelter assistance because that was what he explicitly mentioned. There was a big surge.

Alderman Kelly

Shelter Assistance 55810. Yes, that's what it is. Thank you. You just didn't have it in here. Thank you for this assistance. It's actually page 140. We're looking to increase Shelter Assistance from \$350,800 to \$400,800.

**MOTION BY ALDERWOMAN KELLY TO INCREASE ACCOUNT 55810 SHELTER ASSISTANCE FROM \$350,800 TO \$400,800**

ON THE QUESTION

Chairman Dowd

So I was under the impression that that number was reduced to zero because they were taking money from the what was the line Mr. Griffin?

Alderman Kelly

The trust fund you're talking about?

Chairman Dowd

Weren't we allocating the money from a reserve account?

Alderman Kelly

So the way I remember it, and I can please correct me if I'm wrong, is that the request was reduced by some with the implication that they would take \$50,000 or \$60,000 from the Expendable Trust Fund which is at about \$385,000. It has been a particularly rough year, especially with the cuts to housing assistance, etc., throughout COVID. I don't love the idea of welfare like using their Expendable Trust Fund as sort of a, you know, I'd rather have them have the money that they need to make sure people are housed and if it doesn't get used, it can be put back in the trust fund.

Chairman Dowd

Mr. Griffin can you review the approach that was taken by the budget team and the Mayor's side in this item?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Certainly, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Mack approached the – the way his budget creation, he suggested to add more than 50. I think it was 100 something for shelter and then very open discussion with the budget team including the Mayor. We recognize he had a \$385,000 Expendable Trust Fund for welfare that hadn't been used since he arrived in the late 90s. So trying to limit the amount of the budget increase, working with Mr. Mack, no one was gonna go without State law or maybe even federal law but no one was gonna go without. So we thought that we'd level fund his budget, the shelter

budget, and use the Expendable Trust Fund as necessary. So I want to report the month of May we had to use some of the \$385,000. We have to use \$38,000. So clearly the federal, State, whatever money that was paying for these services before during COVID has dried up. So I don't think it's an unreasonable request to add 50. As you folks know, you get a nice report from Mr. Mack monthly. You get a nice report from last year, this year and you can see the amount that's needed. So the strategy of spending the 350 that's budgeted and then drawing on the Expendable Trust Fund, I think, is still a good strategy but I think this is a reasonable request that they're making.

Chairman Dowd

Okay, so if I understand it correctly, he does have \$325,000 in his budget right now. We still have somewhere near that amount in the Expendable Trust if we had to dive into it for some reason and right now, the motion on the floor is to add \$50,000 to that \$325,000. Is that correct?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

\$350,800 so it's going to be slightly over \$400,000.

Alderman Kelly

\$400,800.

Chairman Dowd

Everybody understand the motion? Does anybody have questions? No. No questions?

#### **MOTION CARRIED**

Alderman Kelly

I have one more. Okay. So I would like to make the motion to restore the one and a half truck drivers to the Street Department. So that's page 194. We're looking at, I think - maybe you could help me out here. Would it be wages full time or does it go somewhere else? We could just do pay line 51 by 75,000.

#### **MOTION BY ALDERWOMAN KELLY TO RESTORE THE ONE AND HALF TRUCK DRIVERS TO THE STREET DEPARTMENT, PAGE 194, BY \$75,000**

ON THE QUESTION

Chairman Dowd

So basically if we add this money and they're never able to hire those people...

Alderman Kelly

It goes back into...

Chairman Dowd

They would have that money in their account. Would it be a better motion to put that money in contingency and if they're able to hire those people we transfer? Mr. Griffin?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

I would say you could put it in the Street Department budget so you don't have to transfer it if they can hire. The beauty of putting it in there is that there's an intent to spend it on those types of individuals that goes into the general contingency. General contingency is for unforeseen that type of thing. So it's six and one half a dozen of another but if you put it in there, I think that'd be fine – the Street Department.

Chairman Dowd



And the dollar amount was at?

Alderman Kelly

\$75,000. I remember and I just want to make sure I completely understand that there was a discussion at our meeting was that there was really a reduction of two and a half but she took out one before it even came to the budget book. So the one and a half is what was reduced. So I'd like to at least restore that. Actually, my understanding here and my concern here is that we've had a lot of discussions about plowing, and sidewalk plowing, and not having enough, you know, similar to what other Aldermen have brought up. When I asked at the very end of the meeting who they were cutting, they said they were cutting drivers. So I would love for them to have it there if they're able to hire them because we know it's been an ongoing issue. They work really hard and they need that support.

Chairman Dowd

I have no basic issue with it as long as they have trucks to go along with.

By the way to answer a question last night from a member of the public, our plows are used 24/7 around the clock year round. We don't just have trucks that are set aside for plowing. They're all in CERF. We know how long we get from them because they're not sheltered usually and if we ever get a garage to put them in, they'll last a lot longer. But anyway, we use them all the time. The plows come off. Anyway, any questions on this motion?

Alderman Jette

Could you clarify what line item are we adding this money to?

Alderman Kelly

So I was just putting it on 19151 which is how Alderman O'Brien did his previous one because I don't see part-time wages. So I just thought that might be the best way. CFO Griffin if there's a better place to put it, let me know.

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Yeah, I would recommend page 203 in the appropriation detail wages full time 51 100 and just add \$75,000.

Alderman Kelly

Oh into Streets. Okay.

Chairman Dowd

That's the cleanest place to book it.

Alderman Kelly

So if I could just clarify - page 203, 51100. Okay. So if I could amend my motion to add to line 51100 on page 203 which is the Street Department's \$75,000. The total would be - do you need me to say the total or could I just - give me a second.

**MOTION BY ALDERWOMAN KELLY TO INCREASE LINE 51100, PAGE 203, BY \$75,000 IN THE STREET DEPARTMENT**

ON THE QUESTION

Chairman Dowd

My scribe I think has all that.

Alderman Kelly

Okay. Great.

Alderman O'Brien

I hope somebody listens to the tape.

Alderman Kelly

I did not bring my TI85 tonight. So yeah, that is the request. Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Miss Lindner is taking copious notes out there for him.

Alderman Kelly

Thank you.

Alderman O'Brien

Thank you Ms. Lindner. Thank you.

Alderman Jette

Yeah so through you to the maker of the motion. I don't remember Director Fauteux asking for any extra money. I thought she specifically said that she was comfortable with the amount that she had and the Mayor had agreed upon. So I'm a little uncomfortable just with perceiving that there's a problem. I know that the problem is hiring drivers. At least that's how I understood it but the problem is they can't find enough qualified drivers. She didn't say that they didn't have the money to hire them. She could find them. So could you - am I wrong about that? Do you remember her specifically asking for additional people?

Chairman Dowd

I think that came up. Alderman Caron asked if there were things that were requested that the Mayor sort of eliminated from your budget because I've had several conversations with her. I know she'd like the extra two drivers. If they could find them, they'd lasso them, tie them in duct tape, and put them in their employ. They're having a problem finding the drivers but they certainly if they do find them want to be able to hire them. I certainly have been working with Alderman Moran on there are sidewalks that we got to find somebody to plow. You can't plow all the sidewalks in the city but the ones that are most critical, which I think we've identified, and still paint an earmark on a map. They don't have enough people to do that, including Park Rec. and the school clears a lot of the sidewalks. School has their own sidewalk plows and stuff but they only clear around the schools as you can tell by Nashua High North and Nashua High South. There's a lot of sidewalks. Then you've got other schools along sidewalks to Sunset Heights, Main Dunstable, you know, and a lot of those sidewalks are cleared by snow blowers and the custodians. But beyond that, it's a combination of city, and Park Rec. to clear the sidewalks.

Technically, they only have to clear one mile because anybody beyond one mile is eligible for busing but we're trying to work that out on a map so that we know they're all covered. But right now, there aren't enough drivers. The drivers that drive the sidewalk plows are the same drivers that drive the snowplows because if you had separate drivers for sidewalk plows, what do you do with them when there's no snow on the sidewalks? So difficult questions. So in this case, they're looking for drivers to help them with all of their tasks not just snow plowing.

Alderman Jette

I understand the problem you've described. Alderman Moran and I met with the Assistant Director...

Chairman Dowd

Andy.

Alderman Jette

And someone else – the Streets Superintendent. So I understood the problem not to be that they don't have enough

positions authorized. What they don't have are the people to fill those positions. So I'm not sure that authorizing an additional \$75,000 is going to - I'm not sure I understand how that's going to create people to fill those positions. The problem is you don't have enough qualified drivers. As I understood them to say, you know, it's not that they don't have the money to pay them they just can't find the people. That's the problem they're working to solve.

Chairman Dowd

That is correct. As was pointed out by Mr. Griffin a minute ago, they want to put the money in their account so when they find somebody, they can hire him right away. They don't have to come back to the Board of Aldermen and say oh by the way, I need another \$75,000 which takes time. It takes about eight weeks and they may lose them because there's a lot of demand for CDL drivers.

Alderman Jette

My point is that, you know, my understanding is that it's not that they don't have the money. It's not that if they find qualified people they're going to have to come back and ask us for more money. My impression, I may be wrong, but my impression is they've got the money. They just don't have the people. So if they get a qualified driver, they don't have to come back to us. They've already got the money to hire them. It's just, you know, finding the people.

Chairman Dowd

Get that clarified Mr. Griffin?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Yeah, I would say that they have the money now. As a matter of fact, to add a little bit more of the back and forth Director Fauteux and her team would have rather had given a choice, they'd rather have the park equipment so they can actually mow the lawns, etc. We had originally reduced that number. So they've gone through this deliberation and said we can't find the drivers so we don't need \$75,000 in the Street salaries and wages. What they really want is \$100,000 in the Park Rec. equipment so they can buy that. So it's just another added color to the discussions and that's why Director Fauteux was very comfortable. I think she sat right there and explained that she got it because it was a good give and take between the budget team and Director Fauteux.

Alderman Jette

Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

I guess in retrospect if they're able to hire drivers now and they need it, they got to the point where they could get more drivers. We have the ability to give them more money later, right?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Correct.

Chairman Dowd

So the question is do we need to give it to them now? I think Alderman Caron beat you by a whisk.

Alderman Caron

Yeah.

Chairman Dowd

She's quick on the draw.

Alderman Caron

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know when I asked that question about the numbers of truck drivers, Director Fauteux said that she'd love to have it but it was not top priority. At this point in time, she'd rather have other things as Mr. Griffin stated. I had talked to the Superintendent of the Street Department and he had barely hired two people that he'd been searching for about six - seven months. The question is how do we get people who might not have a CDL license but to help them get a license to become a truck driver. We know a friend of my son. She's a young girl. She is a truck driver and most of her eight hours is sitting waiting to be moved up and she makes \$55 an hour. So that's the competition as Alderman Dowd said. You have a lot of competition and you have a lot of people don't want to do this type of work anymore. So I don't see the need to put that \$75,000 in. I would hate to see us lose any part of that \$100,000 that we need for Park Rec. equipment to keep our parks and playgrounds clean and safe.

Chairman Dowd

I would say that money might be better spent putting it in an account to train people. I don't know if we could do that as part of this budget. It would have to be put in by Park Rec. at a later date and passed under a different set of ordinances. I wouldn't make it part of this budget. So while I'm extremely concerned about doing the sidewalks, I think we've got to come up with an overall universal solution before we know what we need and don't need. I think we probably need some more equipment as well. So I'm still waiting to hear more but Alderwoman Kelly.

Alderwoman Kelly

I didn't mean to interrupt you if you weren't done.

I just wanted to clarify because I think that some things that were said were unclear. When Director Fauteux was asked where she stood, she said that the cut was that they had to unfund two and a half drivers. So if they said they're unfunded in the budget, so she got the full complement and still wanted two more drivers. The money is not there because what the negotiation was is I will unfund two and a half drivers in order to get the equipment. Is that correct?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Correct.

Alderwoman Kelly

So the money's not there. That's all I wanted to clarify.

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

One additional point. When I drive in, I see DPW hiring sign.

Chairman Dowd

It's all over the place.

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

And I'm not sure, you know, kind of like what we have for the police and fire. They don't have enough - they have more money in their budget to hire additional drivers than this. I look at this as like if they have 20 truck drivers, they only have 20 positions, 16 they can hire for. These would be like the 21st and 22nd. Do you know what I mean? I don't think they're that tight. We can certainly react with contingency or something like that.

Chairman Dowd

When you hear more people speak but I'm getting to the point where I think we probably have not passed this particular motion and if they come back later and need people, we can help them but they're like way under right now.

Alderman Moran

Yeah I just want to make two statements. One - we are trying to a cohort of Alderman Kelly, the School Board President, and June Lemen and I will be meeting to try to figure out ways around the shoveling and bring back particular proposals to the respective boards to see how we can improve whether it's a recommendation to raise wages or be more competitive.

So there are other veins that we're trying to do to affect it and this doesn't impact voting on this tonight.

One other thing. I do think its bad policy to create a budget and then with the intention of changing it later on if it needs change but that's just how I do my budgeting. I try to stick to it for the fiscal year but I do see what everyone's saying.

Chairman Dowd

But you got more money than the city so.

Alderman Moran

No not quite. Only 1/10 of a percent.

Chairman Dowd

In this instance, we have monies in the budget set aside that we could move without impacting the tax rate. So it's not like we're going to change everybody's tax bill if we add \$75,000 later on for drivers if we can get them. But if we're 20 short right now, I don't see them hanging out there.

As far as increasing their salaries, I believe those drivers are all union drivers and that's a union contract. That's a lot more difficult to change. If there are unaffiliated drivers, which I don't know if there are any. I'm here seeing no. That would be different. That's easier to change but unions, not until the next union contract comes up unless you do a supplemental. You don't want to open up a contract in the middle because that'll hurt. It really hurts.

Alderman Wilshire

Thank you. I was gonna support this initially but after the discussion, I think, I'm not gonna support this motion.

Alderman Lopez

Not flash. I just got tired of holding my hand up. But I just wanted to point out, I don't think it would fit under this particular motion but maybe an idea for CFO Griffin. We keep talking about how badly we need to recruit people with CDLs and we're starting to move to the point where we talk about why don't we pay for their school. Maybe we should move to the part where we hire a CDL instructor since there are so many departments that need CDL staff and we have staff that may actually take the class and try to upgrade their own positions.

Chairman Dowd

The other thing to consider is that in the snow plan, we find out that we're going to hire more CDL drivers in the school maintenance to do more of the school sidewalks. Well then, they don't need them in DPW. Alderman Moran is all over this thing and we're trying to figure out what sidewalks, who plows? We don't know that yet.

Alderwoman Kelly

Given the discussion, I'd like to rescind my motion. I'd love to have the contingency that this group talks about the snow removal issue and we have some real discussion and have Director Fauteux come because I think we've all brought up some interesting suggestions but obviously, it's what she does for a living. I'd love to just...

**ALDERWOMAN KELLY RESCINDED MOTION**

Chairman Dowd

But not as part of the budget.

Alderwoman Kelly

Correct. Yes. Yep.

Chairman Dowd

Good motion.

Alderman Wilshire

Do we know what it costs to get a CDL license? Any idea?

Alderman Moran

I feel like I'm just living at DPW lately. Director Fauteux had mentioned it up to \$25,000 for the CDL schools, which they've actually have offered to pay people, new employees to go get their CDL. Drastic increases in the cost of the CDL schools.

Alderman Wilshire

That's a lot.

Chairman Dowd

We had Director Cummings doing a start on a 50,000 mile race.

Alderman Lopez

It doesn't have to cost that much.

Alderman Moran

I think they compared from now to like 10 years ago when the price has increased to like 200% or something like that.

Alderwoman Kelly

I'll put this to bed after this but I also had in the back of my mind the idea of potentially looking at people who are retiring that have CDL. Like my father works for Asplundh Trucks. He's had a CDL license for 30 years. Is there an opportunity to recruit people who might be like oh I'm done with my full time job but I might come snowplow for...

Chairman Dowd

I know a retired person who has a CDL but his Alderman won't let him go back and drive a truck.

Alderman Caron

His name would be Pete would it?

Alderman Caron

No.

Alderman Lopez

Yeah, I just wanted to say having worked for the Soup Kitchen as a (inaudible) for 15 years, I contributed a small number of CDLs to the general area both through First Student but also through those schools. They do not need to cost that much but 90% of the ones that cost so much, some of it is because they're basically trying to pay an instructor who could otherwise be like in a cashier job to not with a student drivers but with like his own direct income but also because they have to do the upkeep and the maintenance of the practice vehicles. So it is probably more cost effective to at least look at the possibility of us having an in-house trainer because then you wouldn't have to pay as much overhead for it.

Chairman Dowd

And the other thing is if we hire a CDL driver and we put them in a \$300,000 to a million dollar vehicle, we don't want him driving it the wrong way. They should be fully trained.

Alderman Caron

Yes, thank you. So I looked it up because I knew it wasn't that much money. It says between \$3,000 and \$10,000.

Alderman Moran

Yeah, that's what I've seen too but then there's other underlying costs.

Alderman Caron

Well I think that's, you know, more complicated.

Chairman Dowd

And Director Cummings is out of the starting blocks and half way through the race.

Tim Cummings, Administrative Services Director

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For the record, Tim Cummings Admin. Services. I wasn't going to speak on this but since we've spent some time on it, I do think it might be helpful for me to provide some details. It's relevant because actually it came up last night relative to the Risk Department paying for CDL. It's actually CDL training that the Risk Department provides on behalf of the city citywide. So we pay for DPW training that allows for employees to be able to attain the CDL. The cost of that is between \$5,000 and \$10,000.

Part of the reason why it initiated in Risk is actually it comes from the fact that we have to adhere to strict federal regs. in compliance to having CDLs here on staff and part of that is mandatory drug testing. We have a centralized process to do that. So Director Fauteux worked with Jen Deshaies our Risk Manager and to develop this program in a way to help try to bring in more talent citywide for CDLs by offering this type of workforce training initiative because we're required to do it anyway having to provide the drug testing out of the Risk Department. Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Okay. Thank you.

So did you resend your motion?

Alderwoman Kelly

I did.

Chairman Dowd

All right so there's no motion on the floor. Are you all set with your emotions Alderwoman Kelly?

Alderwoman Kelly

I'm good.

Alderman Jette

Thank you. So I moved to increase the capital improvement appropriations which would be page 224, appropriations line 81 Fire, by \$50,000 for a total of \$100,000 for a building condition assessment study.

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN JETTE TO INCREASE THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT APPROPRIATIONS PAGE 224, APPROPRIATIONS LINE 81, FIRE, BY \$50,000 FOR A TOTAL OF \$100,000 FOR A BUILDING CONDITION ASSESSMENT STUDY**

ON THE QUESTION

Okay. I'm just gonna step down for a minute. Alderman O'Brien would you run with me for a second?

Alderman O'Brien

Absolutely.

Alderman Moran

I also have to leave. I just don't want anyone to think I'm storming out.

Chairman O'Brien

Does anybody - we all need a five minute recess or shall we continue? We shall continue.

All right. Alderman Jette - I'll let you work and if you can hand that to me afterwards.

Alderman Jette

Okay.

Chairman O'Brien

Thank you, Sir. Okay.

Alderman Jette

Could I ask are you the Chairman now?

Chairman O'Brien

Yeah, temporarily. Yes, Sir.

Alderman Jette

So through you Mr. Chairman if I could ask the Chief to come and speak to this.

Chairman O'Brien

Absolutely. Chief Buxton if you'd be so kind.

Alderman Wilshire

While we're waiting, could you repeat your motion Alderman Jette please?

Alderman Jette

Yes. It's to increase the capital improvement page to 224 appropriations, line 81, Fire, by \$50,000 for a total of \$100,000 for a building condition assessment study.

Alderman Wilshire

Thank you.

Steve Buxton, Fire Chief

Good evening. Steve Buxton Nashua Fire. I think there might be a little bit of confusion on this one. Our initial request for this study was for \$210,000. That was the estimate we got to do all of the facilities. So \$100,000 would not allow us to facilitate that program at this point.

Alderman Jette

Okay. Yes that is some confusion. Okay, so I understood you to say that it would cost \$50,000 for the study but it's not. It's \$210,000.



Steve Buxton, Fire Chief

Correct. So I think the area that the confusion might be in is we currently have \$50,000 in our capital improvements budget for deferred maintenance for our facilities - for all of our facilities. The building conditions assessment study is estimated to cost \$210,000.

Alderman Jette

Okay.

Chairman O'Brien

I want to recognize the captains on the bridge.

Chairman Dowd

All right. Where are we?

Alderman Jette

So I made a motion to increase capital improvements appropriations on page 224, line 81, Fire by \$50,000 for a total of \$100,000 for the building condition assessment study. The Chief has just informed me that I don't know where I thought I got that \$50,000 from him but he says \$50,000 is not enough. It would be \$210,000.

Chairman Dowd

Yeah I know the school one is going to be \$350,000 because there's 20 buildings. Fortunately, they don't have anywhere near that many buildings. If you do, you have to hire an architect to get in and look at the design and find out what the deficiencies are. I can tell you from a lot of experience, they're not cheap. No offense to my architects.

Alderman Jette

So for the for the purpose of discussion, I'll amend my motion to \$210,000 which would be a total of \$260,000 for that line item.

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN JETTE TO AMEND TO \$210,000 FOR A TOTAL OF \$260,000**

ON THE QUESTION

Chairman Dowd

Alderman O'Brien did you want to add something?

Alderman O'Brien

Yeah. I was never happy in the past with the capital improvements and the way things are going. I thought I was under the impression that we're going to look at that differently and come up with a better plan to focus in on capital improvements in the city to target them better. It always seems like I understand something happens such as the Amherst Street station with the floor issue. Nobody really anticipated that but this goes along with like I say in the future, you know, something to identify.

Chairman Dowd

Yeah that dock is further down the river. We'll get to it but not during budget.

Alderman O'Brien

Okay. So the thing is if I may follow up. Yeah if I may follow up, I mean though I think I could support Alderman Jette in this endeavor but the thing is, you know, are we kind of putting the cart before the horse if the other problem is the capital improvements and identifying the need as you mentioned with the School Department and there's others equally as well.

Chairman Dowd

I know that after the budget hits, we're looking at evaluating a bond issuance for parking garages, fire station repairs. Certainly the analysis of all the stations would go a long way to giving us a better estimate of what really needs to be done and therefore a better estimate of costs. So the assessment could be done now or it could be done as part of the bond. The first element of the bond would be to do the assessment but that delays things. My concern is an 80,000 pound million three fire trucks sitting on a concrete slab that's got cracks in it. I know that's Chief Buxton's concern too. So I know they're evaluating it often to make sure it's okay. It's not an immediate crisis but it's not going in the right direction. So Chief which is your preference biting it all out on one piece of the apple or doing it in chunks?

Steve Buxton, Fire Chief

So I just want to be clear. We have \$50,000 in deferred maintenance that was awarded to us the Capital Improvements Program. That's in deferred maintenance. We utilize that and we usually expend that every year trying to keep up with our HVAC systems, odds, and ends throughout the fiscal year. We requested \$210,000 for a facility study separate to the deferred maintenance program. Two completely separate programs and that was not funded through the Capital Improvements Program at this point in time until Alderman Jette just made this program.

I do believe that before we're able to make decisions on where we need to invest dollars through a bond to rehab the facility, we need to study all of our facilities. I know I have roof leaks on a couple of the fire stations. We have the floor situation at Amherst Street and we have a fire station that is probably in need of replacement out on Pine Hill Road. So I think that facility study would be an order. I think you guys are the ones that need to decide which way we would fund that.

Chairman Dowd

So it is in the Capital Improvements Program and its on page 19, B2 fire building condition assessment study \$210,000 and there's certainly a long explanation of why it's needed.

The School Department's looking, not through this budget, but looking at a \$300,000 to do all 20 buildings. We're in a position where we're caught up at the moment and a lot of our buildings in the School Department (inaudible) so the School Department has time to evaluate the rest of the schools so that they can be lined up. I think the fire stations are at least Amherst Street an airport fire station are really need a lot of work. I think the other stations haven't been fully evaluated in - when you did your master study that that came out. They hadn't been evaluated. They needed to be.

Steve Buxton, Fire Chief

That is correct. I forget which bullet point it was within the Master Plan but they did state that the city should prepare to invest money in the Fire Department infrastructure. They should evaluate the facilities to see which ones should be rehabilitated and which ones should potentially be relocated or rebuilt.

Chairman Dowd

Mr. Griffin do you know whether this could be allocated in an unanticipated revenue, or some line at the end of the year, or?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Yes.

Chairman Dowd

Or even considered in that arena?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Yeah what I'd like to do is go back to the heart to heart discussion I had a few weeks ago on June 1<sup>st</sup> with regard to the lack of funding for capital improvements between changing the oil on a on a truck and building \$130 million multi-school, middle school district. We've never been able to fund what the Chief is asking. We probably need to but you have to start at some point. The great City of Cambridge, MA, \$800 million budget with an \$85 million capital improvement program. The Mayor here tonight he readily admits \$812,000 is a drop in the bucket when you're talking about a \$370 million

operating budget. So when you talk about straightening out, or fixing, or reorienting the Capital Improvement Program, we've got some great volunteers on that. They put their heart and soul into it. They rate these projects but they're told don't worry about the funding.

So in my little Town of Tyngsboro, we have a Capital Asset Program that funds things you need and they have to make choices. So I've been looking at this for 13 years and the numbers are its a half a billion dollars of needs anywhere from a \$10,000 study, to a \$210,000 study, to a \$300,000. Mr. Smith comes in and says I need a million dollars a year and he gets 100. Right. So that isn't going to be straightened out. We're going to have to fund the things in the middle otherwise, you're just going to be bonding in perpetuity. You're actually going to bond and your option tonight for the Chief is do you want to fund the 210 in a bonding authorization. You certainly could. You'll get the assessment. You go to architectural engineering, get the construction, and that's kind of how we've operated. So you can flip it around and change the Capital Equipment Program and come up with funding, right? Come up with a pecking order of where you want to have first. That's the problem we have. We had a great debate on fire apparatus that you've probably watched diligently. Why don't we pay cash for that and bond the rest? You know what I mean? We don't have the cash. This 812 is what we were putting forth to the residents and businesses. This is what we selected and that's not an impressive list.

#### Chairman Dowd

So I know for a fact we have over \$1 billion in building assets in the school system and this year's deferred maintenance was 100k from the Mayor and capital improvements. Now we're getting some money from another source or I'd be making a motion tonight. I've had discussions and it's for downstream. It's not for now with Director Sullivan. He and I are going to be talking about this program going forward because did the – in the assessment you guys did, did they come up with a value of all your fire stations?

#### Steve Buxton, Fire Chief

Yeah, I believe the current evaluation for all of our assets facility wise is just under \$15 million.

#### Chairman Dowd

So if you do any of the analysis on how much you should be putting aside for deferred maintenance on infrastructure, I know 13 years ago, 14 years ago now, we determined on the school system at that time before the new school was built that we should have been putting a million dollars aside every year for school deferred maintenance and we've been doing \$100,000. Last year we got a little more because I pushed it. We are not taking care of our buildings. What happens is all of a sudden, oh my God, you've got a huge bond to replace a building because you didn't take care of it and now it's falling down. I could give you all kinds of examples.

#### Alderman Wilshire

A lot of that has to do with the spending cap. Defer, defer because we have to meet certain percentage so. We've been handcuffed by that for 30 years.

#### John Griffin, CFO Treasurer/Tax Collector

But I guess what I'll remembering your first question if I may, we usually have appropriations not spent and this could be an item that you would identify the source and go through the escrow process because it's a capital item. If we don't clutter the appropriations not spent and with all sincerity with operational costs that should have been budgeted in the first place, you're going to have going forward you're going to have some good money to spend. It's a reasonable approach to fund this with some appropriations not spent.

#### Chairman Dowd

I fully support doing the analysis. I'm just a little hung up on we put as part of the budget that we do it another way. Actually, I was gonna ask Alderman Sullivan what his thoughts were but do you want start with Alderman Jette?

#### Alderman Jette

Yeah I just want to say that, I mean I feel that the study, you know, I came here with the idea that the study was very necessary. You can't start fixing these buildings until you do a study and find out what's needed.

Chairman Dowd

That's true.

Alderman Jette

So proper planning requires that we do the study first. When it was \$50,000, it was a no brainer for me. When I spoke to the Mayor, \$50,000 was no problem for him either. Now that it's \$210,000 it, I don't know how the Mayor would feel about it. I guess I still think that it's important that we take care of the buildings that we have before we start building new ones. This is a step in the right direction I think. I don't know what adding 210 to the budget what that would equate to as far as the burden on the taxpayer but maybe if it could be done through escrow. I'm not sure that doing it through a bond. I don't know. I defer to the expert but to me \$210,000 is a small number for a bond when you consider the expenses of getting the bond and the interest on top of the bond. It seems like 210 is something that we ought to be able to find.

Chairman Dowd

No my thinking on that was that the first part of the bond would be do the analysis. As part of the analysis upfront, you get an estimate for the rest of the cost on the bond so that when the bond went in, you would have an estimated cost of what they're going to say are repairs required up to a point. If it goes beyond that because the station is in worse shape than we think I think but I think most of them are in ok shape. Then you'd either have to add money to the bond, or you don't spend it, and you reallocate it somewhere else, or just don't buy the bonds. So you can get a good estimate up front from an architect as to what it was going to be then they get into the details. So they do the detailed study up front and get an estimate of the costs to what they think is going to be the stations.

Alderman Jette

Follow up. So how do you come up with the \$210,000? How to how do you know how much to borrow if your bond is dependent upon the estimate of the cost of construction?

Chairman Dowd

It's like the schools. We go out to - we put out an RFP to do an estimate of repairs on say Main Dunstable/ Birch Hill, and they come back with an estimate, and then we take that estimate and go for a bond. Same thing. We do it as all part of one bond. Part of the bond would be the estimate to get the price but we'd allocate what we think it's - we have a lot of experience in building buildings. I'm sure anybody that's on the Joint Special School Building Committee knows what the cost of architects are. They're not cheap but they would do that analysis. They've done so many of these things that they would do a preliminary visit before we do the bonding to every one of the stations and say okay, I think it's gonna take us this much to figure this out. We figured this is probably the things that need to be repaired. They give us a price and they're very conservative or we could do the analysis separately and then bond what they come up with.

Alderman Jette

Yes. So could I get an answer from Mr. Griffin about the effect on the tax rate?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Sure. Every \$2.5 million is 1% on the tax rate. So to one and 10 would be a fraction of an increase.

Alderman Jette

Would it be unfair to ask you like how many dollars and cents that would add to the tax rate?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

I would be 210,000 divided by 2.5 times 1807.

Alderman Jette

Oh, why didn't you say so?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

It's a small number. It's a small number. The problem we have and I've tried to be honest as Fire Chief Buxton that, you know, you've heard from the Police Department. You've heard from Citywide Communications. You've heard from the school. You've heard from the Library. You've heard from Parking. You know what I mean? It's the sum of all the needs that creates the half a billion dollars with the CIC. So what we've done is we've kind of come in and you know everyone's got a great bond - 25 million here, 15 over here and it's like geez that's not too bad. I think what we're talking about is what is our capital improvement plan that has roots and the needs and then you have to say what is it that you want to do? But safety first, obviously.

Chairman Dowd

The other alternative is to defer for now and see if we can get the money in another way for the study. But right after the budget passed, we get an estimate of what it's going to cost Amherst Street and the airport fire station to do a bond. Those aren't changing no matter how many times the study. What they need is what they need and what they need is they need something fast. So those are options.

When those two stations are fixed, somewhere along the line we do the study and find out what the rest of the stations look like and see. The thing that I've been trying to do is get the capital improvements laid out in a priority basis for funding and tie the capital improvements projects to the bonding plan so that we know in 2026/2027 these are things that we want to bond and we sort of have set limits for the out years and not go crazy on something else we hadn't planned on. That's downstream.

Alderman Kelly

So I have many thoughts on this and we've talked through this a lot. I think that the seven needs to happen but I also think that we've heard like it was spoken about schools are an issue, or library is an issue, Holman is an issue. So this whole idea of having an actual plan for upkeeping our infrastructure really needs to be considered because we give him \$210,000, we get this report, and then we're gonna get another wish list to add to the half a billion dollars and projects that we know we can't fund. So I'm a big picture person. I'm thinking about how do we come up with a solution that will allow us to start putting more than \$100,000 in this deferred maintenance on a school portfolio that you said was what \$16 billion? Is that what you said our schools worth?

Chairman Dowd

One billion dollars of infrastructure.

Alderman Kelly

Sorry, \$1 billion. I think that that is a true discussion that we need to have around if we're building new schools, if we're building or improving our fire stations what's our long term plan to make sure that we don't end up back where we're pulling down Elm Street because it's cheaper to build a brand new building. I would love to do the study but I think that that bigger discussion that we continue to talk about every year needs to happen because if we continue to just put \$50,000 in there, we're gonna continue to have the issues and we're going to have (inaudible) holes every year.

Alderman O'Brien

Thank you. I'm kind of still circling my brain where to go with this. But anyways at the very most, it seems like we're talking to defer Chief and something else popped up that you haven't - I haven't heard before. One of the stations has a roof leak. I'm happy to say I worked at the old Crown Hill station where you actually showed up with an umbrella inside on a rainy day. But that being said, I'm dating myself here, but can you go and ask your Captains to copulate what is needed for the particular stations? If we call with the bond, you know, have those numbers in preparation whether for the Committee of Infrastructure and Budget so that we can work with that and at least have an in-house need of what we want.

Chairman Dowd

I'm pretty sure they already know that. I think he gets feedback every day. So basically as I see it either don't pass this now and hope we get it at the end of the year revenues and cover it that way or we don't pass it, and we wait, and we have an architect look at Amherst Street, and the airport fire station and get an estimate on those repairs and do a bond. At some point down the line, do the further analysis or we pass it tonight and up capital improvements 210k, which increases

the budget. As I said, I'd like to get Alderman Sullivan's thoughts.

Alderman Sullivan

I appreciate that. You had me at 50. You lost me at 210. I'll be honest. I'm thinking about this whole discussion and a million years ago I used to sell advertising. So let me tell you a little story. So I used to preach this theory called "the Theory of the Glasses". What would happen is you would have a business owner that would try to take their entire ad budget and they would spread it across all these different - I would use water glasses here - and they'd do a little bit, little bit, little bit, little bit. The problem is is that you don't do enough to make an impact. When I look at this \$812,000, I would look at it and say let's come up with a comprehensive plan. Is that the number? Is that not the number? Then some people are going to get, you know, maybe people are unhappy but you take okay, sorry Public Works we're going to take your 340 and we're going to add it to the 50,000 plus a little bit more and we're going to take care of the Fire Department this year because that is the priority. Then that money actually does it as opposed to just putting \$50,000 against the fire line and then maybe that doesn't really do much. So you think like well we put aside \$50,000. Like what is the number, what is the plan, and then fund it. Some you can do, some you can't. I mean I think it's, you know, it's not decisions. It's tradeoffs. I mean you hear that all the time. So those are my thoughts.

Chairman Dowd

So I appreciate your thoughts because the School Department put in this year a little over a million dollars in capital improvements. They got \$100,000. The total number, and I should have left the page open, the total number I think for capital improvements a projects was Director Sullivan smoke signal?

Alderman Sullivan

\$30 million.

Chairman Dowd

\$30 million. So if we add this 210 to what's already in the budget for capital improvements, it's a little over or a little under a million which is ridiculously low for maybe \$2 billion in infrastructure in the city. We are not being good stewards of our infrastructure and it bites us later on. When we tore down the old high school where South is now, we had multiple air handlers rusted shut, we had mold. We had - I can't get into all the issues we had. When we got done tearing the building down to add to it, we only had the stairwells in one wall. Alderman McCarthy always said, we should just torn down the whole damn thing down started from scratch and did a copy of the North, which we almost did.

So, you know, we can either put a little money aside now or we can spend multiple millions of dollars replacing buildings later. Like if the floor falls in at the Amherst Street station, do you know what that's gonna cost us? Could start with a couple of million dollars' worth of trucks but replacing that station, now you're talking what was Lake Street? West Hollis Street - that was \$15 million.

Alderman O'Brien

Before its time.

Alderman Jette

It's not enough room not in Amherst Street to build it.

Chairman Dowd

No, no, I know. It would be if you to planned by eminent domain but I'm not even gonna go there. But no matter what you replace there, it's gonna be a lot of money. So we can either do the study and find out what it costs to fix it and fix it or we can wait until the floor falls in. It's that simple. I mean it's just that simple. As much as I hate to add more money to the budget, it still only puts capital improvements in around a million dollars which is ridiculously low when the capital improvements is seeing a project is for \$20 million. It costs money to run a city. Much as I hate adding \$200,000 more to the budget, it makes sense.

Alderman Wilshire

It's tough \$210,000 to add. I would really ideally like to see this come out of escrow. But what's the \$50,000 going to do? Are you going to keep that motion or are you going to...

Chairman Dowd

No he amended it to the 210.

Alderman Jette

I amended it to 210 once I heard that I had the wrong number.

Alderman Wilshire

Yeah. Ideally, I would like to see it come out of escrow and not be budgeted. So that's...

Chairman Dowd

I can tell you if it doesn't pass that Mr. Griffin and I will have a meeting with the Mayor and twist his arm to see where we can find it somewhere. It definitely has to get done but it's just a matter of where we get the money, right? Any other discussion?

Alderman O'Brien

Is he withdrawing?

Chairman Dowd

No he didn't withdraw it.

Alderman Jette

No I didn't withdraw it.

Alderman Wilshire

So the motion is to add \$210,000?

Chairman Dowd

To the capital improvements line for the Fire Department. I forget what the line numbers are. My scribe over here I'm sure has it.

Alderman Sullivan

Department 81, line 5.

Alderman O'Brien

No I think Alderman Jette hopefully kept the right record of this. I ran out of space on the city worksheet.

Alderman Jette

Yes, I did.

Chairman Dowd

Miss Lindner do you get that down?

Alderman O'Brien

You're the best Miss Lindner.

Chairman Dowd

She certainly is. All right. There's no further discussion.

**MOTION FAILED**

Chairman Dowd

We will certainly push to get that money another way.

Alderman Sullivan

Okay. I have five motions to make. I'm gonna make it real easy on you. Alderman O'Brien it's all on the same page and I wrote it all out.

Alderman O'Brien

Do you have to sheets because we'll have to go the...

Alderman Sullivan

I wrote it all out.

Alderman O'Brien

Oh you're the best. Can I have that afterwards? Merci beaucoup.

Alderman Sullivan

Of course. All right. Motion number one. I would like to make a motion to remove \$50,000 from interfund transfer Department 89, page 223 - all of these are on the same page 223. Line number 2 to 14 Court Street Expendable Trust Fund. Could I speak to my motion, please?

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN SULLIVAN TO REMOVE \$50,000 FROM INTERFUND TRANSFER DEPARTMENT 89, PAGE 223, LINE NUMBER 2 TO 14 COURT STREET EXPENDABLE TRUST FUND**

ON THE QUESTION

Alderman Sullivan

There is currently \$50,000 in the Expendable Trust Fund through the end of May according to the city website. There were zero expenses drawn on that Expendable Trust Fund last fiscal year. In the description of the trust fund, it said that \$50,000 would be equivalent to a year's worth of expenses. Since there were no expenses withdrawn and \$50,000 remain. That will suffice for the next fiscal year. Thus, I am motioning to remove \$50,000 additional to that fund.

Chairman Dowd

Mr. Griffin is that expendable trust does that have spending authority on it?

John Griffin, CFO, Treasurer, Tax Collector

Well the genesis was that there's money being spent at 14 Court Street. There's revenue coming in and the revenue coming in was designed to essentially fund this particular trust fund that could do certain things in the future that are not taken care of by the Building Trust Fund. So I wouldn't assume any - this was a building of a fund to be used for certain, I would say, larger expenses of 14 Court Street. Historically, we've put new suppression equipment over there, we've done some roof enhancements. So the thought behind the setting up of this is kind of a trust fund is to kind of earmark to the renters over there that their money that they're paying is actually going to benefit the facility at some point.



Chairman Dowd

So Court Street this expendable trust is who manages the building? Is that our building city...?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Director Cummings probably knows that better than I but I believe it's in this part of the city buildings portfolio.

Chairman Dowd

So this building is used primarily for younger children and the arts. We have revenue coming in from a very lucrative place that serves delicious beverages without naming it and they just expanded it and are paying us rent to offset the cost of that building. This money as I understand it would be for okay all of a sudden they started something needed to be done, they had money they could reach out for. I'd be hesitant to - did you want to say something Alderwoman Kelly?

Alderwoman Kelly

Oh thank you. I mean I would say that I think that this is a good example of what we're trying to do in other areas of the city where we put this money aside so that if there's a bigger problem at 14 Court Street, we can take care of it in slow incremental. So there's \$50,000 in there but that's not really enough to cover some of the bigger needs. I don't know how often you've been in that theater. I'm on the Board of Peacock Players and I go there a lot with my daughter. She was at camp. It is in disrepair and so the fund that we put together was to try to make sure that the money that comes out of that building goes back into that building. So I'm not going to support the motion to remove this but I think that was the thinking and I'd love to see us do more of that for other buildings.

Chairman Dowd

Just FYI, that auditorium has chairs that were donated by BAE over 20 years ago. I used to have them in my office 20 years ago. They're still being used and not really comfortable.

Alderwoman Kelly

It needs a lot of help. No they're comfortable.

Alderman Wilshire

Yeah a question for Mr. Griffin. Is there \$50,000 in that account now? I mean this was printed on 3/31.

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

There's \$50,000 in there now. As I kind of recall the intent, it was not to put money in and take money out. It wasn't meant to be an operational take care of the electric and other things and cleaning. It was to build. Some of the Aldermen the proponents of it were like, you know, I really need to show a building that's in disrepair that we're committed to taking some of their rent for the revenue and building this so if three or four years from now something happens, you have a funding mechanism.

Alderman Wilshire

Follow up? Yeah and that's what we were just talking about that we don't take care of things. In this instance, we're putting money in there so I don't think I can support that.

Chairman Dowd

The building is old enough to have houses the horses when we were using horses for the fire station. I was gonna stay away from that but I know that the restrooms in there if one of them gives away because it's over - it's got to be - how old are you? And they lose an entire bathroom, they've got no my place to go. They would have to come back to us if we didn't have that 50k and ask us for money to fix them.

Alderman Jette

Yes. So I have a question. This is interfund transfers and so this \$50,000 is being transferred to 14 Court Street. Where is it coming from?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Alderman Jette with your appropriation, it's coming from the general fund transferring into taking \$50,000 - so it's an appropriation. You're appropriating it into the Expendable Trust Fund.

Alderman Jette

Okay. So could I follow up? So the \$50,000 that we're going to put into here is not \$50,000 that we have now its \$50,000 that we're going to collect from the taxpayers?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Its \$50,000 but I think some of the discussion, as I recall, was we roughly earn \$50,000 through the rent and other programming. So the thought on the behalf of Alderman Clemons was you're kind of taken the money that the renters are paying and you're putting it into a fund specifically with the authorization from the Mayor or the Administrative Services Director to fix things that are broken.

Alderman Jette

Okay. So I know all the money is taxpayer money but I suppose one could argue that this money is not coming from the taxpayers. It's coming from the renters of the facility.

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

That's correct. The renters are paying into the general fund revenue and it's around \$50,000. If you take the \$50,000 and you appropriated it, revenue equals sort of the appropriation amount. The idea was it was revenue neutral. It wasn't going to - historically without this, you had to use the general city building fund that's got all kinds of needs. So the thought behind the creation, although it is another building fund, but it's dedicated. It's the people that use it are funding capital improvements down the road. That was the whole basis of it.

Chairman Dowd

So usually these are established by a resolution, is that correct?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Yes. This was a resolution approved.

Chairman Dowd

So I don't know is we're allowed to do anything with it in this budget process. I think it would have to be another resolution outside the budget process to do anything with that amount and there's also spending authorities which have the right to spend it.

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

One follow up? I'm not sure in the resolution a little bit unlike the downtown improvement resolution which committed \$100,000, I think it's up to you folks to put money in or not put money in.

Chairman Dowd

Right and put money in but the spending authority is who?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

The spending authority is the Mayor or the Administrative Services Director.

Chairman Dowd

Okay. So not the Board of Aldermen?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

No.

Chairman Dowd

So I think that in many cases, that's problematic. I appreciate trying to lower the budget but that particular amount of money to earmark savings on Court Street is – unless there's ever a replacement for Court Street, I think we need to safeguard it. It might be. Anyone else. Seeing no one.

**MOTION FAILED**

Alderman Sullivan

I'm even going to mark down that it failed. So I'm gonna keep track of it for you. All I'm gonna do is I'm just gonna give it to you. I'm training for being a clerk someday.

Chairman Dowd

Here you go. He's offering to take your job.

Alderman Sullivan

No I'm not.

All right. One down four to go. I would like to make a motion – page 223 to remove \$37,025 from interfund transfer Department 89, line number six, to the Deane Skateboard Park Expendable Trust Fund and I'd like to speak to it please.

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN SULLIVAN TO REMOVE \$37,025 ON PAGE 223 FROM INTERFUND TRANSFER DEPARTMENT 89, LINE NUMBER SIX, TO THE DEANE SKATEBOARD PARK EXPENDABLE TRUST FUND**

ON THE QUESTION

Alderman Sullivan

There is currently \$135,840 in this trust fund and less than \$1,000 in expenses made this past fiscal year. The current fund balance should suffice through this fiscal year. We only spend \$1,000 out of that fund. So I'm questioning why do we need to put in another \$37,025 into it.

Chairman Dowd

So I may defer this to Alderman Wilshire but when we set up this arrangement with former Alderman Deane, the skateboard park used to be over by the bridges to Hudson. Because of that development, the skateboard park got moved under certain conditions. I don't think it's named after David. I think it's named after his father?

Alderman Wilshire

Correct.

Chairman Dowd

And certain conditions were made in the legislation to move that and I don't think that we can touch it. That would be a Legal I guess question but...

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Yeah so I want to give a little bit of history because I have - a few years ago, we actually tried to reduce this budget. It didn't go over well. The reason why is it's tied essentially to the cell tower revenue that is over near the former David Deane Skate Park. So it's not - let's put it this way, it's not you have to have a like amount. If its 37,000, you have to put 37 in but the thought behind it, the spirit of it is that whatever the good estimate is the David Deane Skate Park the cell tower near it – now it's not near it but it's appropriate. It's known. It's expected. We tried to cut it in half to save some shackles and it didn't go over well. We tried to cut in half Mine Falls, David Deane, and Holman Stadium. It's the same logic for the 14 Court Street. You're trying to build up things. A lot of us that were here at the time when we had to move it, it was a very expensive...

Chairman Dowd

Very expensive

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

A very well done skate park. I'm not a skateboard person but it looks impressive.

Chairman Dowd

There's a lot of State in New England and even national skateboarding things - and not that I go watch them either but how old is that? It can't be that old.

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Believe it or not time flies. I think it was - it could be like 2015/2016.

Chairman Dowd

Really?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

I don't know when Aldermen Deane left the Board of Aldermen but he was here. He was a proponent of...

Chairman Dowd

I remember it being built.

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

I'm remembering like a half a million involved.

Alderman Caron

In the 2000.

Chairman Dowd

So the one that we replaced, that one was fairly new and then there was all hell about moving it so we made all kinds of agreements when we moved it not to mess with it. I can't remember what they were but that skateboard park is extensively used. I don't know if they spent that much but they may be getting revenues in from all these events which saves the city money in (inaudible). They don't charge?

Alderman Caron

No they better not. That's why they get the money from the cell tower. Am I dating myself?

Chairman Dowd

Anyway, I think that we would get a lot of pushback if we tried to change it. Again, I think that was established by a

resolution. Again, you'd have to rescind the resolution to do anything with that funding. Like you said the last time we tried that, all hell broke loose.

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Like I said if I just point of clarification, I don't think it's not tied. It doesn't say take the route but it's expected. It's to repair, maintain. That's the reason for it.

Chairman Dowd

And I'm not sure we do it as part of the budget because Mr. Griffin I've talked about these accounts for years. The ones that are expendable by the Mayor and the Finance Officer are probably the easier ones that they haven't been tapped in a long time to zero out and get rid of. I still think we need to do it by a resolution not by the budget.

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Correct.

Chairman Dowd

So I'm not sure that we can just do this as part of the budget process. That particular resolution that created it would have to be rescinded by resolution outside of the budget resolution.

Alderman Sullivan

So are you saying that in each one of these resolutions - so I have three more motions all around trust funds, around the general fund appropriation of money? Are you are you saying that it's written into the resolution that we must fund every fiscal year this trust fund?

Chairman Dowd

No. No, no. I don't know how - unless the resolution actually says that it has to be funded by usually the monies that go in a lot of them, we have to pass separate money. Well I mean if you just mentioned the ones to Mr. Griffin, he can tell you. If we are allocating money - if somebody is earmarked to allocate money into it this year that we don't want to do as a Board of Aldermen that we have control, we can say no. If its monies that come from a resolution that say, for instance, the renter at Court Street that puts money into that account, we can't then do anything with that money. Only the people that can spend it can. If we made an agreement with somebody that this would go into this account to maintain that building, we get in trouble if something happens to the building and we're on the hook because we took the money out of that and we would have to fund it with fund repairs.

Alderman Sullivan

But can you see my reasoning?

Chairman Dowd

Oh I see your reasoning because I've tried to work with this for years.

Alderman Sullivan

Because we're putting money into this every year of \$37,000, we only spent \$1,000 out of the fund so why put another \$37,000 in it?

Chairman Dowd

You're talking about the skateboard park?

Alderman Sullivan

Yes, Sir.

Chairman Dowd

That revenue is coming from the cell tower is it not?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

That's correct.

Chairman Dowd

We're not putting it in.

Alderman Sullivan

Well it's in the general fund.

Chairman Dowd

It's because the money from the cell tower goes into the general fund and then the general fund money goes into this account. Its money generated by the cell tower that under the agreement of the resolution, we can't use it for anything else I don't believe, right?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

We'd have to check the resolution but it doesn't say take every bit of revenue from the cell tower and put it in but that's the expectation.

Chairman Dowd

So any of these that you have questions on if we say no here, which we might, you can check with Legal and get their opinion on what it takes to change that. If it's allowed, then you can bring it up at the 27<sup>th</sup> but if it's not allowed, it's a moot point.

Alderman Sullivan

Well and I'm going to save the Committee's time and I'm not going to go through the rest of these. I'm going to check the resolutions and I will check with Legal to see if I have any grounds to not fund these.

Chairman Dowd

That would be the safest way. I'd hate to get wrapped around messing with the resolution that we just took the wrong action on and up in court again. God forbid. Anyway any others?

Alderman Sullivan

No because they're all - no.

Chairman Dowd

You have a motion?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

No I can't make a motion. I want to give you a little history. I know I can't make a motion but a few weeks ago, Director Fauteux and Senior Manager O'Connor - Carolyn O'Connor wanted to setup an expendable trust fund for expenses related to this item called "the Sculpture Symposium". I got back to them and I said, you know, you really don't want to set up an expendable trust fund if you're just going to not grow it. You're just going to pay the numbers 10,000 out to the people that run that every year. So reviewing with the Mayor and Director Fauteux if it was okay with the Board to make a motion to create in that civic and community activities area a line \$10,000 for the sculpture symposium.

Now what happens is Director Fauteux there's no funding source from the city. So she and her team get called from time to time to "help out" moving sculptures, making sure they're not falling apart. I don't know much about it. I'm not a sculpture enthusiast but if someone was willing to make a motion – I've reviewed it with the Mayor and Director Fauteux - we could put a line \$10,000.

Chairman Dowd

I love the one they put in Ward 2. It's beautiful.

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

We have things like funding for the arts. I'm not quite familiar with that either but that would go a long way.

Chairman Dowd

So is this also going to be an area where people that want to donate to the arts for that program can put money in?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

No. This would be an appropriation added to the civic and community activities area.

Chairman Dowd

So this would be a yearly budget thing?

C. John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Correct?

Alderwoman Kelly

I think this symposium that we do is an incredible asset to the city. It's one of the - we have some one of the largest sculpture collection of a city and I think they do an incredible job.

I'm happy to make the motion. I wanted to know how they've funded it for though.

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

I think they've called Director Fauteux - like from like heavy labor and other things. They call her and she's been amenable to helping them.

Chairman Dowd

It came out of the hide of the DPW and these sculptures are getting bigger, and bigger, and bigger.

Alderwoman Kelly

They're beautiful though. I'm happy to make the motion. I don't know that you gave us a clear line but I'm happy to make that motion.

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

So it would be similar. It would be page 40, \$10,000 under Civic and Community Activities and we'd have a line. We haven't quite identified the series but it would be a 56 line that we create and if approved, we put it in.

**MOTION BY ALDERWOMAN KELLY ON PAGE TO ADD \$10,000 UNDER CIVIC AND COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES, LINE 56**

Chairman Dowd

So I think from a fairness standpoint, these are world renowned artists coming into Nashua, developing a piece of art at no cost to the city, and displaying them in the city to, depending how you interpret each one, beautify the city and they keep asking the DPW to take monies that aren't allocated for this out of their budget to move some of these heavy sculptures and get them placed. I think it's only fair that we do this.

Alderman Kelly

Okay.

Chairman Dowd

Any other questions?

Alderman Jette

I know that the sculpture symposium is funded out of perhaps - ladies, I don't know. You might know the answer.

Alderman Kelly

What was the question? Sorry.

Alderman Jette

So I think the sculpture symposium is funded by - there's an organization - I forget the title of the organization - but there's some organization that, you know, the funds they pay these.

Chairman Dowd

I'm familiar with them. The travel for the artists, the housing, the food, all that's covered by private donations but they don't have any way of moving these huge statues to put them in place. That's the only thing they're asking for. The rest of it's covered by donations.

Alderman Jette

Right. So my question was whether they would have sufficient funding to reimburse the city for the cost of moving these things?

Chairman Dowd

My guess is I'm not 100% sure but I'm seeing Director Cummings saying no. They don't have the extra money. They're lucky to get by with what they're doing.

Alderman Jette

Okay.

Alderman Kelly

I think it's a good question. I just wanted to amend - I know it was a very specific thing but we're the only city in the United States with an annual International Sculpture Symposium and it's a quirky little thing that not everybody knows about but it's really such an asset of the city. So I think \$10,000 to make sure that these can be placed when these artists come in and support this art.

Chairman Dowd

I know I've contribute some money to it.

Alderman O'Brien

I'll pay \$10,000 if they do me in a sculptor.



Chairman Dowd

It will take a lot more than that.

Alderman Kelly

I'd pay 20 not to.

Alderman Caron

Thank you. First of all, the symposium because these sculptures are going into public facilities, mostly parks, and areas like that, Park and Recreation is the one that brings them to the site, sets them up, and works with the Street Department and that's always been part of the project.

One of the things you have to think about though is how many places we have to put the sculptures because I noticed one of the new ones is by the exit on Temple Street near the Senior Center and that's huge. I mean it's beautiful but it's huge. I know that the committee came to me to find out if they could put another sculpture at Sullivan Park. I said if the neighbors have no problem with it, it's fine because they now have two sculptures out there. So space is going to become an issue down the road because you're using city facilities to put these massive pieces of work. I'll tell you that the welder that I live with loves the one on Main Street by the old Indian Head bank with all the faces. He'd like it in his backyard.

Chairman Dowd

Any other questions on this?

Alderman Jette

Does Director Fauteux have a driver to drive these?

Chairman Dowd

Do you know the people on these sculpture symposiums? You don't want to say no to them. Oh, my God.

Alderman Caron

Park Rec. has to travel.

Chairman Dowd

Any other questions? Seeing none.

**MOTION CARRIED**

Chairman Dowd

Any other motions this evening? If not the motion on the floor is to approve the modified budget that was modified this evening with amendments to R-23-125. Is there any discussion?

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN O'BRIEN TO RECOMMEND FINAL PASSAGE OF R-23-125 AS AMENDED IN THE AMOUNT OF \$317,505,102**

Alderman Wilshire

So by my calculations, we've added \$1,812 to the budget?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Correct.

Chairman Dowd

Which is far less significant than we've ever done. We had a lot more last year.

Alderman Jette

Can you repeat that number?

Alderman Wilshire

\$1,812 we have added tonight to the budget.

Alderman Jette

That's all?

Alderman Wilshire

That's it.

Chairman Dowd

We do have another motion Alderman?

And just to remind everybody so the other Aldermen that aren't here, other motions can be made the 27<sup>th</sup> when we do this with final passage but this would be the recommendation from the Budget Committee for the FY24 budget. Do you have the exact number just for the record?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

So Mr. Chairman the General Fund, which was modified tonight, is \$317,505,102.

Chairman Dowd

All right. So the motion on the floor is to recommend to the full Board the final approval of R-23-125 in an amount of \$317,505,102. Any discussion?

Alderman Sullivan

I actually have that we dropped at \$8,000. That's what I have unless I missed a motion.

Alderman Wilshire

Mr. Griffin and I both agreed. We both have the same number.

Alderman Sullivan

Okay. All right. I must have missed the motion.

Chairman Dowd

And our professional scribe sitting in the back of the room with a calculator.

Alderman O'Brien

Hey I'm doing okay here.

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

We dropped to 23 cents if that's okay.

Alderman Jette

So what we're doing actually, I think, is we're recommending final passage or that the budget be amended and then final passage as amended.

Chairman Dowd

Right to the full Board.

Alderman Jette

Okay.

Chairman Dowd

So it's not official until the full Board votes on it.

Alderman Jette

Right.

Chairman Dowd

So just so you know, we have increased the budget. So to pass the budget, we will need at least 10 votes.

Alderman Jette

Right.

Chairman Dowd

If there's nothing else?

**MOTION CARRIED**

Chairman Dowd

The Board of Aldermen meeting is on the 27<sup>th</sup>.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Alderman Jette

Yeah so somebody said that the gross domestic product implicit price deflator for state and local government consumption expenditures and gross investment was included in the book but I can't find it. Is that...?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

It was included in the resolution.

Alderman Jette

Okay. So that provides that number plus what the limit on budget whatever? That's all in there?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Correct. That that calculation that recognizes all expenditures to include grants, supplemental appropriations, enterprise funds, and general fund roughly \$412 million, which is approximately \$43 million under the cap.

Alderman Jette

Okay. Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

So Mr. Griffin, Ms. Lindner, and Ms. Graham will have a golden rod copy with a new number on it for the 27<sup>th</sup>.

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Correct.

Chairman Dowd

Any other general discussion?

Alderman O'Brien

Yeah it's just I think this is my eighth budget being on this particular Committee and some of it has been the Clerk. I like to thank Ms. Lindner for catching everything that I have missed and Alderman Sullivan too. But eight budgets, I think we've done pretty good with this one so I commend you all. Thank you very much.

Chairman Dowd

So this is my 24th budget but I'm not counting.

Alderwoman Kelly

Worried to say the same thing?

Yeah I just wanted to thank everyone. I think we did a lot of good work talking through some of these smaller pieces that we know have to happen and then some of the bigger discussions to want to have moving forward. So just wanted to compliment Alderman Dowd. I loved the binder. I'm really normally got an online person but I think it really is nice to be able to poke through so I like the binder.

I know that Megan Caron was instrumental in getting us into an online format so I gave her some feedback from public comment and my own around being able to search it. You can't search it right now and we talked a little bit about maybe being able to change the font sizes.

Chairman Dowd

Yeah this was the first stab at using the new software.

Alderwoman Kelly

Yup she said they were very responsive.

Chairman Dowd

Next year the print will be larger and we'll get magnifying glasses with each book.

Alderwoman Kelly

Can we maybe make it so you can ask for a large print form?

Chairman Dowd

It's much easier to read by the way online because you can blow it up as much as you want.

So by the way, I wanted to thank everybody on the Budget Committee. This year I felt that the Budget Committee was much more engaged, much more questioning, and we had great meetings, and thank you all for participating. Now I have a few more free nights and there's no hockey, no basketball. What the heck am I going to do?

Alderman O'Brien

Well you don't have to worry about them Bruins or Celts. Red Sox baby.

PUBLIC COMMENT – None

REMARKS BY THE ALDERMEN

ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting was declared closed at 10:00 p.m.

Michael B. O'Brien, Sr., Committee Clerk