

## **City Council Work Session**

**April 11, 2016**

Present were: Mayor Grenier, Councilors Otis, Remillard, Gentili, Morgan Allain, Higbee, Rozek, and Theberge; Councilor Nelson was absent.

Others present included City Manager James Wheeler, Community Development Director Pamela Laflamme, Public Works Director Mike Perreault, Finance Director Patty Chase, Berlin Representative of NHMA Legislative Policies Tom McCue, Elaine Riendeau, HEB Lead Engineer Jay Poulin, Barbara Tetreault from the Berlin Daily Sun.

### **NHMA Legislative Policy Process 2017-18**

Tom McCue reported that the New Hampshire Municipal Association advocates legislation for municipalities. They are looking ahead at 2017-2018 legislation to introduce to a new group of legislators and a new Governor. Mr. McCue indicated that he is on the Finance Committee and there are 30 proposed policies to review. The Committee will review each proposed policy asking such questions as, what the risks are and what can be gained from the policies. Who would be opposed? Would the policy cost money; and would the policy be divisive among municipalities? The Committee will then recommend whether NHMA should support or oppose the policy. At the end of May, the policies will be compiled and published in Town and City Magazine. At the end of September there is a policy conference and Mr. McCue promised to come back in late summer to review the policies and get feedback and how to vote on behalf of the City. He encouraged anyone having a policy to propose to let him know.

### **Review of Upcoming Construction Projects**

Jay Poulin informed the Council that Hutchins Street has had its bid opening and the notice of award has been issued. There is a pre-construction meeting set for Wednesday and once bond requirements are met by the contractor, work will begin. Final completion of the project should be at the end of July.

Since there are federal funds involved, the project requires near full time observation of the construction. DOT has approved an Independent government estimate. Councilor Rozek asked what a “reimbursable expense” is and Mr. Poulin noted that it is mostly materials testing to be sure the material used meets the specs before it is installed. SW Cole is a geotechnical firm being contracted to do the testing. Councilor Rozek asked if \$61,938 would be considered the not to exceed amount and Mr. Poulin replied that any increase would need prior approval from the DOT and the city.

Councilor Rozek affirmed that there would be three people from HEB working on the project, one full time on site engineer, one project engineer who will work about 8 hours per week and one administrative staff for a total of about 60 hours per week. Councilor Theberge asked about drainage in the area of Success Road and Mr. Poulin noted that a ditch line will be maintained and there will also be drain basins.

### **Route 16**

Mr. Poulin explained that there are 6 contractors who have purchased plans for bids that are due Thursday, April 14 at 2:00 pm. They are all good, capable potential bidders. Once the apparent low bidder is identified, it should be a two to four week process for the contractor to meet the bonding requirements and get the notice to proceed out, likely in mid May. Since there is no federal money in the Route 16 Project, a different process was used for awarding the bid. The contractors were given the construction budget of \$5.9 million and they were asked to provide how much project they can do for that money. This way the alternates are part of the competitive bid.

Councilor Theberge asked what the alternates are and Mr. Poulin stated that the base bid is full reconstruction of roads, sidewalks, and drainage from St Anne’s Church to just beyond 12<sup>th</sup> St Bridge and milling and overlay from 12<sup>th</sup> St. the college. Alternative 1 is milling and overlay to Cates Hill Road; Alternative 2 is full reconstruction from St. Anne’s south to the Railroad crossing. Alternative 3 is landscaping on private properties within the project. Landscaping within the base bid includes bump outs at street intersections where trees will be planted. HEB worked with a landscape architect for this aspect of the plan.

Mr. Wheeler added that the other piece to this is the financing. At the next meeting, the bond resolution will be finalized and since bid numbers will be known; the resolution can be amended to the appropriate amount. The project is contingent upon funding.

Councilor Rozek moved to approve the contract administration contracts for Hutchins Street (\$61,938) and Route 16 (\$438,173 + expenses) projects, subject to implementation; Councilor Higbee seconded and the motion carried. All voted in favor.

**Budget**

Mayor Grenier noted that the discussions with the schools have been that they are at level funding. He commented that he will work with them as far as expenditures and revenues to be applied to next year. Councilor Otis asked if any major items have been pulled from capital improvements. Mayor Grenier noted that capital improvements are expenditures that don't affect people's jobs. He confirmed that the second Monday in May is when the Council will decide a budget for publication and the public hearing will be on May 25.

**Other**

Councilor Gentili reported that he sits on the Prison Advisory Board and they are excited about renewing the summer work program that has inmates working in the community.

Councilor Rozek commented that the tax abatement process is going very slow. Filers have not received a phone call yet. Mr. Wheeler stated that he will report back and perhaps some communication can be posted to the web site.

**Adjournment**

Councilor Rozek moved with a second from Councilor Theberge to adjourn. The meeting ended at 7:33 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted  
Susan Tremblay  
Administrative Assistant