

FINAL

**LEBANON CITY COUNCIL
WORK SESSION MINUTES
Wednesday, November 8, 2023, 5:30 p.m.
Council Chambers**

Remote Via Microsoft Teams: LebanonNH.gov/Live

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Tim McNamara, Assistant Mayor Clifton Below, Erling Heistad, Christian Simon, George Sykes, Douglas Whittlesey-Rem Devin Wilkie, Karen Zook-Remote

MEMBERS ABSENT: Karen Liot Hill

STAFF PRESENT: City Manager Shaun Mulholland, Deputy City Manager-Public Services Nik Coates, Deputy Finance Director Alesia Williams, Solid Waste Manager Erica Douglas, DPW Administrative Services Manager Kelly Crate, Acting DPW Director Jay Cairelli, Deputy Human Resources Director Chris Kilmer, DPW Utilities Maintenance Superintendent Rick Brown, Finance Director Vicki Lee

1. **City Manager Shaun Mulholland opened the meeting at 5:30 PM.**
 - **Councilor Zook attended the meeting remotely.**

2. **Review Of 2024 City Budget - Question & Answer Session**

Public Works (DPW)

Acting DPW Director Jay Cairelli provided a presentation of the previous years' challenges and accomplishments. Director Cairelli outlined several challenges for the coming year.

- DPW Administration (Engineering, Energy & Facilities, Operations & Maintenance)
Requesting: \$6,396,520
Included in Agenda: All supporting documents and presentation can be found on pages 123-126 of the Budget Report, Council agenda packet.

Acting Director Cairelli reviewed and explained the budget request. The need for road repairs was highlighted as a significant portion of the budget.

- DPW Water Treatment & Distribution
Requesting: \$4,689,410
Included in Agenda: Supporting budget documents can be found on pages 132-134 of the Budget Report, Council agenda packet.

Acting Director Cairelli reviewed and explained the request. The budget reflects the status quo, but there is a need for a capital reserve for a coming rate spike.

- DPW Sewage Collection & Disposal

Requesting: \$4,839,850

Included in Agenda: Supporting budget documents can be found on pages 136-139 of the Budget Report, Council agenda packet.

Acting Director Cairelli reviewed and explained the request. The budget reflects the status quo, noting a sewer development charge and the fact that the facility would be taking more septage than before.

Council Discussion:

Councilor Sykes inquired about the lifespan of the city roads. City Manager Mulholland explained the maintenance process and costs as related to the budget. Councilor Whittlesey commented on the issue of bonding for road repair.

Acting Director Cairelli shared three scenarios of the budget for road pavement preservation as the most important factor regarding road maintenance. Staffing was also highlighted. The engineering department has two positions that remain unfilled. An additional maintenance position is also being requested. Councilor Sykes noted that money was likely not saved by contracting out work and inquired whether the savings would be short-term or long-term. Acting Director Cairelli stated that filling a position allows the new worker to complete other minor tasks.

Councilor Simon inquired about presenting a budget from both the department heads and the City Manager to get a clear picture of the needs as perceived by the departments rather than the amended version from the City Manager. Councilor Whittlesey inquired about the items that would be cut if the new positions were approved. Acting Director Cairelli stated that it is difficult to determine the actual savings. Councilor Wilkie inquired about the cost savings with the new engineering positions. City Manager Mulholland noted that some engineering coming up would be extremely expensive if it is outsourced.

Councilor Sykes inquired about the plowing contract. Acting Director Cairelli stated that the contracts are in place.

- DPW Solid Waste Disposal
Requesting: \$4,839,850
Included in Agenda: Supporting budget documents can be found on pages 128-130 of the Budget Report, Council agenda packet.

Solid Waste Manager Erica Douglas reviewed and explained the request.

BACKGROUND

Manager Douglas shared highlights of the new programs at the landfill. Some rates will increase this year due to equipment replacement costs, expansion, and contractor fees. Additional staff will be needed to manage the additional food waste coming to the landfill due to a new law.

Council Discussions:

Councilor Simon inquired about leasing equipment. Manager Douglas stated that it costs more over time.

Councilor Sykes inquired about compacting for single family homes versus commercial users that are required by law to bring it. Manager Douglas stated that it is charged by the ton. Composting material is being used on site and around the city. Councilor Sykes inquired about the methods to cover material. Manager Douglas stated that tarps are being used when weather allows, and mixed material is also used as cover.

Manager Douglas explained the new positions being requested to replace seasonal employees. The rate increases were detailed.

Manager Douglas described the cost and staff needed to shred matter. Mayor McNamara commented on increasing user rates to incentivize more recycling and even speed up the increases. Councilor Sykes noted that the increases are needed and reasonable and could be accelerated. Manager Mulholland invited a recommendation for a higher number.

A Straw Poll was taken regarding an increase to \$105 per ton. The councilors present were in favor of the increase.

Manager Mulholland will calculate the increased revenue for a comparison to the increased cost of new positions.

Councilor Sykes inquired about the age of the shredder. Manager Douglas stated that it is due to be replaced in two years. Councilor Sykes stated that finding additional revenues is important to help with the tax rate. Mayor McNamara noted that equipment allowing staff to be more efficient is important.

3. Adjournment

The special session ended at 7:04 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Holly Howes
Recording Secretary