

FINAL

**LEBANON CITY COUNCIL
WORK SESSION MINUTES
Thursday, November 16, 2023, 5:30 p.m.
Council Chambers**

Remote Via Microsoft Teams: [LebanonNH.gov/Live](https://lebanonnh.gov/Live)

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Tim McNamara, Assistant Mayor Clifton Below, Erling Heistad, Christian Simon, Karen Liot Hill, George Sykes, Douglas Whittlesey (Remote), Devin Wilkie (Remote), Karen Zook (Remote)

MEMBERS ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT: City Manager Shaun Mulholland, Deputy City Manager-Administrative Services David Brooks, Chief of Police Phillip Roberts, Deputy Police Chief Matthew Isham, Airport Director Carl Gross, Director of Planning and Development Nathan Reichert, Deputy Director of Planning and Development Tim Corwin, Library Director Sean Fleming, Deputy Finance Director Alesia Williams, Finance Director Vicki Lee, DPW Administrative Services Manager Kelly Crate

1. Review Of 2024 City Budget - Question & Answer Session Public Works

- Police – Chief of Police Phillip Roberts
Requesting: \$7,398,430

Included in Agenda: All supporting budget documents can be found on pages 113-117 of the Budget Report, Council agenda packet.

BACKGROUND:

Chief of Police Phillip Roberts provided a presentation of the department's positions, challenges, accomplishments, and current needs. Chief Roberts outlined several challenges for the coming year related to staffing. There are a significant number of officers leaving the department and other departments around the state. The statistics related to traffic stops and accidents were presented in addition to calls for service at DHMC and local businesses, with shoplifting the most common offense. The Cyber Crimes Unit received an award from the FBI for their work on a case. Much of their work involves devices.

Council Discussion:

Councilor Sykes inquired about COPS Grants. Chief Roberts stated that they have not looked into them recently. Councilor Sykes inquired about the number of positions open at present. Chief Roberts stated that there are two positions open at this time.

Councilor Simon shared his appreciation for the police presence and their work in the city.

Assistant Mayor Below inquired about the detective role in the department. Chief Roberts stated that they are spread throughout the departments as part time assignments.

Councilor Sykes inquired about revenue and related legislation. Chief Roberts stated that there are several sources for modest revenue, most of which goes to the State. Councilor Whittlesey inquired if the revenue from traffic fines goes to the State. Chief Roberts confirmed that it does. Manager Mulholland stated that Special Assessment Districts are allowed, but Lebanon does not participate.

- Airport – Airport Director Carl Gross
Requesting: \$1,883,710

Included in Agenda: All supporting documents and presentation can be found on pages 145-148 of the Budget Report, Council agenda packet.

BACKGROUND:

Airport Director Gross reviewed and explained the budget request. Director Gross stated that ridership has increased this year, and air traffic has increased. The Cape Air draft lease is under review. There is a wait list for hangar space. Landing fees are increasing and provide additional revenue. Rental car revenue has increased following the reduction to one company.

Council Discussion:

Councilor Simon inquired about the revenue from T-hangars and the potential for increasing the monthly rental fee. Director Gross stated that the T-hangars are fully occupied. Councilor Whittlesey noted that the current waiting list would indicate the potential for increasing rates. Director Gross stated that he would reach out to other regional airports regarding rates. Councilor Liot Hill noted that initially the T-hangars were not fully occupied early on. Councilor Sykes stated that proper planning with data could reveal potential revenue. Manager Mulholland stated that information could be gathered and available in January. Director Gross explained the current program for funding the construction of new T-hangars, which is within the CIP.

Director Gross stated that there will be a CPI increase in July. Utility costs are expected to decrease, and several other cost increases were explained.

Mayor McNamara stated that landing fees are being increased and he will be submitting plans for increases.

Councilor Sykes inquired about vehicles being allowed to cross roadways. Director Gross noted that some companies with vertical takeoff and landing vehicles will be more common in the future.

Councilor Liot Hill inquired about Cape Air's plans to replace part of their fleet and update marketing plans. Director Gross noted that there have been factory delays, and they will bring in new planes as available. The passengers are happy with the comfort of the new planes. Assistant Mayor Below inquired about E-planes and plans for charging stations. Director Gross stated that they have the underground feed available to provide those services. Manager Mulholland explained the funding for the TIF district and

bonding. Councilor Liot Hill invited clarification on the current bond and the status of the restaurant. Director Gross stated that payments are being made while changes are being made.

- Planning & Development – Director of Planning and Development Nathan Reichert
Requesting: \$1,334,250

Included in Agenda: All supporting documents and presentation can be found on pages 109-112 of the Budget Report, Council agenda packet.

BACKGROUND:

Director Nathan Reichert reviewed and explained the budget request.

Director Reichert noted that Rebecca Owens was promoted to the new Senior Planner position for Project Development and Funding, and grant applications have been submitted. He explained various increases in revenue streams and shared that Catheryn Hembree, a new Associate Planner with excellent experience, has joined the department. The revenue to support the new positions comes largely from previously outsourced positions. The Pattern Zones Study and a report to the City Council will be made next summer. There is potential for infill in the city. Recalculating impact fees is underway, and the City Council will be asked about including the Fire Department in the impact fee calculation. Zoning updates passed in March. The new permit software has helped streamline the process when dealing with incomplete applications, which causes delays. It provides a roadmap for applicants. Revenue and the number of permits issued have increased over 2021 and 2022.

Council Discussion:

Councilor Liot Hill inquired about pattern zoning applied only to ADU's. Director Reichert stated that it is not that limited.

Councilor Sykes inquired about the dip in applications. Director Reichert noted that interest rates and manpower shortages have impacted the start of new projects. Several large projects have been approved. The number of building permits issued is impacted by the same issues. Manager Mulholland noted that it can fluctuate due to interest rate increases. Some builders are holding off currently and waiting for the best situation. Councilor Liot Hill inquired about the Mill project. Director Reichert stated that they just completed the second review, and the project will likely be approved December 11, 2023.

- Library – Library Director Sean Fleming
Requesting: \$1,669,740

Included in Agenda: All supporting documents and presentation can be found on pages 106-108 of the Budget Report, Council agenda packet.

BACKGROUND:

Director Fleming reviewed and explained the budget request. The library programs for outreach and youth services have greatly increased. The community has expressed its appreciation. Most of the budget increase is in facilities maintenance due to the renovation at Lebanon Library and the newness of Kilton Library.

The Kilton HVAC control system is no longer being supported, and the cost for addressing that will appear in a future year. There are trainings for addressing issues with patrons. There are fewer discounts from book vendors, which is creating an increase in the book budget. The library circulates about 100,000 items a year. The book budget is funded by the Foundation, the Trustees, and the City. The computer budget is increasing to replace the servers. Most computer-related items have been waiting due to budget constraints.

Council Discussion:

Councilor Liot Hill inquired about the Library of Things. Director Fleming noted that the collection is primarily tools and entertainment items.

Councilor Heistad commented on the enjoyment of patrons attending programs.

Manager Mulholland noted that there will be one final work session on November 28, 2023. December 6, 2023, will be a regular meeting for public comment on the budget.

1. Adjournment

The special session ended at 7:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Holly Howes
Recording Secretary