

BUDGET REVIEW COMMITTEE

JUNE 22, 2022

A meeting of the Budget Review Committee was held Wednesday, June 22, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. in the Aldermanic Chamber and via Zoom which meeting link can be found on the agenda.

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

Members of Committee present: Alderman Richard A. Dowd, Chairman
Alderman-at-Large Michael B. O'Brien
Alderman John Cathey
Alderman Ernest Jette
Alderman-at-Large Shoshanna Kelly
Alderman John Sullivan (via Zoom)
Alderman-at-Large Lori Wilshire

Also in Attendance: Alderman-at-Large Gloria Timmons
Alderman Alex Comeau
Alderman Patricia Klee
Mayor Jim Donchess
John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector
Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

ROLL CALL

PUBLIC COMMENT - None

COMMUNICATIONS - None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS – RESOLUTIONS - None

NEW BUSINESS – ORDINANCES - None

TABLED IN COMMITTEE

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN O'BRIEN TO TAKE FROM THE TABLE R-22-035
MOTION CARRIED**

R-22-035

Endorsers: Mayor Jim Donchess
Alderman-at-Large Michael B. O'Brien, Sr.
Alderman John Sullivan
Alderman Patricia Klee
Alderman Thomas Lopez
Alderman Alex Comeau
Alderman Richard A. Dowd
Alderman John Cathey
Alderman Derek Thibeault
Alderman-at-Large Lori Wilshire

**RELATIVE TO THE ADOPTION OF THE FISCAL YEAR 2023 PROPOSED BUDGET FOR THE CITY OF NASHUA
GENERAL, ENTERPRISE, SPECIAL REVENUE AND GRANT FUNDS**

Chairman Dowd

Tonight is the wrap up session, especially people who are new. This is the actions that we will take before we send it up to the full Board. Any changes that we make via motion this evening are recommendations to the full Board for the action on the final agenda. I think without further ado, I'm going to ask Alderman O'Brien, I think you have a motion.

MOTION BY ALDERMAN O'BRIEN TO REDUCE ON PAGE 215, DEPT. 89, LINE ITEM/DESCRIPTION DOWNTOWN

IMPROVEMENT, THE AMOUNT OF \$25,000 AND ADD THE \$25,000 TO ACCOUNT 56 - OUTSIDE AGENCIES, LINE 56221 – GREAT AMERICAN DOWNTOWN

ON THE QUESTION

Alderman O'Brien

It seems that inadvertently the Great American Downtown in previous Budgets was up to \$50,000. Inadvertently, they were cut back to \$25,000. This will make them whole. In communication with the Great American Downtown to add that \$25,000, we did get which is the Downtown Improvement Committee. They are in agreement. We'll take \$25,000 from there, place it into the Great American Downtown. So it's basically just swapping. I don't see any real true increase to the budget where this is coming under one approved account. So it's more of a wash. If I can advocate for the Great American Downtown, those of you that like the Christmas Stroll and other good things, the Farmers Market, and the like, this will assist them in those endeavors. So thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Dowd

Any other comments or questions? Alderman Jette?

Alderman Jette

I was planning on making a motion. The source of the transfer taking \$25,000 from the Downtown Improvement Committee - so during one of our meetings, Mr. Griffin acknowledged that the \$100,000 that is listed on that line item for Downtown Improvement Committee was an error. That \$100,000 we voted last year to allocate \$100,000 to Downtown Improvement Committee as a one-time event. So the \$100,000 that appears there was a mistake he said. So I was going to move to remove that \$100,000 completely. So I don't mind taking \$25,000 from it, but it's really not money that's supposed to be there to begin with.

Chairman Dowd

We can bring Mr. Griffin up. But technically it's in the budget being considered until another action is taken, but Mr. Griffin? Mayor do you want to come up?

Mayor Donchess

I'm just here if anyone has questions. You may not have any questions for me at the moment, but if you do I can answer them now otherwise I need to leave pretty quickly.

Chairman Dowd

Does anybody have a question for the Mayor relative to the budget before we move on? Alderman Jette?

Alderman Jette

This is your budget. So the \$25,000 that you did not put in for Great American Downtown what's your feeling about adding \$25,000 to Great American Downtown?

Mayor Donchess

Well we have given them \$50,000 in the past. I mean we had understood that some of that money was going to the concerts, but having met with them they were adversely affected by COVID. Their income over those two years was reduced because of lower income. So I would arguing against – I'm not against restoring that money if the Budget Committee or the Board thinks that is worthwhile.

Alderman Jette

Okay. Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Alderman Cathey?

Alderman Cathey

Thank you Mr. Chairman. Mr. Mayor did you happen to see Mr. Cummings' communication this afternoon regarding this particular issue and why the monies were allocated the way they were?

Mayor Donchess

I didn't see it, but I think he was saying we had put money in prior years for these concerts.

Alderman Cathey

Yeah and then he seemed to intimate that because he felt like there was a plan coming from GAD down the line that we would wait until we heard that plan and we could do escrows. Do you have an opinion about how you feel about that? Is that something you'd be okay to or do you prefer to do it now?

Mayor Donchess

I think it could go either way.

Alderman Cathey

Okay.

Chairman Dowd

Alderman O'Brien?

Alderman O'Brien

Thank you Mr. Chairman. I'm just trying to give you some additional information. Prior to my getting elected on the Board of Aldermen, I was on the Nashua Fire Rescue and was a liaison to the Great American Downtown. A very important position. Because of the Holiday Stroll, we have over 100,000 people that we anticipated coming into Nashua. It's a great asset to our downtown community. It's great for the families. A lot of families they enjoy some of that fried dough which I cannot eat anymore but its good fun. Its Christmas tree lighting and everything else like that.

So there's a new Director that came to get – just recently Paul Shea as you know is now a Commissioner on Public Works. Last year he worked with a \$50,000 budget. This got cut inadvertently for whatever reason to \$25,000. That's half. That's very traumatic and with a new Director coming in having to cut at that magnitude, I don't think anybody here if they were the CEO of that organization as such could really come in new and part of your learning curve and operate like that. So what this does, this is not an addition. It basically level funds and those of you that have been on Budget in the past, level funding doesn't actually mean level funding because it doesn't keep up with inflation or anything else like that. To keep it as in the previous year \$50,000, again, I have to advocate. I don't think it's too much to ask. I can think about the 100,000 people that come into Nashua, spend money in Nashua, working and such things, the Farmers Market that people attend too. This is a worthwhile project and to help this brand new Director to achieve these objectives I think this is money well spent. Notice not allocated - transfer. Thank you.

Mayor Donchess

Can I just intervene here? I apologize for this, but I can't really stay very long so if you have other questions would it be okay to address those to me now?

Chairman Dowd

Does anybody have questions for the Mayor?

Mayor Donchess

You can always get in touch with me, call me, or have me come to your next meeting whatever you want. Anyway you have all worked very hard on this. Thank you for your efforts. It's not an easy job making these decisions balancing between the needs and the tax rate. I'm sure people really appreciate it.

Chairman Dowd

Great. Thank you Mayor. Alderwoman Kelly?

Alderwoman Kelly

Thank you. I'm going to support this. I think Alderman O'Brien said a lot of what I was going to say. GAD has done a great amount of work for the City and I've seen it grow since I lived downtown when I first moved here to now. This new Director needs to have the support to continue to do that and grow whatever she envisions it to happen. It's been really critical to the downtown business owners who I talk to all the time. We've just brought in so many people to our City through a lot of stuff GAD has been doing.

Chairman Dowd

Alderman Cathey?

Alderman Cathey

Thank you Mr. Chair. Question to Mr. Griffin or anyone else who has been to all these meetings. In my notes here to Alderman Jette's point, I do have the \$100,000 not in that capital improvements anymore because it was an error. So could Mr. Griffin speak to whether or not that's actually an allocated line item, or that was a misprint, or whatever the case may be before we move ahead?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Certainly if I may Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee. Yes during my Budget Review Committee session with you folks, I recognized after listening to the previous meeting that the \$100,000, I believe, Chairman Dowd indicated was a one-time deal. So I looked at the Resolution and it's a one-time deal. I reached out to Alderman Clemons and he told me he wasn't planning on doing anything for Fiscal 2023. So Alderman Jette is correct that that \$100,000 can be reduced. If it isn't reduced, then it's just going to lapse to surplus because we don't transfer. The motion by Alderman O'Brien makes sense to me - taking the \$25,000 from that number, leaving a balance of \$75,000, and there can be a motion to just basically reduce it to zero.

Alderman Cathey

Follow up question if I may? Thank you. So what you're saying is that notation in the prior meetings was just to notate it was a one-time deal. So it wasn't necessarily a necessity or anything that had been planned, but the money is available in that particular way and we would move it around anyway we want. I was taking it as that money was not available and so really it should be zero and then we don't have \$100,000 to move around but you're saying we do have \$100,000 to move around as we please.

Chairman Dowd

Just for the new people. When you get this book, that's the budget for the Mayor. Unless the Board of Aldermen take a motion to change an item in this book, it's there.

Alderman Cathey

I understand Mr. Chair. My confusion was in that meeting when I took the notes, I thought it was saying "hey we didn't mean to put this \$100,000 here because it's not there" but what he was saying it's a one-time thing. So I got confused. I just needed the clarification. I appreciate it.

Chairman Dowd

And it's there until we make a motion to do it. So any other questions? Alderman Klee?

Alderman Klee

Thank you Mr. Chair. I really wasn't planning on speaking but the head of the Downtown Improvement is one of my constituents and she did reach out to me to say they haven't been talked to about the money so I just want to clarify that as far as the Downtown Improvement Committee.

I want to add to my avocation of it. I think that you should be putting the \$25,000 back to GAD and the reason for it is this. I spoke to the previous Director of GAD Paul Shea to get a little history to find out exactly how there budget was. When their budget started, they started with \$50,000. I'm not sure I think he said it was 2003 or something of that nature. As they moved on, at one point they were reduced to \$35,000. Then in 2011, it was brought back up to \$50,000. They've never had anything below \$35,000. When you think of as I think it was pointed out, inflation, they started way from day one with \$50,000. For a short period of time, I think it was like 4 years they were down to \$35,000 and then were put back up to \$50,000. I think we are doing a disservice to GAD. We put a new employee in there who has no other staff with her at the moment. I know she was meeting tomorrow with the Board of Directors and so on.

We are putting them behind the eight ball by cutting them even by \$25,000 and saying to them "make it a success". Even without the concerts, the concerts were not costing \$25,000. They weren't just doing that for the \$25,000 when you consider they've never been below \$35,000. I think you're right to give them the \$25,000 back, but I do want to just say Miss Blaisdell did send me a comment to say they've never discussed this and she's not sure how her Committee would be in favor of it, but I think she's misunderstanding when we're saying we are taking this money from Downtown Improvement. I don't think she quite understood that it was transferred so I did promise that I would put that out there.

Chairman Dowd

By the way, I did have communication with the Chairman of the Board of Directors of GAD and they said they don't think they can survive without the additional \$25,000. Any other conversations or questions? Alderman Wilshire?

Alderman Wilshire

I agree with adding the money back and I will be supporting this.

Chairman Dowd

Okay. The motion on the floor is as read by Alderman O'Brien is to take money from the Downtown Improvements ETF which is currently in the budget at \$100,000, taking \$25,000 out of that account, and returning \$25,000 to take the GAD budget from \$25,000 to \$50,000.

MOTION CARRIED

MOTION BY ALDERMAN COMEAU TO ADD ON PAGE 307, LINE #17, FUND 7058 PARK REHABILITATION FUND, THE AMOUNT OF \$275,000

ON THE QUESTION

Chairman Dowd

Alderman Comeau?

Alderman Comeau

Yes, thank you Mr. Chair. So this has been something that I've been working on for a while with the support, I believe, of the Department of Public Works and Parks and Recreation. There is an athletic field on the grounds of Fairgrounds Middle School - Labine Field. It is a lit field. The City uses that. They permit the field out to rec leagues, adult leagues, and things like that. They generate revenue from the field. The lighting system has fallen into severe disrepair. This is something that's been a concern for several years. It started with just the basic condition of the lights. All the bulbs were burning out. The frame that they were attached to is wood. It was warping and twisting due to the weather, and sun, and things like that.

Just recently, a crew from Parks and Rec came out to replace some of the bulbs and while they were up in the bucket truck, they found that the infrastructure that the electronics were attached to is falling into even worse disrepair to the point where one of the technicians came back down and said he had stopped trying to loosen the hardware because he thought the whole thing was going to break and come down. So I've spoken with DPW and Parks. We talked about a couple

different options ranging from just rehabbing some of the poles and hardware to a basic rebuild of the system. We all kind of agreed that it has outlived its life expectancy and they gave me this figure of \$275,000 to completely rebuild the system, which I think we all agreed was necessary. They support this and are willing to do the work later in this year if we can allocate funds.

It does sound that if I understand correctly that there might be \$75,000 from Downtown Improvement Committee that we could transfer over here so that we'd only be looking for an additional \$200,000, but the total is \$275,000. It's important to note that not only is it for the quality of using the fields, but it is a safety hazard. We're concerned that some of that stuff is going to come down and it's adjacent to the Legacy Playground which is a differently abled accessible playground. There's kids that play there and I'm horrified to think that one of these poles might come down while there's kids on the playground. SO that's why we're looking for \$275,000 to rebuild this lighting system later this year.

Chairman Dowd

Alderman Wilshire?

Alderman Wilshire

Thank you. I support fixing the lights. I'm just wondering if they're generating revenue there, where is that revenue going. Maybe Mr. Griffin can tell me that and how much revenue are they generating?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Mr. Chairman and members - it's not part of the towers. So my suspicion is it's in the Parks & Rec Department from their programming.

Chairman Dowd

Director Fauteux and the Parks & Rec know. They had another meeting and reached out to me and said that it is definitely a safety item that at least we need money to remove the lighting if they had to because it is a danger to even have it just sitting there never mind using it. If they're playing a game, several times the lights have gone out while people are pitching and catching hard balls. It's kind of dangerous. So they recommended that it be completely replaced. Any revenues that appear would be for the rental of the field that would appear in the revenues for the Parks & Rec Department. If they don't have the lights, they'll lose the revenue from any night activities.

Alderman O'Brien

I'm going to advocate for this. Strong supporter of athletics but the thing is you need lights to play. If it's a safety hazard, I'm fine. But also I come from Ward 9 and I advocate for my Ward much like everybody else advocates for their own particular Ward. Ward 9 has St. Andrews Field that hasn't been touched in eons. Hasn't been touched when these poles were probably planted. I have been through probably four, I think it about four. It goes back to Mr. Nick Caggiano when he was the Director of the Parks Department. At that particular time, "oh you're next on the list". And if you've heard this before, and I don't want to sound like a broken record on it, so therefore how can I support one thing and yet try to advocate for another? If Alderman Comeau would like to amend his motion to an even number of \$300,000 maybe.

Chairman Dowd

Point of order. There is the legislation coming to us at the next meeting that has been generated by Director Cummings to fund that Park. It's coming out of monies that were generated by a project that happened in Nashua that had to give us some money and they want to allocate it to that Park. So I don't think we need to.

Alderman O'Brien

Right but unfortunately Mr. Chairman as you know, I'll be content to sit here and be quiet on the matter but I'm not because it's going to be at the whim of other Aldermen who are sitting here. This could be another how do you do to Ward 9 because this money that you are absolutely correct in saying it does exist. It has no earmark. So we're going to have to come before this Board to earmark that particular money to make sure that goes to the Saint Andrews fund. I'll sit on my hands if I have a - I'm not asking for the vote or anything Mr. Chairman but if we have a mutual understanding that maybe we could wait until that legislation comes in and if it comes in with support of the Board, then I'll withdraw that.

Chairman Dowd

And it will be allocated on this year's funds not the FY23 budget, so it will probably happen faster that way.

Alderman O'Brien

I think I proved my point Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

So the motion is still on the floor.

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Mr. Chairman if I may. Just a little bit of mechanics. If we want to put the money in, we need to transfer it in. So we need to do it on that page that we just talked about with transferring from reducing the transfer to Downtown Improvements. We need to create a transfer into this particular expendable trust fund.

Chairman O'Brien

I wrote it as such. Can I show it to you to see if it's – is that what you're talking?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Well this particular \$275,000. That needs to be part of the budget. Other than doing a transfer, there's no other way of getting it into that park rehabilitation.

Alderman O'Brien

Okay.

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

And the one final thing we're dealing with and we dealt with the pending St. Andrews is I need to just look at my email to see if that's one of the 11 parks that is eligible for the money and it's Fairgrounds. Is that the park?

Alderman Comeau

The park is located at the Fairgrounds Middle School so I'm not sure if that...

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Is it referred to as Fairgrounds? But I can look it up just to make sure you can put it in something. So one of the things we did when we worked on St. Andrews, and I don't even know if this is even (inaudible) but one of the things we want to make sure is when you put it into that expendable trust fund, that's eligible to be spent on the parks. For some reason years ago when they created that, they limited it to 11 parks. So I want to do that one final check.

Alderman O'Brien

Mr. Chairman if I may. I did talk to Legal and I think there's pending legislation and working with other members, Director Cummings on this particular and hopefully that Legal will come out with that information. I'll take that under advisement and make sure that it does Mr. Griffin.

Chairman Dowd

Are we talking about Saint Andrews?

Alderman O'Brien

Saint Andrews. He's talking about Saint Andrews.

Chairman Dowd

So what needs to happen to the motion to make it as affected by Alderman Comeau's?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

So right now I'm trying to make sure that it's one of the eligible parks to expend money from that Park Rehabilitation Expendable Trust Fund. That's our preference to put it in there because it doesn't lapse and if the plan exceeds the fiscal year, you don't lose the funding. I'm hoping to get a...so what I'm getting from my Controller is Saint Andrews is good. I already checked that. That's named in the legislation.

Alderman O'Brien

I'm just advocating.

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

That's good. Now I'm trying to make sure Fairgrounds and we're struggling with what the name of the park is so I'm not what...

Alderman Comeau

It's called Labine Field.

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Oh, Labine Field. Oh, okay. Just making sure. Is it my understanding that there might be two Labine field?

Alderman Comeau

There is also the new park social at Labine at the corner of Ledge Street and Pine Street on the side of the building that burned down also called Labine.

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Excellent.

Alderman O'Brien

Because of Labine block.

Alderman Comeau

So one I believe is technically Labine Park which is the Park Social and the athletic field is Labine Field.

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Okay.

Alderwoman Kelly

And they're not anywhere near each other.

Alderman Comeau

And they are not anywhere near each other. They're about a mile apart.

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Okay. So if we look at page 215, we want to put the transfer in there. What I want to do now is get a proper account number to insert in this to move the 275 into that fund so you can spend it. That fund that Alderman Comeau is

referencing is 7058 Park Rehabilitation. What happens with that is that the Director of Public Works is the Agent to Expend. It was created in the year 2007.

Chairman Dowd

Also want to state I think they went out and got a bid for the work. So that's a good number. Do we have the motion correct now or does something have to be added?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Well it would be a transfer to 7058 Fund 275 and there's no offset. It's just an add but I need to get the fund.

Chairman Dowd

What is the line item?

Alderman Klee

17 - 7058.

Alderman O'Brien

17? Okay, thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Alright can we have the motion now?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Bear with me for one second.

Alderman Comeau

Mr. Chair a question if I may? Is it possible to – not to make the Clerk write a whole bunch of extra stuff but is it possible to do two transfers - one for the \$75,000 from the Downtown Improvement Committee that we just talked about and then the remainder in another?

Chairman Dowd

Let's handle that separately.

Alderman Comeau

Okay.

Alderman Wilshire

I see Director Cummings has joined us.

Chairman Dowd

He is just a fly on the wall unless we ask him a question. He can answer the question about Saint Andrews Park. That legislation has already been put in but let's hold on that until we get one thing at a time.

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

So what I'm waiting for now if you can give me a minute is what the account number should be to put this transfer into.

Chairman Dowd

Okay. While we're waiting, Director Cummings you put in the legislation for the tot park in Ward 9, correct?

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

Yes, Mr. Chair that's correct. I will be coming before you at the next Board of Aldermen meeting for first reading.

Chairman Dowd

Okay, thank you.

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

Also if I may Mr. Chairman. I have the Capital Reserve Fund - the ETF of Parks if CEO Griffin wants me to pull it up. It does appear that Labine is named.

Alderman Cathey

What does that mean, if it's named?

Chairman Dowd

The legislation agreed that particular fund. It has the parks listed that it's applicable to so Labine is...

Alderman Cathey

So it gets included in this. Okay. Do we decide how it's allocated amongst the parks?

Chairman Dowd

No. The spend authority is with the Director of DPW - Lisa Fauteux. Is it also the Board of Public Works? But they are big advocates of this and I will be jumping on it because it is a safety issue.

Alderman Cathey

We could take that amount out of what Alderman Comeau is asking for but we just don't know what that amount will be because we don't know the allocation numbers are for each park until DPW decides. Okay. Now I get it. A lot of moving parts.

Chairman Dowd

Always is with a budget.

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

So the motion would be to transfer \$275,000 to account number 89758. It's to transfer the money to Park Rehab Fund Number 7058. So by way of explanation, you need a transfer in the budget to include it and then it gets to just like all the other ones on here, it gets to the fund 7058 which is Park Rehabilitation.

Alderman O'Brien

I don't see any account number.

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

89758. So that's the account number on page 215.

Alderman Jette

I don't see any 89758 on page 215.

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Right. So Alderman Jette is indicating he doesn't have an account number that's why we just created it. If you were to add any other transfers, we need an account number. So this never existed before this particular transfer.

Chairman Dowd

All set now? Go ahead Alderman O'Brien

MOTION BY ALDERMAN DOWD TO ADD ON PAGE 250, DEPARTMENT 198, LINE #17, FUND 7058, ACCOUNT #89758 LINE ITEM/DESCRIPTION PARK REHABILITATION FUND, THE AMOUNT OF \$275,000

ON THE QUESTION

Chairman Dowd

Further Discussion? Alderman Jette?

Alderman Jette

I'm not against this. I'm trying to understand. So where is the money coming from? It's coming from an existing fund?

Chairman Dowd

At the moment, we're adding \$275,000 to the Mayor's budget. No, we haven't done the 75. It's still 275 unless somebody makes a motion to take the 75 that's left in the Downtown Improvement Committee and apply it to this account.

Alderman Jette

Okay so I misunderstood. I thought that we were transferring money from an existing fund that has money in it for the purpose of rehabilitating certain parks and we're putting it into this budget to rehabilitation Labine Field in this upcoming Fiscal Year. Did I misunderstand that?

Chairman Dowd

Mr. Griffin?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

The next motion you want to make is to just reduce the \$75,000 in the transfer to Downtown Improvements to zero. The effect is the same if you don't add anything else. But the direct answer to Alderman Jette's question is this money is new. It's added to the Mayor's budget. It's not coming from anywhere. You're creating it through the appropriation process of the budget.

Chairman Dowd

So if you make a motion afterwards to reduce the \$75,000 left in the Downtown Improvements, then the ultimate change in the Aldermen budget would be \$200,000 not \$275,000 because we're always dealing with expenditures and revenues. Alderman O'Brien?

Alderman O'Brien

Point of order if I may. When we do something like that Mr. Chairman, should be leave \$1.00 in that particular Downtown Improvement account?

Chairman Dowd

We're not changing anything.

Alderman O'Brien

So we're not going down the full \$75,000. Okay.

Chairman Dowd

Alderman Comeau.

Alderman Comeau

Yes, thank you Mr. Chair. To answer my colleague from Ward 5's question, the Park Rehabilitation Fund doesn't have a balance so I'm looking to fund that fund so the work can be done.

Chairman Dowd

And Park Rec is definitely in favor of getting this done as soon as they can get a contractor to do it. Alderman Kelly?

Alderman Kelly

Thank you. I actually wanted to commend Alderman Comeau for finding something and really digging in for it.

I think my question is around the mechanism of how this works. If we just fund this right here, does it just go off or do we still have the opportunity to hear a little bit more about it? I get really nervous giving away \$300,000 not knowing exactly what's happening and what's in the plan. Does that make sense? Does it come back through us in terms of do we get to see it again?

Chairman Dowd

Well that expenditure I believe would have to go through Finance, right, a contract? Mr. Griffin?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

It goes into the fund through this action and then as Alderman Dowd indicated to what I assuming is going to be contracts to do this work. So those contracts would be approved by the Board of Public Works and then would come to Finance Committee the contracts. So you get another shot at all the great things that are going to be done there to make it safe.

Chairman Dowd

In which case, you'll get nauseating details.

Alderman Kelly

I just wanted to make sure. Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Any other questions on this motion?

MOTION CARRIED

MOTION BY ALDERMAN CATHEY TO MOVE \$10,000 FROM LINE ITEM 89782, PAGE 215, INTO LINE ITEM 89768 HOUSING AND TO ADD ON PAGE 215, DEPARTMENT 198, ACCOUNT #89768, HOUSING ETF THE AMOUNT OF \$10,000

ON THE QUESTION

Alderman Cathey

I already had plans to reduce the Downtown Improvements ETF anyway. I have my work already being done for me. The reason I'd like to move some of the money into housing is this year is a little rough and I feel like people are going to need the assistance and the help coming up especially with a lot of uncertainty. I don't know how far \$10,000 is going to go given the economy and different things. So I'd like to have a little extra in there just in case we need it.

Chairman Dowd

Every race starts with one step.

Alderman O'Brien

Can I ask for clarification? Okay we'll hold the first amendment that you made temporarily. You'll come back to that. This motion will be to reduce on page 215. What department is that Alderman Cathey?

Alderman Cathey

Department 198 Transfers in/Transfers out.

Alderman O'Brien

And you would like to add \$10,000, right?

Alderman Cathey

I'd like to subtract \$10,000 from Downtown Improvements which is Line Item 89782 and move it into Line Item 89768 which is Housing.

Alderman O'Brien

What's the title?

Alderman Cathey

It is Transfer to Housing ETF.

Chairman Dowd

Are you good on that wording Mr. Griffin?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Yes.

Alderman O'Brien

Can I read back just to make sure this correct? First motion by Alderman Cathey is to reduce on page 215, Department 89 Downtown Improvement - Account #8972 the amount of \$10,000. There's a subsequent motion by Alderman Cathey.

Chairman Dowd

It's all one motion to move it into.

Alderman O'Brien

Yeah, I know. But limited to the way the script is worded here. Then the 2nd half of the motion from Alderman Cathey is to add on page 215, Department 198, Account #89768, Housing ETF the amount of \$10,000.

Chairman Dowd

Yes, that's actually going to be one motion just to clarify. Alderman Comeau?

Alderman Comeau

Yes, thank you and pardon me if I'm out of order. Would it be clearer if we just said the first motion was to put \$10,000 into funding this Housing Fund and then the subsequent motion would be to zero out the Downtown Improvement

Committee. Because the net dollar amount will end up the same. Rather than transfer from one to the other, you have a motion to add \$10,000 to the Housing Fund and then afterward you have a motion to reduce....

Chairman Dowd

We have to have the money from/to, right Mr. Griffin?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Maybe I can help. I would recommend the first one to be - you're doing two separate things really. It's just the net is going to be \$65,000. So just reduce the transfer to Downtown Improvements by \$75,000 and add to the transfer of the Housing ETF \$10,000 and that does it. It makes it clean.

Alderman Cathey

Do you want me to make that motion?

Chairman Dowd

Yes the motion would be to reduce the Downtown Improvements Committee - and you've got that information - by \$75,000 and move \$10,000 - that other information.

MOTION BY ALDERMAN CATHEY TO REDUCE ON PAGE 215, DEPARTMENT 89, ACCOUNT #8972 DOWNTOWN IMPROVEMENT THE AMOUNT OF \$75,000 AND IN ADDITION TO ADD ON PAGE 215, DEPARTMENT 198, ACCOUNT 89768 HOUSING ETF THE AMOUNT OF \$10,000

Alderman Cathey

Can you read it back to me?

Alderman O'Brien

Okay I have the Cathey Motion to reduce on page 215, Department 89, Account #8972 Downtown Improvement the amount of \$75,000, followed by an addition by Alderman Cathey to add on page 215, Department 198, Account #89768 Housing ETF the amount of \$10,000.

Chairman Dowd

Any questions on this? Alderman Jette?

Alderman Jette

I am going to support this. I just want to clarify that for anyone who is worried about the Downtown Improvement Committee, they have a balance of \$247,816. So this \$100,000 that's in the budget book on 215 was an error. We gave them \$100,000 as a one-time payment last year because the parking revenues weren't going to be enough to support them. But that leaves them without adding anything this year, they still are still are eligible for excess money from the parking fund if it exceeds, I think, its \$278,000.

Chairman Dowd

Alderman Clemons clarified that with the Downtown Improvements Committee and he also is working on legislation for FY'24 and beyond to make this much simpler. I don't want to steal his thunder, so. It has nothing to do with this budget. Alderwoman Kelly?

Alderwoman Kelly

I was wondering if the maker of the motion would just reiterate why the housing fund? Can you just explain?

Alderman Cathey

Oh sure. Absolutely. Given the state of things mainly in the economy, I believe that people who are going to need help in various ways with housing. I don't think \$10,000 is going to go a long way and my assumption is there will be some amount of the housing that's already closer to downtown. So instead of spending a lot of money on downtown improvements, why not spend it on people who are living in the downtown area, at least some of them. Obviously it's to be determined how the money is allocated inside that fund but I think \$10,000 doesn't go a long way and this is a little baby step into giving it more legs to do a little bit more good for people who are going to have a hard time.

Chairman Dowd

All set Alderwoman Kelly?

Alderwoman Kelly

I was trying to actually find what's in that fund currently. Do you happen to know? I'm looking. It's very small print. The balance is \$40,025.

Alderman Cathey

Oh yes, we got \$30,000 and added \$10,000. \$10,000 more is fine.

Chairman Dowd

Alderman Wilshire?

Alderman Wilshire

I'm going to support that motion. \$10,000 doesn't sound like a lot but it helps. I mean it certainly helps. Anything we can do to help with housing, I'm all in.

Chairman Dowd

Okay. Alderman Jette?

Alderman Jette

I don't think \$10,000 is doing to do a whole lot but I'm not against it. I'm thinking wasn't there a proposal and maybe Director Cummings can help clarify for me. Wasn't he looking to allocate was it the ARPA - a substantial amount from ARPA for the Housing Trust Fund? Am I ringing any bells Director Cummings?

Chairman Dowd

Director Cummings do would you like to chime in?

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

Yes, I'd be happy to. I would just need to clarify that was being referenced as the Housing ETF, which I quickly just looked up appears to be the Housing Trust Fund. CFO Griffin can confirm that. My quick look on it is we're talking about the same account. Then "yes" there is a proposal before your subcommittee to transfer \$10 million of ARPA funds into that account.

Alderman Cathey

Question for Director Cummings if I may?

Chairman Dowd

Yes go ahead.

Alderman Cathey

Director Cummings those ARPA Funds are they restricted for use?

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

That's a great question. I don't want to hijack this evening's conversation by going into the details of that but the simple answer is "no" because of how our finance team has structured this. It will allow us to have maximum flexibility which is the goal.

Alderman Cathey

Thank you Mr. Chair. Is this a guarantee thing or is this something you're looking to do and we don't know if we'll get the \$10 million? We have the \$10 million. We're just deciding where it goes?

Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

And that's up to you do decide. You being the body of the Board of Aldermen which nothing has been decided as of yet but there is a proposal before you.

Alderman Cathey

Okay. In that case, I'm going to withdraw my motion.

Chairman Dowd

Entirely?

Alderman Cathey

Oh I'm sorry. I'm going to withdraw the part that goes into Housing and just cut \$75,000 from Downtown Improvements. If the \$10 million is coming then, obviously I'll support that one when it comes on our desk.

Chairman Dowd

Are you all set with that? So the Motion before us is to cut the remaining \$75,000 from the Downtown Improvement Committee account.

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN CATHEY IS TO CUT THE REMAINING \$75,000 FROM THE DOWNTOWN IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE ACCOUNT
MOTION CARRIED**

Alderman O'Brien

The Clerk is glad he brought an eraser.

Alderman Cathey

My apologies to the Clerk.

Alderman O'Brien

No problem.

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Mr. Chairman if I may. There was a discussion about the Holiday Stroll. It seemed to be a worry. The Mayor and I we escrowed that money and we plan to re-escrow that money like for like. So those that were worried there was no money for the Holiday Stroll, I'm trying to allay those fears at this point.

Chairman Dowd

Anyone putting up flags. If I didn't already know that, yes. So everyone understands that? The money is escrowed. Alderman Jette?

Alderman Jette

So that brings up a question. We transferred \$25,000 to the Great American Downtown?

Chairman Dowd

Yes. That's for the other expenses that we're talking about not for the GAD. There are several expenses -Police, Fire, and there's a bazillion expenses for the Stroll. Whatever the amount of money is I think is what they're talking about.

Alderman Jette

So they need more than the \$25,000 and they'll get some other way?

Chairman Dowd

GAD no but the departments like Police, Fire, and DPW they do. You recall on the Stroll, DPW puts a huge truck on every street to block it off and there's a significant amount of police there (most of them on overtime) and firemen and that all has to get paid for. That's what we're talking about.

Alderman Jette

Okay. I kind of remember a couple years ago that there was a decision made that we would charge Great American Downtown. The Police send them a bill and the DPW.

Chairman Dowd

That's where that money goes. The money that's being allocated, that's how it gets paid because GAD doesn't have the money unless we give it to them. Alderman Klee?

Alderman Jette

Okay.

Alderman Klee

If I'm not out of line, can I clarify what you're were talking about with the Police and GAD?

Chairman Dowd

Yes.

Alderman Klee

Thank you. One of the things when I spoke to Ex-Director Paul Shea from there, I asked about that. He said at the beginning the Police only charged him a small amount but then his budgets got tighter and tighter. They started charging him the full amount of the cost of police and so on. Their budget could just not handle it. What the City did was so it didn't hurt the police, it didn't hurt GAD, they put that public Safety (DPW) into a separate account to cover that. It doesn't cover GAD's cost of the Stroll, etc., and so on but it does take care of that other expense because it jumped from like \$300 to an extraordinary amount of money and that is where all that came from. I had a hard time understanding why do we have this line item and then you said you needed more money. So that's how it was explained to me if that helps.

Chairman Dowd

All set?

Alderman Jette

Thank you, yes.

Alderman Comeau

Yes thank you Mr. Chair. I was just wondering if I could get a clarification because this is my first year and I haven't been around in previous years. We haven't had a stroll in several years. Does GAD not still have the money that we sent them in previous years that would not have been spent on these police details since there was no stroll?

Chairman Dowd

No money got transferred to them because there was no expenses.

Alderman Comeau

So in previous year's budgets if it was allocated, we just didn't spend it and it carried over?

Chairman Dowd

Yes it goes into unexpended. Alderman Cathey?

Alderman Cathey

Thank you Mr. Chair. Just a clarification. So the 25 that we just gave to GAD that's for essentially them operating what they do on a general basis.

Chairman Dowd

For their staff for a year.

Alderman Cathey

Right. We will then give them other additional monies for other events and that monies will be paid for instance and not only this but police. So we're essentially giving them money to pay our police. Why don't we just pay our police?

Chairman Dowd

I'm not sure how the money gets transferred. Do you know Mr. Griffin? Does the City just pay the Police Department direct? I notice they give it to GAD?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

I'm not sure if they give it to GAD, but I know the police get paid. In that area where it's located gets from \$27,000 to zero.

Alderman Cathey

I saw there was an extra step to do that.

Alderman O'Brien

You might think it's an extra step but there's people out there that don't understand the inner workings. A very common example on the Fire Department, let's just say. Snow piles need to be removed from in front of the fire station so visibility can be maintained. We have Public Works but they're busy doing something else. Their hours are allocated. So to make it accountability, this is the whole thing. It's not a shell game. Everything is within the public perusal.

Alderman Cathey

Oh I didn't think it was a shell game. I just thought it was inefficient.

Alderman O'Brien

If it's demanded by people make sure it ain't a shell game.

Chairman Dowd

So I think we're all set. People bear with me. I have a motion I'm going to be making but I wanted to preface that in my discussion on - the School Department has \$1 billion dollars in infrastructure - 18 schools and it keeps growing with the new school. The deferred maintenance projects that were put in by Mr. Smith for the School Department this year total \$1,280,000. The Mayor and his budget allocated \$100,000 for deferred maintenance. The problem is if we don't do the deferred maintenance, its pay me now or pay me a lot more later. So there are a few of these projects that are very high priced and we wouldn't touch them in this budget process but there are three projects - Dr. Crisp repaving the fire lane and repaving the playground for \$75,000, Mt. Pleasant repair and paint high walls and stairwells in gym that custodians don't paint anything high - that's a long story, and high schools to install motion detector sensors \$60,000. So that amounts to \$210,000. So in order to assist the School Department in deferred maintenance and try to keep ahead of our schools to some degree because we're not covering every one of what they needed, I would like to add \$160,000 to the total Financial Services Estimated Revenue Fund #126 on page 34 changing the current amount from \$20,628,415 to \$20,788,415 and adding \$160,000 to the Capital Improvements Project Line 14 School Deferred Maintenance making the total for that line \$260,000.

MOTION BY ALDERMAN DOWD TO ADD \$160,000 TO THE TOTAL FINANCIAL SERVICES ESTIMATED REVENUE FUND #126 ON PAGE 34 CHANGING THE CURRENT AMOUNT FROM \$20,628,415 TO \$20,788,415 AND ADDING \$160,000 TO THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT LINE 14 SCHOOL DEFERRED MAINTENANCE MAKING THE TOTAL FOR THAT LINE \$260,000

Alderman Jette

Can you repeat the lines? When you were telling us the lines, I couldn't keep up with you.

Chairman Dowd

I'm going to have to clear this with the Finance Director. It's to add \$160,000 to total Financial Services Estimated Revenue Fund #126 on Page 34 changing the current amount from \$20,628,415 to \$20,788,415 and adding \$160,000 to Capital Improvements Project Line 14 School Deferred Maintenance making the total for that line \$260,000.

Alderman Jette

What page is Line 14 on?

Alderman Comeau

218.

Chairman Dowd

218 Deferred Maintenance. And I just want to check. When we estimate our revenues as has been said many times, we are very conservative. When you're talking an area with over \$20,000,000 in revenues, \$160,000 is pretty much a drop in the bucket. Every year we've underestimated our revenues by a substantial amount, I think you'd agree Mr. Griffin, and then it gets allocated different ways into spending.

In this case, we are trying to insure that our \$1 billion in infrastructure has some degree of care and we can get some of these things done and not have to pay a significant amount later to fix the problem we didn't fix when we should have. So are you okay with that Mr. Griffin?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

If I may. What I would recommend because the revenues are always estimated locally so my recommendation is that you don't add to the revenues and I'll explain why in a minute. But I would recommend is on page 217 is where the appropriations approved. I would recommend that you add \$160,000 to Account 81100 Capital Improvements and specifically state you want the School Deferred Maintenance to increase by that amount.

Page 218 is just for clarity for showing you what the capital improvements are going to be spent on. So what you're really doing is you're increasing the budget by another \$160,000 appropriations. We made an estimated on this budget for revenues. We have been conservative. It's all in the tax calculation at the end. You don't need to put the revenue thinking that you're offsetting.

Chairman Dowd

That's what I was trying to do offsetting.

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

You're trying to do that and in the spirit of that, that's great but it's really you're increasing the appropriations side which is the key. You've explained to the group here that you're hoping to get \$160,000 somewhere to pay for it.

Chairman Dowd

The other thing I was trying to handle is I know for a fact that the Fire Department is going to be raising their fees for things as part of the Strategic Plan. I know that the DPW is going to be raising their fees because we've already talked about that. I think there are other areas that are going to be raising their fees both in Matt Sullivan's area and other places. So I'm assuming or me going out on a limb and saying our revenues are going to be higher than we have in this budget and for \$160,000, we're going to be taking care of a portion of \$1 billion worth of school infrastructure. Having worked - I can't even count how many schools. I know when we took down the old Nashua High, that building was not well maintained and we ended up after 15 years tearing down a building and ending up with staircases basically that was all that was left.

You noticed the high schools still look new today because we built them right and that's what we're doing with the new middle schools. These other schools have deferred maintenance that needs to be taken care of. We're not even addressing the \$1.3 million that he requested. We're just covering another \$160,000 and I think it's extremely important. Alderman Jette?

Alderman Jette

Yes, I agree with you completely. I think there are many examples of the City not taking care of the stuff it has. We keep building new things and we're not taking care of the stuff we already have. I agree with you completely but I've heard you lecture many times since I've become an Alderman that we only have control of the bottom line with the School Department. We can add \$160,000 to their budget but is there any guarantee that they're going to use it for that purpose?

Chairman Dowd

That doesn't apply in this case because it's under deferred maintenance. It's under capital projects. It's not in the School Department budget. Correct Mr. Griffin?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

That is correct.

Chairman Dowd

So no this is for these projects only. They can't spend it for anything else.

Alderman Jette

Okay. I'm not saying they will or they would but I just...

Chairman Dowd

Having been on that side of the fence, trust me I would not throw this 160 out there for general spending. Alderman Cathey?

Alderman Cathey

Thank you Mr. Chair. I just have two clarifying questions.

Chairman Dowd

Oh, I'm sorry Alderman O'Brien also.

Alderman Cathey

You can first if you'd like.

Alderman O'Brien

No. I think I had the same question Alderman Jette. I, too, am concerned because of the bottom line and whenever we deal with the School Department, we have to probably do exactly what the Chair did - earmark it for lack of a better term into what we want on that. I'm content with the answer. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Dowd

So these deferred maintenance accounts are stand alone and they can't use it for anything else in the School Department only this. Alderman Cathey?

Alderman Cathey

Thank you Mr. Chair. I believe this question is to Mr. Griffin. Alderman Dowd stated that our revenues are usually underestimated by and I quote, "a significant amount". Could you ballpark what a significant amount would be so I have an idea of what we're looking at before I decide to spend more money?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Good question. Significant amount means that we generally receive about \$15 million in motor vehicle registrations. Now if we put that in the budget and we don't make it, we have what's called a "revenue deficit". Not good. So what we do is budget around \$11 million, this is what Treasurer Fredette had done for years. So we kind of know that through the tax rate setting process, you're going to be able to apply about \$4 million against the tax rate which brings down the tax rate. If it's 4 percent, it's going to bring it down to 2.

And then there's other items because I've seen the struggle. I've see you Alderman Jette fees and great stuff, great discussion that you're trying to raise the numbers in here. The better approach is keep the same numbers in here and raise the fees and have surplus. If for example we put the \$15 million in here, you might spend \$4 million on an appropriation. We don't want you to do that. It's a balancing act. When we represent to the rating agencies that rate our bonds, we budget revenue conservatively. They're comfortable that we're not going to have to come back to you in a revenue shortfall.

But I wanted to bring up two other items - one kind of hot of the press. You talked to and the old Dan Donovan the other night but we are going to get about \$1.7 million in Fiscal '23 and \$1.1 million in Fiscal '24 for what's called "extraordinary school aid". I'm not sure if people know about it but I found it kind of funny that's extraordinary. It's pegged off the free and reduced lunch numbers. Complicated as usual, but we're going to get about a \$1.7 million. What's going to happen there is you don't race over to the School Department and cut their budget. No you keep the budget the same, but now we're going to get \$1.7 million more in revenue. Now the thing about that is they're going to put it if it's school aid, State aid, they'll literally fill that line in when we do our rate setting. You're not going to give us a check and then we can do whatever we want with it. No, they're literally going to put it in there and set the tax rate.

The other thing that Alderman O'Brien knows all too well is the notion of a 7.5 one-time only reduction in our pension costs. Sitting here today, I can't tell you how they're going to handle it because the NHRS management usually likes to control things. So they very well might take the employer rates for this one year and reduce them by 7.5%. What that does is when we file our wages with them, they're guaranteed they're not paying more because they're going to have to talk to the State and say we need our money. It is State funded and that's a great deal, but you might say can well can we cut our budget \$2 million? You could. I wouldn't recommend it but I really know that as the time goes on that our bills are going to be less than they otherwise would be. But just keep in that mind as financial management, you don't want to go into all these budgets and start reducing pension costs. Because it is a moving target, sometimes we have a lot of

overtime because we have attrition especially in the Police and Fire Departments. So we've got to be careful but that's another item that you folks were kind of thinking about searching to cut things.

Chairman Dowd

If these funds came in near term whenever they go up to set the tax rate to the State, all those things are taken into consideration. Two years ago, we thought the tax rate was going to be a 7% increase. In the end, it ended up under 3% and that was caused by the huge insurance costs. So that's why they're had a difficult time in saying oh I think it's going to be 3% or 3.5% because there's too many variables in the equation that sets the tax rate and the tax rate is set by the State and not us. We can sort of guesstimate but other additional revenues keep coming in, things change, and the tax rate is probably not as severe as one would think. It has nothing to do with Assessing. We don't want to get into that discussion. Alderman Cathey?

Alderman Cathey

I just had a follow up to the same item. When we talk to the School Department, I know Mr. Donovan explained in great detail which I appreciated all the ESR funds. I know at one point for the ESR 3 there's coming to be some renovations. Is there any way that some of that ESR funds could be used for these capital improvements that you're seeking or would we not have those monies available to us for that particular?

Chairman Dowd

No. We explored this and the State won't allow it and the federal government whoever is funding this. ESR funds are very limited and last night at the Board of Education Finance Committee meeting that was happening opposite our fun we were having in the auditorium, they're getting ESR funds to modify Birch Hill and Main Dunstable a significant amount of money. There will be some additional bond money required just to cover things that aren't covered by ESR funds. So that's going to be added in very shortly and they transferred it to the Joint Special. So all of a sudden I'm feeling like I'm a major contractor in the United States doing several buildings at the same time. Just keeping these meetings straight is crazy so. That's coming down the pike. It's not going to happen tomorrow but it takes time.

Alderman Cathey

I appreciate the clarification. Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Oh believe me if we could have spent it, we would have spent it. Alderwoman Kelly?

Alderwoman Kelly

Thank you. Just sort of chuckled to myself that it's nice that Main Dunstable is getting a facelift. My daughter graduated from Main Dunstable yesterday. I actually want to say thank you for bringing this up. This was one of the notes I had as well to make sure we can get some more funds into there. My question is probably for CFO Griffin. It's more of an ethereal question but like we have the same issue with CERF. We're never funding it enough to get in there. I'd love to see us have more thought to how to your point the school buildings are a significant infrastructure that we have in the City and we need to be taking care of them. So how do we potentially get in a path where we can make sure there's enough in there for these projects as they go along?

Chairman Dowd

On CERF acquisitions you mean - vehicles?

Alderwoman Kelly

No, no. I was saying that CERF is a lot like this. It's never funded enough for what we need. So what I'm saying is school deferred building also never has enough in there. So how do we put together a schedule for it?

Chairman Dowd

If you look at the Capital Improvements Subcommittee, they rank things from A to D and then within that and it's never funded anywhere near what's asked for. Things have to sometimes sit in there for years before they actually get to a level and that's because it's a heck of a lot of money, but I'll let Mr. Griffin.

Alderman Kelly

And I understand that. Overall how do we start to chip away at it?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

I mean you're asking great questions and I have the pleasure of being here since August 23rd of 2010. I'll give you a little contrast. When I was the Finance Committee member elected – I know what that's all about in Tyngsboro - we have like a half million dollars' worth of capital improvement programs and we have them. That budget is about \$32 million. With a \$302 million proposed budget, we have capital of a million. I've been getting a little bit beat up on spending cap stuff lately, which is no problem. I lived through the recession here and then the increases and we never had enough money to fund this stuff. As I mentioned to Alderman Jette with all sincerity, I said you can't start now with a big bang theory. You're going to need like corrections. Meaning and you can do analysis as we had the bonding analysis we had about \$17 million which is less than, Alderman Sullivan corrected me, less than 10% of the operating budget.

We did a little looking at the great City of Cambridge, MA. At one point, they had a \$600 million operating budget and \$85 million capital budget. So as Alderman Dowd points out, we're just bonding things because there is no money to fix things. I remember when Mitt Romney was elected Governor of Massachusetts, I was with another city at the time, and he wasn't going to be any money into any new buildings until the cities could show they could repair what they had and maintain what they had.

So during that time from probably 2011 to 2015, we had to underfund things. We had to underfund the program for CERF. We had to use reserves that we had saved in the benefits fund. There were a lot of different things because we needed to pay the people to work and we needed to pay the other cost drivers that you see in the budget. There has to be a Capital Improvements Committee that's tied to funding and we don't have that. Like in Tyngsboro do you put new bleachers in or do you fix one of the fire stations and people make the decisions. Here we have a whole process that's very well defined and it's necessary under State Law but its not outranking is done by a number of citizens, plus Alderman Jette, and I, and Rose Evans the Comptroller. We rank things based on need, importance, citizen safety, etc. and you get like this year, the request for \$55 million. The total six-year plan is almost \$600 million. So as you can see, we're a long way from writing the ship. I'm not sure how it could be done given this difficult economy we're in, but it could be that you take the million, and you add a half million to that, and the next year add another half million, and you work on these programs. Shawn Smith has come into our Committee every year and with all sincerity, he's got all these buildings and he needs to maintain things. So it is a challenge. Not sure how but you can't get it all back at once. You can't take this million dollar capital improvement budget and make it \$10 million right because you increase the tax rate by 5%. So it's a give and take. You need both. You need the people, the buildings, and the equipment otherwise it's a struggle. Thank you.

Alderman Kelly

Thank you I appreciate and I know it's not an easy task having sat on this Committee for a number of years. I get it. It's just give and take. I think the maintenance thing for me has been especially poignant thing because when we let things lapse until the point that they have to complete if it's an emergency it costs us a great deal more to fix it than if we maintained it slowly along the years. I know I'm preaching to the choir, but the maintenance thing has been especially eye opening to watch.

Chairman Dowd

So the motion before us, we're going to eliminate the revenue part and the motion is to add \$160,000 to the School Deferred Maintenance Account. The Chair has my paper with the pages.

Alderman Cathey

Is it the new pages for capital improvements?

Chairman Dowd

It's Capital Improvements Project, line 14, School/Deferred School Maintenance the increase in total by \$160,000 to make the grand total \$260,000.

Alderman Cathey

But don't we also have to notate for page 217, line Item 81100? You're adding \$160,000 to that line on that page?

Chairman Dowd

Yes.

Alderman Cathey

Okay, just making sure.

Chairman Dowd

Any other questions? Alderman Wilshire?

Alderman Wilshire

I know you said this is for deferred maintenance but did you mention a specific project that needs to be done?

Chairman Dowd

They have three items that I got the number from. They are Dr. Crisp repair the fire lane and repave the playground \$75,000; Mount Pleasant repair and paint high walls and stairwells in gym \$75,000; and the high schools install motion detection sensors \$60,000. Part of that is security. I won't get into the details but. There are additional funds coming from the State for additional security stuff. Alderman Klee?

Alderman Klee

Thank you. My question is similar to one of my colleagues had kind of mentioned. I know that we can't affect the bottom line budget, only the bottom line budget and these are going to be in deferred maintenance but can we say that they have to do these three things if we were to put money in it or are we just putting money in it and they can end up doing whatever they felt is necessary?

Chairman Dowd

We did that one year and we changed. They came back and said okay there were other funds available to do this other thing so we want to switch it to this thing. I'd rather just give them the leeway because things happen. One year, as Alderman Jette well knows, they lost a pump. The pump was \$90,000 and there was a lot of concern about \$90,000 for a pump and I gave the Board of Ed and the Aldermen a tour of the high school and the pump is the size of a small Volkswagen. Pumps water up four floors as Alderman Jette can attest by when you see it. So things happen. If we lose a pump like that for instance, I'd rather have them have the flexibility. It would only be used for deferred maintenance items though.

Alderman Klee

Follow up. So while we're talking about these three items that add up to \$210,000 – 75, 75, and 60 adds up to 230 but we're only going to put \$160,000.

Alderman Wilshire

210.

Alderman Klee

Oh my god I can't even add. 201, yeah sorry. \$210,000 but we're only going to put \$160,000.

Chairman Dowd

We're adding \$160,000 to the \$100,000, so it's \$260,000.

Alderman Klee

Okay. Getting to back to what I was saying, if they decided whatever reason it's very possible that these particular projects that we're speaking of will not get done, is that correct? I just want to make sure that's out there so that people can't turn around and say well Dr. Crisp they were supposed to do this but they had the leeway to make their decision.

Chairman Dowd

It would only be if something catastrophic happens somewhere else in the school system and they didn't have a choice. They had to fix it. They can't materialize money so it would get pushed off probably.

Alderman Klee

And if I may. I have no issue with that it makes absolute sense. I just want to make sure that the public is aware that if they decide that they need to do something else, they are free to do what they need once we put that money in the account.

Chairman Dowd

It would have to go back through Finance. I've sat down with Mr. Smith and gone through this list with a fine tooth comb and physically seen most of these projects or I wouldn't be advocating for them. Alderman O'Brien?

Alderman O'Brien

Thank you. Along the lines of Alderman Klee, I feel kind of comfortable with this. I know exactly what you're saying. I'm fearful I've seen that happen before but I take what's happening now - this is on tape, I think they're seeing it. They know the intentions of this Board and I know under good authority our liaison is very good friends with the Chairman of the Budget Committee. I wonder who that would be. So I think when that comes up that he could establish being his job as a liaison what the intentions of the Budget Committee was.

Chairman Dowd

He would definitely be on the phone with me. I mean I'm on the phone with him almost every day now because of these schools. Alderwoman Timmons?

Alderwoman Timmons

Yes, thank you. I know I'm not on this Committee but I do have a couple of questions. One is the motion detection. I thought the schools had that already?

Chairman Dowd

I can't give the details but I think it is things that they're adding.

Alderwoman Timmons

They're adding, okay. I thought they did.

Secondly is maintenance in the building almost 24/7 because they have three shifts in the high school.

Chairman Dowd

That is under their normal day-to-day maintenance. It's not deferred maintenance.

Alderwoman Timmons

But if it's going to be motion detectors in the school, then the maintenance department would trigger that wouldn't you think? Then I don't see...

Chairman Dowd

My guess is those are being installed by an outside company.

Alderman Timmons

To put where in the schools, right?

Chairman Dowd

In the schools.

Alderman Timmons

Right. So if maintenance is in the school for 3 shifts, I don't understand why we need them because they would be moving around the building for three shifts.

Alderman Cathey

They turn off.

Chairman Dowd

They're in areas where the maintenance guys wouldn't be cleaning at night. I can't get into details.

Alderman Timmons

But they clean the building at night.

Alderman Cathey

But the motion detection for lights, right?

Chairman Dowd

Yes.

Alderman Timmons

For outside lights, not for inside lights. They're not the motion inside the building, that's my question.

Chairman Dowd

Well I can tell you that the high school there isn't enough motion activity by the custodians to cause enough lights...

Alderman Timmons

You said that not me.

Chairman Dowd

Any other questions? Everyone understands what the motion is?

MOTION CARRIED

Chairman Dowd

Are there any other motions to be made on the budget?

Alderman Cathey

Thank you Mr. Chair. I don't know if I can even make this motion but I'm going to try because Mr. Griffin is here. So he'll correct me if I'm incorrect. In a previous meeting with Mr. Griffin, he notated that we use the motor vehicle permit fees of an estimated \$11 million. That's what we put in the budget, to buy down the tax rate. Is that correct?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Just a point of clarity. It does two things. One - we're comfortable with the numbers to the extent other revenue items don't equal what we budget. It helps offset potential deficits as well.

Alderman Cathey

Follow up Mr. Chair?

Chairman Dowd

Yes.

Alderman Cathey

Can we as Aldermen decide what we want to do with that money? Can we add more?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Mr. Chairman it's referred to as local revenue so you could.

Alderman Cathey

Okay with that in mind, I would like to make a motion to increase the – I'd essentially like to double what we use to buy back the tax rate from \$4 million to \$8 million on page 33, line Item #42200 Motor Vehicle Permit Fees. I'd like to use \$8 million instead of \$4 million to offset the tax rate.

MOTION BY ALDERMAN CATHEY TO DOUBLE WHAT WE USE TO BUY BACK THE TAX RATE FROM \$4 MILLION TO \$8 MILLION ON PAGE 33, LINE ITEM 42200 MOTOR VEHICLE PERMIT FEES

ON THE QUESTION

Chairman Dowd

Mr. Griffin do you want to chime in on that?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Yes, if I may. So we have the Fiscal '22 budget and we're expecting surplus in motor vehicle, which is called "revenue surplus". We through a process of closing out the year which identifies appropriation surplus by the liquidation of purchase orders, etc. We analyze the appropriations not spent and through the escrow process determine if we should move already approved escrows forward into the essentially Fiscal '23. So that leaves maybe some appropriations not spent so they lapse to general fund surplus. The mechanics of the surplus and revenue from whatever source we get it, mostly motor vehicle, lapses to surplus.

So on or before September 1st of each year, the Mayor provides the Board of Aldermen with two things. One is notification of overlay needs and surplus. Then the Mayor working with the financial team we decide based on our review of the then unassigned fund balance, we decide how much the Mayor will recommend to you to apply against the tax rate. So although it seems a little bit late to do that, it's perfect timing because we close the books. We know what the numbers are and we're getting ready for the submittal of the Assessing MS1 to the DRA to tell us what the denominator is. Meaning the assessed value.

So even though your motion - let me make sure I'm clear. We've used about \$4 million to reduce the tax rate. It's predominantly coming from motor vehicle. The Board of Aldermen at this time you can't predetermine how we're going to use it because we're going report to you the ramifications of doing things like that. Unfortunately if you took \$8 million, \$12 million, or whatever and applied it against this year's tax rate, next year we got a problem because it's a one-time item. It's not recurring, right? So I'd be cautious in changing any revenue items of that magnitude because the motion really doesn't seem like it's going to work because we determine with your recommend - you're going to get a resolution usually in early September that says we'd like to apply this amount against the tax rate.

As we've discussed, we're going to be really up against the timelines because we want to make sure that the assessments are accurate, all the residents and businesses have the opportunity to have what's called "informal hearings". So even if you knew the number on August 17th residents have a change to ask questions at informal hearings with Vision Government Solutions. We've never had anyone wanting to increase revenue or decrease revenue. I'm just trying to explain the mechanics and the process but were you thinking of taking like the \$11 million and reducing is to \$7 or \$8 million? I'm not sure what you wanted to do.

Alderman Cathey

Let me clarify my motivations which I should have done in the first place. I appreciate the explanation that clarifies a lot of the process for me. The reason that I wanted to do that was based on the information we have now, this tax year is going to suck for a lot of people, pardon my language, based on the numbers that we have just now. An estimated 2.3 increase, 39% average home value is going up. I did the math and that's a lot of money depending on the house you live in. So I understand when people say well if you decrease it a lot this year it, goes up the next year. I understand that.

My issue is this year in particular coming out of COVID, decreased wages for a lot of people, now we're going into an inflationary cycle which does not seem to be ending any time soon and it may get worse. I'm not thinking that it will. It could. We don't know maybe it gets better. I don't know but right now it's not great. So I'm a fan of a reprieve, a break if you will. Not necessarily no increase but a smaller increase than would be typical for a property tax increase and in my estimation and opinion, that would give the citizens of Nashua time to recover because based on most economists, we're looking into 2023 before we're really out of what we're in right now. So if we give them a little bit of a break this year, they have some time to recover. If the rate goes up next year, they have time to save for that as well because they're aware that it's going to go back up. They're aware as long as we communicate correctly that this is not typical.

So for instance if we usually increase the rate 3% just as an example and this year we say you know what we'll make it 1.5 - 1.7 a little bit of a break. Next year you go back up to maybe 3 - 3.1% or whatever, they have time to cover that difference. We have time as a City to figure out if we can even leverage some of our revenues to help get us back to that point as well because we are in a particular weird time in history and we've made a lot of decisions based on how the markets are going. So this is no different than that. We're moving and shaking with what's going on. That's why I wanted to do that. I have no problem withdrawing the motion and dealing with it later but that's where my head's at as far as wanting to increase the monies we use to offset the tax rate.

Chairman Dowd

I appreciate what you're trying to do and I agree. We will get an opportunity in September to put more money towards reducing the tax rate. Now is not a good time to do it. Once they have all of the revenues and everything in place and close out the current year and know how much money we're dealing with, then you can make a logical decision on how much money you want to put towards the tax rate to reduce the rate. Now is not the time to do it because there are again ramifications that could cause a catastrophic increase in prices of our taxes this year. Do you agree Mr. Griffin?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Just one final point that I should have made this point. This budget is for next year's tax not this years. So the mechanics are going to be identifying revenue surplus, identifying appropriations not spent, getting a grand total, more and better information by September, more and better information by the time you deliberate which you want to do. So you're going to get a resolution that's going to have the Mayor's recommendation. At that time with hopefully better information, you're going to be able to say I want \$8 million against the tax rate. Somebody might say I want \$2 million. I mean because we are going to lay out the plan.

Now it's been a very challenging year because to estimate a tax rate, and I can do estimates of tax rates, but I'm going to be wrong 50% of the time, right? Next year is going to be easier because we're going to know what the tax rate is and then if we keep a budget to a 3% increase but given the inflation, you're going to kind of know what the number is. So

when Mr. Teeboom says a person 20 years ago, I can do the same thing. I think Mrs. Ortolano said I could too but I know everybody here knows we can estimate the tax rate because you have the leverage to get to the tax rate with the surplus. So you're going to know. Like if you're a residential customer, you're in a ranch that goes from \$200,000 to \$300,000, you know what your bill is going to be with the new tax rate. You don't know it yet that's why the Mayor is trying to say your value is going up 39%. Your tax bill is probably not going up 39%. But once we get through this next month, it's like waiting for Christmas or maybe graduation. Maybe not Christmas but you're waiting for the numbers and the key is the total assessed value and the individual assessments on the homes and businesses and give them the opportunity to come in and ask questions. That's the whole idea. Because right now according to some reports I have, people are calling up hey come on in. The people who wouldn't let anybody in two years ago are like hey I haven't seen the place. The might have trashed it. It might have been after a party was conducted but in any event getting a little levity, it's premature to do it in this budget but certainly in the next couple of months you're going to know this is what we have.

Alderman Cathey

I appreciate that. I withdraw the Motion.

ALDERMAN CATHEY WITHDREW HIS MOTION.

Chairman Dowd

Thank you. Alderman O'Brien and Alderman Wilshire

Alderman O'Brien

Enough is said. I, too, feel it's premature. We have the sordid Damocles standing over our head, this spending cap. Thirty five years on the Fire Department, 25 years of it was under the spending cap. Ever wonder why we're paving roads now and why we didn't pave the roads in 1999? I'll tell you why, spending cap. A lot of stuff. I worked in the fire station where the rain came down the walls. You didn't hang your coat on the wall because it would get wet and that's why - spending cap. So we don't know yet and I have to say it's kind of premature. I admire what you're trying to do, absolutely, but I think right now it's a wee bit early. Let's kind of time to digest a little bit better because unfortunately a lot of this is not in our control. I'm at peace with Ukraine and Russia myself personally you know what I mean and I'm not really charging. I don't own a gas station. So a lot of these things are out of the perusal of this particular Board so in practical sense.

Alderman Wilshire

Mr. Griffin can you tell me how much the City is getting in ARPA funds this year?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Certainly. We're getting a total of about \$16.139 million and that was the total allotment that came in two transfers from the US Treasury. So we have 16.

Alderman Wilshire

So we have the money.

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

We have all the money and for those new Board members, you've already accepted and appropriated that total amount last year. So we have the 16.1 in the bank.

Alderman Wilshire

Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Any other motions? Alderman Cathey?

Alderman Cathey

I'd like to make a motion to remove \$88,910 from page 54, General Government – Legal, line item 51100 and that is to eliminate the position of the Right to Know Coordinator because I want to move those funds elsewhere in the budget to help out with Admin. Services.

MOTION BY ALDERMAN CATHEY TO REDUCE \$88,910 FROM PAGE 54, GENERAL GOVERNMENT – 103 LEGAL, LINE ITEM 51100, TO ELIMINATE THE POSITION OF THE RIGHT-TO-KNOW COORDINATOR, BY ROLL CALL

Chairman Dowd

So the motion is to reduce the funds for the Right-to-Know Coordinator in the Legal Department. Discussion?

Alderman Jette

Where is that?

Alderman Cathey

Page 54 is the Wages, but if you go to page 278, it lists all the positions for full-time and it will show Right-to-Know Coordinator.

Chairman Dowd

Exactly. The appropriations for that amount of money is under the Legal Department. You're looking at a list of employees.

Alderman Cathey

Yes but I named the page that it's on - the line item. Not the positions. I named the actual budget line item as well in my motion.

Alderman Jette

So can you repeat that?

Alderman Cathey

I'm making a motion to subtract \$88,910 which represents the salary of the Right-to-Know Coordinator from page 54, General Government, 103 Legal, Line item 51100 Wages Full Time.

Chairman Dowd

Discussion?

Alderman O'Brien

Can I just ask? Motion by Alderman Cathey to remove on page 54, 103 Legal, line item 51100, amount \$88,910.

Alderman Cathey

Can I speak to that Mr. Chair when he's ready? So again to let you know where my brain space is at. In my opinion, I don't feel that position is needed. In addition, I would like to in another motion be changing the Paralegal position in Admin Services, take that money, reduce it a little bit, and put in two full-time positions that would specifically address the digitizing records for the Inception Technologies Project. Miss Kleiner when she met with us mentioned that she needs \$52,000 for one full-time employee to cover the documents, the redacting, and all that. So basically I want to give her two full-time employees to expedite that process and get those documents up online, which I think mitigates a lot of the Right-to-Know issues that we've been having if the public can just go online and get those documents without having to request them all the time.

Chairman Dowd

Alderman Timmons?

Alderman Timmons

Thank you. I think that's a bad idea. We have so many Right-to-Know. We have to have someone else to do those Right-to-Know and the right person to do the Right-to-Knows is the Legal Department. It should stay there and we should have somebody that works solely on that for that reason. If those people stop writing those RTKs all the time, maybe we won't need the lawyer. At this particular time, we need the lawyer to keep everybody else from working more than they have to. They have an eight hour job and they're spent most of their time doing RTKs, and I think that's wrong, and I think we need to keep the RTK lawyer. It's ridiculous.

Chairman Dowd

Alderman Wilshire?

Alderman Wilshire

I can't support that motion. I think it takes up too much of everyone else's time and detracts from the work that they're doing for the City and for the departments. We get a ton of Right-to-Know requests. I can't see taking that position out of there and putting that workload elsewhere. So I won't support that motion.

Chairman Dowd

Alderman Jette?

Alderman Jette

Yeah I, too, I understand the purpose but I'm reluctant to get into micromanaging the Legal Department and the Administrative Affairs Department. I would feel more comfortable. You can always talk to them and tell them what your suggestions might be and I would feel more comfortable if they came to us and said this is what we want to do and how we want to do it, and this is the money we need, and we can agree to give them the money or not. That's kind of what they're doing and I think it's difficult as an Alderman to micromanage. I understand and appreciate what you're trying to do but I can't support it.

Chairman Dowd

Alderman Sullivan?

Alderman Sullivan

Thank you Mr. Chairman. I'm off camera so you don't have to see the massive bandage on my head. So I would like to speak in support of Alderman Cathey's motion to remove this position when I first heard it. I understand that there was an increased load on the Right-to-Know situation but based on the minutes from what happened last night in the meeting, I think that it seems to be going in a better direction. To add another head at this point on to this budget I don't think is a good idea. I'm going to support (inaudible) for Alderman Cathey. Thanks.

Chairman Dowd

Alderman Klee?

Alderman Klee

Thank you so much Mr. Chairman. Again, I'm not a voting member of this Committee and while I respect everything that's been said by the Aldermen that are in favor of this, the issue here is things may have slowed down at the moment but we don't know what the rest of the year is going to be. This isn't an added position. This is a position that's already existing. We would be literally be cutting a position from them at the point if I'm not mistaken. If I also recall, Attorney Bolton did comment that they would be using this person for other things if they weren't doing Right-to-Know. So there's enough work there for them to be handled between legal cases, etc. as well as Right-to-Know.

I'm glad that the Alderman from Ward 5 commented and said "micromanaging" because I've always been a fan against any kind of micromanaging. I think we can speak to any department with the Public Works etc. I don't think we should be in the place to say you don't need this position, you don't need that position. If they were coming in after and saying I want to add this position as Miss Kleiner said, maybe at that point we can say can we put that off for a year or something. I would not in her particular case I think she does need that position but I don't think we should be telling them that they have to cut. They know what they need to run their department so thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Alderman O'Brien?

Alderman O'Brien

No I'm going to yield. I think everybody here has their mind. I think we're all set.

Chairman Dowd

I'm just going to add that I probably work with the Legal Department more than anybody on the Board of Aldermen. I can tell you that Attorney Dory Clarke is out straight just doing legislation. Attorney Leonard works with me when she can. She is extremely busy with court cases and as far as the school, she's doing easements, and working with Eversource, and a number of other things that sometimes end up in negotiations or court. I believe that the new attorney and they're trying to take some of the workload off the other Attorney's because they are out straight. So I would not be in favor of reducing this position and it's not just Right-to-Know. I do know that when we get into Right-to-Know things, it goes to the Attorney's Office and someone has to handle it. I can tell you that the three other attorney's don't have the time to handle that based on the amount that's coming in. At this point in time, I would not favor reducing that position at all. They have needed another attorney for a long, long time and it's never been in the budget. Now we have one that's already in place and this motion would basically fire that person and I am not going to support that.

Alderman Cathey

Thank you Mr. Chair. I appreciate all the comments and the feedback. Just for the record, I disagree. We can talk to – like this is our job controlling this budget. So if that means things get reduced, that's what happens. I'm not saying that's what I love or I want that but so I'm not – that's not my litmus test. My litmus test is how much are the taxpayers paying and that's it. That's my only real metric.

Number two when we had the log for the Right-to-Knows, I believe only the Budget Review Committee received the stack of papers with every Right-to-Know request log. On the top sheet that was given to us, it explained what the packet was that we got but it also said the City treats every single question as a Right-to-Know which that's not a Right-to-Know. If I ask a City employee a question, it's not a Right-to-Know. The Right-to-Know requests are being artificially inflated because just a simple question to a City employee is not a Right-to-Know. A Right-to-Know should be triggered when a citizen doesn't feel like they are getting access to what they need or a question answered and so they use Right-to-Know to get that information.

So also I know that I believe and I could be incorrect. Maybe I'm mistaken. I believe Attorney Bolton said the Right-to-Know Coordinator would not be doing Right-to-Knows full time. They would be doing other legal services. Am I misunderstanding that?

Chairman Dowd

Taking some of the workload off the other Attorney's which are out straight.

Alderman Cathey

Okay.

Chairman Dowd

Are we ready for a vote?

Alderman O'Brien

Mr. Chairman since we have been joined via Zoom by Alderman Sullivan, he is a member of this Committee. All future votes from hence forward need to be done by roll call.

Chairman Dowd

Alderman Timmons do you have something else?

Alderman Timmons

That must have made my heart rate go to 120 because that's what my watch is saying. Okay, I'm done.

Chairman Dowd

All set? If there are no other questions or concerns we will call the motion on the floor by roll call. A yes vote is in agreement with the motion and a no vote is against the motion. Will the Clerk please call the roll?

A viva voce roll call was taken which resulted as follows:

Yea:	Alderman Sullivan, Alderman Cathey	2
Nay:	Alderman Wilshire, Alderwoman Kelly, Alderman Jette, Alderman O'Brien Alderman Dowd	5

MOTION FAILED

Chairman Dowd

Any further motions? Alderman Cathey?

Alderman Cathey

Similar to the previous motion, I would like to motion that we subtract \$6,000 from page 72, which is Admin. Services, line item 51100 from Wages Full time. The reason being instead of having a paralegal position, which I believe is being added, I'd like to reduce that money from \$60,000 to \$52,000 to pay for a full time person to do the scanning/redactions for the Inception Technologies Project.

MOTION BY ALDERMAN CATHEY TO REDUCE ON PAGE 72, DEPT. ADMIN. SERVICES, LINE ITEM/DESCRIPTION 51100 – WAGES FULL TIME, THE AMOUNT OF \$6,000, BY ROLL CALL

ON THE QUESTION

Chairman Dowd

Mr. Griffin anything on that?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

I just want to let you know that Director Kleiner is available by Zoom if you wanted an explanation of what that person was going to do.

Chairman Dowd

Director Kleiner would you like to make a comment on the motion?

Kim Kleiner, Administrative Services Director

Good evening. If it pleases the Board, so this position would assist in the redaction of the Inception Technologies and the Docuware documents. I think that a little bit is unknown as to the brunt of the work that has been placed upon the Division's in the actual answering of the Right-to-Know requests. So here at Administrative Services Division, our requests although we often confer with the Right-to-Know Attorney and that is a very needed position, the actual request,

the documents, the redaction all of it is done here within this office. It has caused some great concern as to us being able to get other functions done properly and it's really causing quite a constraint on the day-to-day operations within the Division. So this position would assist with that and assist with the redaction of the Docuware. It's a very, very needed position.

Chairman Dowd

I think the question was the reduction and the amount of salary a paralegal versus someone else. Can you comment on the reduction? I think was \$6,000? Alderman Cathey?

Alderman Cathey

Yes and you know what I may be mistaken in this amount. My notes may be incorrect and I don't mind corrected, but Miss Kleiner when you were here previously meeting with us I believe you said the salary that you would need for just a people who is covering the redaction only would be \$52,000 ballpark in salary. Is that correct?

Kim Kleiner, Administrative Services Director

For us to get the redaction done in the amount of time that I specified, which I still want to be very careful, that was looking at over 2,000 hours. So it would still take 265 days at that salary. The problem is I feel that a position that would also help with the Right-to-Know requests and the redaction would take a little bit more expertise considering there is very formal writing and a lot of more legal type of work that's done by the Right-to-Know - someone that would be answering the Right-to-Know requests.

ALDERMAN CATHEY WITHDREW MOTION

Chairman Dowd

Any further motions? Alderman Cathey?

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN CATHEY TO REDUCE ON PAGE 215, DEPT. 198,
LINE ITEM/DESCRIPTION 89722 – 14 COURT STREET ETF, THE AMOUNT OF \$25,000, BY ROLL CALL**

ON THE QUESTION

Chairman Dowd

Why don't you explain?

Alderman Cathey

Thank you Mr. Chair. As we've discussed sort of round and round in the Aldermanic Chamber, this is I'm sure not a surprise to anyone. I don't love the idea of giving Court Street this amount of money. I would prefer a strategic plan be in place before a lot of monies are spent on that building - not that I don't want to spend money on that building, not that I don't think the building can and should be improved for a variety of reasons, I would much rather that there be a very specific strategic detailed plan before us before I would be comfortable putting \$50,000 into that fund.

Chairman Dowd

May I ask you a question? Where would the money come from for the Strategic Plan? They usually go about \$50,000.

Alderman Cathey

Well if I know that they're going to use this money for a strategic plan that's different, but there's no restriction on that monies. If I leave it in there and they just go to use it for something else, then they're going to have to come back to us and ask another \$50,000 for a strategic plan anyway. I don't know if there's a way around that. We can put contingencies on different things, but I'm open to suggestions.

Chairman Dowd

I don't know what the \$50,000 was allocated for, Mr. Griffin?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

So by way of clarity as part of the capital improvements, the Mayor is proposing \$50,000 for a strategic plan. The \$50,000 that we speak of that's going to the Expendable Trust Fund, Director Kleiner and I analyzed the revenue that goes into the fund and rounded off to 50. There might be a little bit of misunderstanding, but that Expendable Trust Fund - you don't use an Expendable Trust Fund generally for ongoing operations. So Director Kleiner can be a little bit more specific but the electricity, the gas, things like that, that's in the City buildings operational accounts that is overseen by Director Kleiner.

Chairman Dowd

Miss Kleiner do you want to add anything?

Kim Kleiner, Administrative Services Director

Yes, good evening. I would like to add that one of the things that we heard very clearly I think from our meetings and from the discussion was the need of a strategic plan. We have been meeting, and interviewing, and talking to people that would assist with that type of endeavor and we do intend on bringing forth a plan that not only meets the needs of those who use the building but also meets the needs of possible tenants or other uses of the building. So we have heard that and we understand the need for that plan.

Alderman Cathey

May I ask a question Mr. Chair?

Chairman Dowd

Yes.

Alderman Cathey

Director Kleiner Mr. Griffin mentioned what kinds of things the funds are used for. Can you be more specific just so I can have more clarity before I decide what I want to do with this motion?

Administrative Services Director, Kleiner

Certainly. So CFO Griffin is absolutely right. The everyday cost for that building are in the City Buildings budget. They would not be used for that. It could be used for looking at funding the plan. It could be used for working and making some of the recommendations of that plan but it would not be used for the day-to-day operations or any basic repairs. There is right now a group over there that is working to assess the building and there are some repairs that just being made out extra money that we have in this Fiscal '22 budget. We hope to get it set so that at least the artists that need to use it this summer can use it and we can fix some items that have come to light, but it would not be used for any day-to-day meetings.

Alderman Cathey

So if I may, that monies would be used to improve the building for lack of a better explanation? Okay, then I'm going to let the motion stand because like I said, I'd prefer a strategic plan before we start spending money improving the building.

Chairman Dowd

Okay the motion before us is to reduce that line item for Court Street by \$25,000. Alderwoman Kelly?

Alderwoman Kelly

I'm not going to support this motion. We talked a lot about this building and what it needed and this \$50,000 in the grand scheme of this budget is not a lot of money and I will remind everyone in the chamber we just approved \$275,000 for something. I'm comfortable that we have enough in place.

Chairman Dowd

Alderman Sullivan?

Alderman Sullivan

Thank you Mr. Chairman. I'm going to support this motion because I'm looking right now through my budget book and I'm counting the number of trust funds and dedicated to downtown buildings. All of them are in six figures. If there's money that we need to take from one trust fund for another downtown building. So I support this motion to cut this appropriation in half.

Chairman Dowd

Any other comments? Alderman O'Brien

Alderman O'Brien

Yeah I am not going to support this. I look at 14 Court Street as one of the gems of the City. It is used by youth groups whether it be the theater, dance halls, or other things which is part indirectly of our recreational and part of our enhancement of the community. Hey listen folks, I'm all in favor of burning the pool table on the December cold night but it ain't that cold yet. I'm not willing to give up 14 Court Street for a measly small amount of money. There's a lot of issues with that building. Why is that? Because, again, it's a building that is old. It needs every dollar that we can try to muster into it to keep it habitable, to be used a community asset. So I think it is cutting off our nose to save our face by cutting this particular thing. Let's keep it as an asset to the City and fund it with the \$50,000 that is currently in the budget. Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Any other comments on this motion? Alderman Comeau?

Alderman Comeau

Yeah I just wanted to make a quick statement. This trust fund is relatively new if I'm not mistaken. We just created this probably about a month or so ago and I recall during the discussions there were several among us that had some concerns about the creation of this trust fund and we were told well don't worry about creating the trust fund because all it does is establish the account. It doesn't appropriate money into it. I think at least for myself, I won't speak for anybody else, I felt like it was a foregone conclusion that once we created this trust fund we were going to appropriate money into it. So it seemed like a disingenuous argument at the time to say we can create the account because we're not putting any money into it and now here we are a month later appropriating money into it. My understanding was that that fund was supposed to be filled with the money that we collect from tenants, and rent, and things like that to be used for building improvements and things like that. So has the intent of that fund changed since we created it because I thought the purpose of it was to hold the money that we take in from the property and we weren't going to need to appropriate funds into it?

Chairman Dowd

I don't believe, Mr. Griffin you can answer that, I don't believe that the budget puts \$50,000 in that account. I think it would have to be appropriated under separate legislation. So I'm not sure where the \$50,000 came from or per se but it's not this budget that's putting 50k into that account, correct?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Mr. Chairman if I may. Good question. Miss Kleiner and I we recognized that there is about \$50,000 of rent and taxes that is in the Fiscal '23 budget that for purposes as you suggested making sure the building is safe and fixed and not for operating expenses. So that's what's being appropriated. It's taking revenue and appropriating it. Now you could argue last year we had revenue and no appropriations, so it is an increase but it is revenue neutral from the stand point of if you're going to put money in from this particular purpose. We're just identifying the revenue and that's why it's \$50,000 and not \$100,000. There was a notion that we had taken \$100,000 and that's not the case.

Chairman Dowd

So the funds that are going in there are from rent and other things associated with revenue for the building?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Right. Rent and taxes. Miss Kleiner can get to the specifics but there's a few rental revenue amounts that can go in there.

Chairman Dowd

Alderman Jette?

Alderman Jette

I thank Alderman Comeau for reminding me of the conversation. So the fact that this \$50,000 which will come from the rent and the taxes goes into this fund but I remember you saying very specifically that none of it could be spent until there was a resolution authorizing the expenditure of any of that money. Is that still the case?

Chairman Dowd

Who is the spending authority on that?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

I believe it is Administrative Services.

Chairman Dowd

So it's Administrative Services. It would be Miss Kleiner who would be authorizing the expenditure. I think the discussion that we had on the account that was set up was that from the rent and taxes, the people that are renting space there and paying taxes have some reasonable expectations of us keeping up the area in that building. I think also the resolution was that monies would be added to this as we go along from rent and taxes so that there is an amount of money that can help in maintaining the building. Not normal expenses but maintaining the building. So I think within the confines of the legislation that we set up, I think the appropriation is legitimate. So the motion is on the floor. Alderman Comeau?

Alderman Comeau

So thank you Mr. Chair. I just want to make sure that I understand this correctly. In laymen's terms, I thought this was we were adding an additional \$50,000 on top of. This is more like a transfer of the money we've already taken in and just putting in that account is that correct?

Chairman Dowd

Mr. Griffin I believe it's the rent and taxes for FY23 that go in there, correct?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Correct. A couple things. The Mayor and the Administrative Services Director are the agents to expend so they need to authorize to spend. It is a match of the Fiscal '23 revenue to this amount to put it in there. You need an appropriation. The concept is you appropriate 50 but you know that there is 50 coming in as revenue.

Chairman Dowd

Thank you. Anyone else? Alderman Jette?

Alderman Jette

So I have a distinct memory of I think it was said. Maybe I just thought it but I think it was that this was described as an accounting line item that we were creating and any money that would be going into it was a decision that the Aldermen would have to make at a later time. Certainly that we wouldn't spend anything without specific authorization from the Aldermen whether it's the full Board of Aldermen or the Finance Committee. So hearing that in fact \$50,000 is going in

this thing and it can be spent without further authorization is contrary to the discussion as I remember it when we created this.

Chairman Dowd

The legislation had to be very specific relative to who could expend it. If it's the Mayor and the Administrative Services Director, that's what was in the legislation as far as the spending authority. Mr. Griffin?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

One final point. It was a long discussion that we had. A good discussion but the thought here as Director Kleiner said, we're not going to be paying electricity, and gas, and those types of things. Everybody was excited about putting 50 in or some amount and having it grow to cover things that are larger in nature and that the thought might have been at the time goes to the Finance Committee for approval. Contract over \$25,000. The building is an old building and it might need a new closet or something, so that can be less than \$25,000. There is on page 308, second line from the top, it basically describes fund 7022 and what the intent is because we always put that in. As Alderman Dowd indicated, that we have to put in a resolution who is going to be the agent to expend it.

Chairman Dowd

Okay? I have Alderman Sullivan?

Alderman Sullivan

Thank you Mr. Chairman. By way of (inaudible) that was sent out, in believe in January, I have the last three years for 14 Court Street revenue is FY20 actual \$31,025 FY21 actual \$16,750. Fiscal '22 budgeted at the time we still had many months to go, but it budgeted was \$40,625. That's for rent for the last four years. So if this was meant to capture revenue from rents, \$50,000 over a 3-year term I think would be very generous.

Chairman Dowd

I think it was rent and taxes not just rent right Mr. Griffin?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Correct.

Chairman Dowd

All set Alderman Sullivan?

Alderman Sullivan

Yup.

Chairman Dowd

Miss Kleiner would you like to add something at this point?

Kim Kleiner, Administrative Services Director

Yes. I would only like to add that the numbers that were quoted number 1 were reduced due to COVID and no rentals were really taking place considering that Court Street was closed for quite a period of time. It did include taxes. The discussion was that any expenditure from this fund would be for an item that would be in excess of \$25,000. Therefore, brought forth to the Finance Committee. We are not looking to use this for small items. We are looking to obtain the Strategic Plan and figure out the best use for these funds and then bring that forward to the Finance Committee.

Chairman Dowd

Thank you. Alderman Thibeault?

Alderman Thibeault

Thank you Mr. Chairman. Thank you to Miss Kleiner who just touched on a couple of things I wanted to say about COVID. Why would we look at the numbers during COVID? That just doesn't make any sense for one.

Two - there was an attack on downtown earlier on how we are always looking at downtown buildings. The problem is that the downtown buildings are some of our oldest. So yes we're going to look at those. We don't have a lot of City buildings in the south end, or in the west end as much as we do downtown and as old they are. So I think it is important that we're spending money on these buildings. To say that we, I guess it's all of us that voted for it (inaudible) is we weren't putting that money in. This money is what we believe the appropriation will be for next year and I believe we will still have to vote on it at some point. The money, again, is not going in there the minute this budget gets approved. At some point, we were going to have to put money in there. Somebody was. So it's not disingenuous and I think that (inaudible) is just wrong. That's all I got to say.

Chairman Dowd

Any other comments on the motion on the floor? Alderman Jette?

Alderman Jette

Thank you. So I'm looking at the Resolution and it says, "It is the intention of this Board to make annual appropriations into this trust fund beginning with the FY2023 budget and that the annual amount that will be appropriated will be equivalent to the amount of any rent, taxes, and fees collected by the City relative to the use of the building. The Mayor or the Administrative Services Director is appointed as the agent to expend". So that clarifies in my mind yeah that when we talked about there would be no money going into this unless the Aldermen authorized it, I guess that's what we're doing with this budget. This is the authorization to put money into it and the money is supposedly matching what the rent, and taxes, and fees relative to the use of the building. So I'm okay with this now that I've reminded myself.

Chairman Dowd

All right, thank you. If there are no other comments, will the Clerk please call the roll?

A viva voce roll call was taken which resulted as follows:

Yea:	Alderman Sullivan, Alderman Cathey	2
Nay:	Alderman Wilshire, Alderwoman Kelly, Alderman Jette, Alderman O'Brien Alderman Dowd	5

MOTION FAILEDChairman Dowd

Are there any other motions? Alderman Cathey?

MOTION BY ALDERMAN CATHEY TO REDUCE ON PAGE 245, DEPT. 198, LINE ITEM/DESCRIPTION 81100 IN THE AMOUNT OF \$500,000 TO \$250,000, BY ROLL CALLON THE QUESTIONChairman Dowd

What is that line?

Alderman Cathey

It's Capital Improvements for the PEG Access Channel Fund. I can speak to it once we...

Alderman O'Brien

I think you got the numbers wrong. You said 811?

Alderman Cathey

81100 Capital Outlay Improvement

Alderman O'Brien

Unless my glasses are failing me, I have PEG is 2505, Access Channel Supplies and Materials and it's 61100.

Alderman Cathey

81 - two sections down.

Alderman O'Brien

Okay, so you're down into the Capital Improvements?

Alderman Cathey

Correct.

Alderman O'Brien

Okay, thank you.

Alderman Cathey

The reason that I'm making this motion is as you can see the actual through April this year was only \$58,000. So I feel like half to 250 is a safe place to be. I'm not cutting it entirely but I feel like there's some room there so I'd like cut a little fat off the meat.

Chairman Dowd

Mr. Griffin, do you want to cover that one?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Yes if I may. Let me see if I can do justice to this one. This is a special revenue fund where the revenue equals the expenses. So there's a couple line items I'd like to bring up. One in the revenues - 48990 User Fund Balance, page 244, line item – and the intent of this is to balance - 48990, Use of Fund Balance 507678. If we look at the next page which is the one that Alderman Cathey is addressing, he'd like to cut the \$500,000 down because they only spent \$58,000. So this is a fund that doesn't lapse to surplus. This is the PEG Access Channel Fund. Those numbers are essentially placeholders based on the fund balance. I'm going to get you a better explanation but if you reduce the 500, you end up having to reduce the 507 Use of Fund Balance. The reason why only 58 is expended is that's all they needed even though there's a number of 500.

Alderman Cathey

So let's say this budget passes as is and the revenues are accurate, so they're going to make \$983,000 this year. That's our estimation and we're budgeting - we'll spend 500 on capital improvements but we don't. What happens to that revenue that we're not spending because you said the revenue doesn't lapse over? So what does happen to that surplus revenue that we have in this particular fund?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

It stays in this particular fund. It stays in fund 2505.

Alderman Cathey

And just carries over year over year?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Yes. One more point. Really the only revenue that comes in here is the Cable TV franchise fees. There's a little bit of miscellaneous. So over the years, this has accumulated. I believe the Capital Improvements is just kind of the - maybe that's the plug number but I'll find out. But at this point if I haven't given you a good answer, I'm going to get one. This is a Special Revenue Fund. Revenues equal expenses no effect on the taxes.

ALDERMAN CATHEY WITHDREW HIS MOTION

Alderman Cathey

Thank you Mr. Griffin. I appreciate it.

Chairman Dowd

Any other motions? Alderman O'Brien?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Mr. Chairman sorry to interrupt.

Chairman Dowd

Do you want to give us a point of where we are right now?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Well I'm going to do that but I also want to recommend if you would make a motion for me. Upon final analysis of the budget and as you can imagine it's very hectic to try to tie things out as best you can, the Comptroller and I noticed that in wastewater on page 231, the revenue doesn't equal the expenses. We had added some expenses at the end to the process. So what I'd like to do is recommend on page 231, line item 48996, add \$41,772 to that number which is going to have the result of the revenues equaling the expenses which it should do in this particular enterprise fund.

Chairman Dowd

So basically that motion will balance out the revenues and expenditures?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Correct.

Alderman Klee

What number was that?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

So it's 48996 recommending on page 231 to add \$41,772.

Alderman O'Brien

Mr. Griffin I will make that motion.

MOTION BY ALDERMAN O'BRIEN TO INCREASE WASTEWATER NET ASSET NUMBER ON ACCOUNT 48996 INCREASE IT BY \$41,772 - TO INCREASE FROM \$227,639 TO \$269,411, PAGE 231

ON THE QUESTION

Chairman Dowd

Alderman Cathey?

Alderman Cathey

Thank you Mr. Chair. Mr. Griffin I may be misunderstanding this but I see on the revenue page 231 a total amount underneath the Other Financial Services line. I see a total of 8599070. Are you saying that line is supposed to match the expenses on page 235 of \$8,371,431 or you trying to match up a different line? I'm just trying to get clarity.

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

We're trying to match the total revenue line.

Alderman Cathey

Of \$27,000,006?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Yes.

Alderman Cathey

Okay.

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

That \$27,000,006 should be \$27,046,696 so it will balance. But by changing that line, the math will work.

Alderman Cathey

Right. Okay. Thank you Mr. Chair I appreciate it.

Chairman Dowd

Any other comments? Alderman Jette?

Alderman Jette

So we just changed that number. This kind of reminds me when I used to do my taxes for myself. Do we just make this number up is that what we're doing?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

If I may Mr. Chairman. That's the balancing line for the revenue to equal the expenses. I wouldn't recommend changing any other lines above that. We have net assets in the Wastewater Fund, Enterprise Fund and that's why the line says increase or decrease because sometimes the revenues are above what exceed the expenditures, the appropriations. So in this case, we added expenditures so we have to add to the use of fund balance - Wastewater Net Assets.

Chairman Dowd

All set Alderman Jette?

Alderman Jette

Yes.

Chairman Dowd

Alderman Cathey?

Alderman Cathey

Just for clarification, these are estimates because my question would be what if those revenues don't actually match up?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

That's a good question. These are all estimates.

Alderman Cathey

Okay. So what would happen if they don't match up?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

So there's a closing June 30th of every year this gets closed as its own accounting. It's its own funds. If we use more, we'll have less of a fund balance or net asset position or we use less, we'll have the higher net asset position.

Alderman Cathey

Okay. Thank you.

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

You're welcome.

Chairman Dowd

Everybody familiar with the motion or do you want it reread? Looks like everyone is familiar with it.

A viva voce roll call was taken which resulted as follows:

Yea: Alderman Wilshire, Alderman Sullivan, Alderwoman Kelly, Alderman Jette,
Alderman Cathey, Alderman O'Brien, Alderman Dowd 7

Nay: 0

MOTION CARRIED

Chairman Dowd

Okay we've corrected that. I didn't see any additional Motions. So Alderman O'Brien has a Motion.

MOTION BY ALDERMAN O'BRIEN TO RECOMMEND FINAL PASSAGE TO THE FULL BOARD OF ALDERMEN OF R-22-035 RELATIVE TO THE ADOPTION OF THE FISCAL YEAR 2023 PROPOSED BUDGET FOR THE CITY OF NASHUA GENERAL ENTERPRISE SPECIAL REVENUE AND GRANT FUNDS AS AMENDED BY THE ACTION OF THE BOARD THIS EVENING, BY ROLL CALL

ON THE QUESTION

Chairman Dowd

Any questions? Alderwoman Kelly?

Alderwoman Kelly

I was just going to ask CFO Griffin is he was keeping a tally where we ended up with the Amendments.

Chairman Dowd

He beat me to the punch because I asked him a couple of minutes ago. Before we voted on it, he was going to tell us.

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

So the operating budget general fund will be increased by \$360,000. That includes \$25,000 to the Great American Downtown, \$25,000 reduction from transfer into Downtown Improvements, \$275,000 transferred to the Park Rehabilitation, \$75,000 reduction to the Downtown Improvements and \$160,000 Capital Improvements specifically for school deferred maintenance. So that calculates the net of \$360,000. So the budget recommended increase to \$303,358,903.

Chairman Dowd

So does everyone understand what the motion is? Alderman Cathey?

Alderman Cathey

I do understand the motion. I just want a clarification. Maybe I missed a line item because I've been tallying. We have 275 for the lights and I have 160 for deferred maintenance but the 25 is coming out of Downtown Improvements to go to GAD. So what are the other things that we added? Because on the Wastewater Fund, that balances out so we're not actually adding that right because it washes?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

No change on the Wastewater Fund but we do have 25 add to the GAD.

Alderman Cathey

That comes out of Downtown Improvements.

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

Right. You did that by reducing the Downtown Improvements by 25, so that's a wash. Then you added 275, subtracted the remaining 75 to Downtown Improvements, and added 160. So the total is 360.

Alderman Cathey

Okay, I though you said something else.

Chairman Dowd

All set. Everyone understand?

MOTION BY ALDERMAN O'BRIEN TO RECOMMEND FINAL PASSAGE TO THE FULL BOARD OF ALDERMEN OF R-22-035 RELATIVE TO THE ADOPTION OF THE FISCAL YEAR 2023 PROPOSED BUDGET FOR THE CITY OF NASHUA GENERAL ENTERPRISE SPECIAL REVENUE AND GRANT FUNDS AS AMENDED BY THE ACTION OF THE BOARD THIS EVENING, BY ROLL CALL

A viva voce roll call was taken which resulted as follows:

Yea: Alderman Wilshire, Alderwoman Kelly, Alderman Jette, Alderman O'Brien
Alderman Dowd 5

Nay: Alderman Sullivan, Alderman Cathey 2

MOTION CARRIED

Chairman Dowd

So the next full Board meeting is the 28th. We do have another Budget meeting because we have a couple of other items on it. One I know for sure is adding the monies for the Fire Department and one other. But we will have that other Budget

meeting but only for the regular budget stuff. Then the Budget for FY23 will come up at the next full Board of Aldermen meeting in which case it will be voted on and I believe it will be a roll call vote.

Alderman Kelly

Alderman Dowd when you were talking about the Budget meeting are you talking about the wrap-up that we had held or are you talking about something else?

Chairman Dowd

No. No more wrap-ups. We just sent it to the full Board.

Alderman Kelly

I know but you said you we are still going to have the Budget meeting.

Chairman Dowd

We have a Budget meeting to discuss two items of legislation. There's two items on it. One is the shortfall for the Fire Department that we talked about. That will come up at that Budget meeting which is next Monday. There's one other piece of legislation and those are the two items that we'll be discussing at that Budget meeting.

Alderman Kelly

Our normally scheduled Budget meeting. Got it! Thank you.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Alderman Jette

So adding money to the Fire budget is to cover a shortfall. That's going to come after we vote on this budget?

Chairman Dowd

It has nothing to do with this budget. It's this year FY22.

Alderman Jette

Oh, okay.

Chairman Dowd

The legislation explains, unless Mr. Griffin wants to explain. It's because of COVID and the way we allowed them to take vacation after COVID. It's kind of complicated. It came up at the first reading at the last Board of Aldermen meeting and there were several people that had signed on. So I assumed everyone read the legislation. It's basically to give the Fire Department the money to resume to do the rest of the year basically. Correct, Mr. Griffin?

John Griffin, CFO/Treasurer/Tax Collector

That's correct.

Alderman Jette

So your assumption is that the people who endorsed it read it not necessarily those who didn't endorse it?

Chairman Dowd

I would hope. Any other general discussion?

Alderman O'Brien

I do have one. Just to my good friends on Infrastructure. We're doing it again tomorrow night. We got the Joint meeting at the Nashua North High School at 6:15.

Chairman Dowd

Yes the Joint is at 6:15. The Infrastructure is at 6:00.

Alderman O'Brien

Yes, we're at 6:00. This is a meeting on some stuff that we have that's pending out there with Infrastructure. Some of it's the Garden Street for example. I'll discuss it after the meeting but it's going to be a regular Infrastructure meeting. We're quickly going to go into the Joint with DPW immediately following that. After that, Chairman Dowd kicks in with his Joint Special with the Schools.

Alderman Comeau

And all this is happening at North?

Alderman O'Brien

Yes, North. So be there or be square.

Alderwoman Kelly

I just wanted to remind everybody that the Nashua Pride Festival is this Saturday 2:00 p.m. for parade with festival to follow. Hope to see you all there.

Chairman Dowd

Alderman Comeau?

Alderman Comeau

Yes. I just want to thank all the members of this Committee for their work on the budget and for your support of my Labine Field Project. It means a lot to me and the people in the neighborhood, so I appreciate it. Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Alderman Sullivan are you showing us your injury.

Alderman Sullivan

There it is. Right there – 4 stitches. A great story I'll tell you some time.

Anyway, I wanted to - this is a long process of the budget six weeks or so. I learned a lot about City government. I learned about this City government over the past six weeks. I am licking my chops for next year because I have serious on the job training and looking forward to next year, digging in, and seeing what we can do. Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

I've been on the Board 11 years and I'm still learning.

Alderman O'Brien

Just quickly. The Clerk would like to thank everybody for repeating and everything. Mr. Griffin I would like to see you afterwards to make sure we have everything all set. Thank you. I am not as good as my Clerk Alderman Comeau who the night of the thousand barriers but I try and match you.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Laurie Ortolano

Laurie Ortolano, 41 Berkeley Street. A couple of things. I shared a little bit of a story last night living over in Litchfield and attending deliberative sessions and how the sessions worked in a small town of 7,000 with a budget of about \$13 million. The public would get together. There was usually quite a lot of interest. Fill a school auditorium and the process of deliberating, discussing, and asking questions about a budget went from 9:00 in the morning until 3, 4, sometimes 5:00 in the afternoon. You had wide variety of people at the microphone - long lines in fact. It wasn't the same people talking and very often if you had a list of questions, somebody else was asking your question, or getting an answer which helped you in understanding in getting the information you were looking for.

When you go to a Nashua budget hearing and there's only really 4 or 5 people that are participating in it, I thought that the Chairman showed an extreme amount of frustration and disrespect to the citizens who showed up because we kept coming to the mic and he didn't appreciate it. He changed the rules repeatedly, which I think was in violation of how a public hearing is to be done and I drafted a letter to the Attorney General's Office today to have a discussion with the State about what's happening down here and our hearings.

It was just so disrespectful and attacking to have a Chair say, "You've come to other meetings. We're sick of you. We're tired of you being around. You've already asked questions. We don't want to hear from you anymore." Most of the public comments at the meetings are just only public comment and not questions to be answered. The hearing was the one place I could come and to be shut down for addressing the spending cap when in fact Alderman Dowd...

Alderman O'Brien

One minute.

Laurie Ortolano

...at a public meeting stated the spending cap could be discussed at the hearing was just really discouraging. So this City and the leadership of this City – the old guard - needs to go. It certainly doesn't respect (inaudible) government.

The document that Jonathan Cathey referenced a large stack of Right-to-Knows tabulated with a cover sheet that explained how the City treats Right-to-Knows...

Alderman O'Brien

30 seconds.

Laurie Ortolano

...I would like to a copy of that document as a formal Right-to-Know request publically. I want that because I think that's what the Mayor was referring to and that person that seems to take a lot of criticisms, I actually don't have that record. I'd like to see it. I'd like to study it and I agree with Jonathan Cathey that we're abusing what a Right-to-Know request is. Thank you and thank for the work done by the Committee tonight.

Chairman Dowd

Just so you know a lot of what was just said is not true and you can take it for a grain of salt.

REMARKS BY THE ALDERMENAlderman Thibeault

Thank you Mr. Chairman. So I wasn't going to speak, but I just want to commend you last night for doing a great job. I couldn't be there but I did watch it. I thought you did a great job. I thought people weren't respecting the rules but you go up there and make statements and you make speeches. That's not what it was supposed to be. It was supposed to be to ask questions, ask questions, ask it on what we're going over. If we're going over Police, ask questions about Police not the spending cap. So I think those comments were just what Alderman Dowd said. They just weren't true. I watched it last year and saw the exact same thing and it was the same people doing the same thing. I wish more people came out. I wished people came up to ask questions if they wanted to know more about. We have Budget meetings that people can come to, learn about certain departments, learn about budgets. I would love to see it filled up every single meeting. But

for some reason, there's too much apathy out there and people don't come to see. There's so much to learn and there's a lot to learn. I think Alderman Dowd did a fantastic job last night and so did the Mayor.

I just wanted to say at Alderwoman-at-Large Kelly, I'm hoping to be at that parade on Saturday if this cold will clear up I can be there. I'm looking forward to it and thank you for mentioning it again. Thanks.

Alderman Klee

Thank you Mr. Chairman. I, too, will be there at the Pride Parade and thank you so much. I saw your interview on TV and you did a phenomenal job. Thank you.

But I also wanted to give thanks to the Nashua PD and all the citizens that worked so hard in finding Timothy. It was very scary for his family today. He was found safely. I think the Nashua PD, and citizen - I heard from my constituents that were out looking for him. Somebody saw him at 11:00 a.m. There were people that were looking over by the Library downtown, and Little Florida, and so on. I heard from so many people and I think it was wonderful that they helped find him. Thank goodness he was reunited with his family and he was safe.

I'd also like to thank Mr. Griffin, Attorney Bolton, and Chairman Dowd. You guys have done a phenomenal job and I've already sent it in writing but I wanted to apologize to Mr. Griffin and Attorney Bolton. They sat here trying to explain everything a few meetings back and they took a lot of abuse. Normally I stand up and I say that this is not fair to them. They work very hard and we all appreciate everything that you do as well as Attorney Bolton. So I want to go on the public record to say thank you very much for everything you do. I don't think you should have to take abuse. I don't think any employee should have to take the abuse that you did that night. I apologize for not standing up that night. Thank you so much.

Alderman O'Brien

I just wanted to say that one of the public last night made a comment geez more people should be there from the public. I agree. We saw the same five people, although they were very interesting. But I've always said what about the silent majority and that means the other 96,995 that stayed home. What about that thing the Mayor talked about last night that again Nashua made it by one of the organizations as the 4th best City to live in New Hampshire. I remember in '87 making Money Magazine. We've done it twice and now we've done it with this group and we've always been high. Mr. Chairman I've been with you six years on this. I relish at your knowledge of the municipal budget. I've been your Clerk for six years. I'm still learning myself.

Chairman Dowd

We'll send you to a course in shorthand.

Alderman O'Brien

Yeah, yeah. Irish have long hands. There is nothing short with an Irishman. But I think it reflects not only us as Aldermen but it reflects City employees. You just don't get recognized by these organizations just by chance. I think we're on the right track. I wish some people would realize that. Welcome aboard, this is the community. But I think we've got to focused on exactly what we're doing prudently and the fact that we're all here living here means we've got a pretty darn good place to bring up a family and everything. I'm not going to sit here and say Chicken Little yet and I'll wait to burn the pool table. Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Alderman Comeau?

Alderman Comeau

Yes thank you Mr. Chair. I just wanted to tell my colleague from Ward 9 I recommend frozen peas for the swelling, single malt scotch for the pain, and lessons for the golf swing.

Alderman O'Brien

Also Alderman Comeau, he should keep his head down. They tell you that all the time.

Chairman Dowd

Then he'd have a concussion instead of an eye cone.

Alderman Sullivan

Not fair, not fair.

Alderman O'Brien

Mend well my friend.

Alderman Dowd

At least you didn't get hit by a Frisbee on the other golf course.

Any other comments? I appreciate everybody's work during the budget. It's always a difficult procedure. I've been doing this for I don't know how many year. Between that and Budget Director for the Board of Ed for a number of years. It's not an easy job and I do have a few other things to keep me busy during the day. In fact I swear to God I talk to more of the Division Directors everyday than the Mayor does probably. There's a lot of things going on with our buildings and schools. I do find it challenging but I also found it very rewarding. I don't mind spending the time making sure things are done right. While I definitely wish that we could lower the tax rate as low as absolutely possible, we'll get some chances in September and it always seems like something in the year forces us to a challenge. We've solved the insurance problem. Our unions have stood up and saved us a lot of money. We've conquered some of the other issues that we've had.

At least this year, we're getting some money from the State for a one-year hit. We don't know when, where, or how so when it gets here it will be good. I also hope that everything goes well at the final aldermanic meeting for the budget. Thank you very much and I think the items we passed tonight are extremely important. Thanks.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION BY ALDERMAN O'BRIEN TO ADJOURN, BY ROLL CALL

A viva voce roll call was taken which resulted as follows:

Yea:	Alderman Wilshire, Alderman Sullivan, Alderwoman Kelly, Alderman Jette, Alderman Cathey, Alderman O'Brien, Alderman Dowd	7
Nay:		0

MOTION CARRIED

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

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