

BUDGET REVIEW COMMITTEE

JANUARY 24, 2022

A meeting of the Budget Review Committee was held Monday, January 24, 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, presided.

Let's start the meeting by taking a roll call attendance. If you are participating via Zoom, please state your presence, reason for not attending the meeting in person, and whether there is anyone in the room with you during this meeting, which is required under the Right-To-Know Law.

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
Alderman-at-Large Lori Wilshire

Members not in Attendance:

Also in Attendance: Alderman Alex Comeau
Alderman-at-Large Gloria Timmons
Alderman Patricia Klee
Alderman Derek Thibeault
Dan Donovan, Chief Operating Officer, Nashua School District
John Griffin, CFO
Kim Kleiner, Administrative Services Director
Daniel Alexander, Nashua Association of School Administrators and Supervisors
Matthew Sullivan, Planning Manager

ROLL CALL

PUBLIC COMMENT

Laurie Ortolano

Laurie Ortolano, 41 Berkeley Street. I was wondering if the Budget Committee has any means or mechanisms to track the ordinance that was passed to allow folks who go out on sickness due to COVID to not to have to use their sick days. I was just at that the Police Commissioners meeting.

Chairman Dowd

We can't talk about that at this meeting. It's not on the agenda and you're breaking up so it's hard to hear what you're saying.

Laurie Ortolano

Yeah hard to hear what you're saying as well. I can't talk about it until the second public comment is that what you're telling me?

Chairman Dowd

No. It's not on the agenda. It's not before the Budget Committee. You can talk about it tomorrow night.

Laurie Ortolano

Well wait a minute. Don't you have a second public comment at the end?

Alderman O'Brien

Yes.

Chairman Dowd

Yes. That you could probably bring it up.

Laurie Ortolano

Well that would be exactly how it would be done there. I will do it at the end. Thank you.

ELECTION OF CLERK

MOTION BY ALDERMAN WILSHIRE TO NOMINATE ALDERMAN MICHAEL B. O'BRIEN, SR. TO SERVE AS COMMITTEE CLERK FOR THE 2022-2023 TERM

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN WILSHIRE TO CLOSE THE NOMINATIONS
MOTION CARRIED**

**MOTION CARRIED TO ELECT ALDERMAN MICHAEL B. O'BRIEN, SR. AS COMMITTEE CLERK FOR THE 2022-2023 TERM
MOTION CARRIED**

COMMUNICATIONS - None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS – RESOLUTIONS

R-22-001

Endorser: Alderman Richard A. Dowd
Alderman Patricia Klee
Alderman-at-Large Melbourne Moran, Jr.
Alderman Thomas Lopez
Alderwoman-at-Large Shoshanna Kelly
Alderwoman-at-Large Gloria Timmons
Alderman-at-Large Lori Wilshire

APPROVING THE COST ITEMS OF A COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE NASHUA BOARD OF EDUCATION AND THE NASHUA ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS AND SUPERVISORS, AMERICAN FEDERATION OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS, AFL-CIO FROM JULY 1, 2021 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2024 AND RELATED TRANSFERS

MOTION BY ALDERMAN O'BRIEN TO RECOMMEND FINAL PASSAGE

ON THE QUESTION

Chairman Dowd

So since there are new members on Budget and we're doing this contract, I just want to give a couple guidance. We did not negotiate the contract. The only thing we can do with the contract is vote it up or vote it down based on costs. The only things we can discuss are cost items. Any of the other paragraphs we don't have any control over them. So we don't have any control over the financial part either. So in the end when we take a vote, it's either yes or no. Any questions on that?

Alderman Sullivan

I had questions because there are some items in the contract that are redlined. What does that mean? Do we have opportunity to discuss those or reject those cost items?

Chairman Dowd

If it's a cost item if you have a question, I have already circled the ones that are actual cost items. So if you tell me which paragraph it is, he's going to go through it. If it's not a cost part, no.

Alderman Sullivan

Okay.

Alderman Cathey

Point of clarification. Not all the red items are cost items, correct?

Chairman Dowd

Right.

Alderman Cathey

We're only talking about the red items?

Chairman Dowd

We're only talking about the red items that are cost items.

Alderman Cathey

Right but underneath red, just cost. So red first would be the limiting principal and then the second one on principal would be just the cost items of whatever is red. Okay.

Chairman Dowd

Right. There are red items that change the people signing the contract.

Alderman Cathey

Right, thank you.

Alderman O'Brien

Perhaps maybe you should explain the other School Board has the authority.

Chairman Dowd

Right. So this contract is negotiated by the Board of Education and their attorneys. It comes to us for cost approval. I also want to mention that the monies that are also in line to be shifted as part of this has already been allocated from the school budget into contingency and now we're just taking it out of contingency and putting it back in the school budget so they can pay the contract. Are there any questions on that? So there's no addition whatsoever to the budget as far as dollars are concerned. The dollars were already passed in the 2022 budget and when we move the money from contingency to the School Department, it's to cover the contract's approval.

Alderman Sullivan

So in subsequent years following this year since that budget hasn't been approved yet, then those numbers, those dollars will be factored in as we go forward I assume.

Chairman Dowd

Those will be in the school budget. The School Department has already said that they will put that in their budget for the two out years. The one out year actually and that becomes part of their budget. Again on the School Board's overall

budget, again, we only have authority on the bottom line. Once we transfer the money to the Board of Education/School Department, we lose all control over it. They have the authority to spend that amount of money.

Dan Alexander, President of NASAS

So my name is Dan Alexander. I'm the President of NASAS as well as an Administrator for the Nashua School District. My role there is the Assistant Director of Special Education. I've been President for two years. I'm happy to say that this proposed contract is a three year contract. It will be the first long-term contract that our union has had since its inception four years ago. We have about 65 members. At our meeting this year, we had 30 members and we had a quorum and we voted 26 to 4 in favor of this contract. It went before the Board of Education on December 20th I believe and there were 8 members there. One left before the end of the meeting. The 7 remaining members all voted 7 – 0 in favor of the budget.

Changes that we made and you'll see in the contract. I know there's questions about redline and things of that nature. We moved to a salary schedule so all of our positions are based on labor grades now and we'll have a step system in place for people to be hired at certain steps and move through those salary schedule through the life of this contract which would be three years. It was a great process working with the Board of Ed. representative and Superintendent McKinney, and Mr. Donovan, and the school team to come to this contract. I'm happy to answer any questions that I can.

Chairman Dowd

So also the union has agreed to the healthcare changes in the second year of the contract which is why the benefits number went down. If anybody has any questions on the cost sheet, I'm sure one of us can answer them.

Alderman Wilshire

It's not related to budget but we do have a person participating via Zoom. Alderwoman Elizabeth Lu should not be on here as an Alderman. So I'm asking that she take down the Alderwoman in front of her name because this is an aldermanic meeting and she is not a sitting alderman. Thank you. Sorry.

Chairman Dowd

Yes. Would she please change the name on her Zoom? I don't know if Jeff can do that. There you go. Are there any questions that you have for the union representative Mr. Alexander? Any questions for him?

Alderwoman Kelly

I saw that this was a section that it looks like it was added around snow days for administrators. I'm just interested in what we did beforehand because I think now it says one snow day per academic year.

Dan Alexander, President of NASAS

So if we were unable to get to the office – I live in Manchester myself for example – able to make it to the office because of the amount of snow and the District Office is open, we would have to take a personal day or vacation day. We proposed that because through the process of kind of working remotely, we were all able to do our jobs remotely. Many of us work, I should say, obviously there are positions within our union that are relied upon to clean snow and take care of facilities during that timeframe. Obviously you could not work at home and the language does state within there that we need to notify our Supervisor immediately that we plan to do that and we can be asked for any time of deliverables on what we've done that day during their own time.

Chairman Dowd

Also we have a former member of the Board of Education and now an esteemed member of this Board Alderwoman Timmons who could also answer questions if you have any.

Alderman Thibeault

Thank you Mr. Chairman. I know I'm not part of this Committee but I had a question because I know we're still waiting for the contract for the actual teachers. I don't know if Mr. Alexander can answer this question or maybe somebody else. Does this contract that you guys are looking to approve tonight how does that impact the teachers' contract? Is it totally

separate and different?

Chairman Dowd

No impact.

Alderman Thibeault

Okay. Thank you.

Alderwoman Kelly

I didn't hear your answer. I'm not sure if anyone else did.

Chairman Dowd

No impact. Any other questions?

Alderman Sullivan

I have several on the cost items under "other salary costs" specifically the real annual increase over the prior year. The cost sheet – page 3 in the PDF. It looks like under "longevity" that jumps up to \$21,600 but overall the increase is 21.2 percent over one year and then it remains flat. What's the explanation around that?

Chairman Dowd

It's part of the contract. Do you want to address that?

Dan Alexander, President of NASAS

I'm not sure what your question was.

Alderman Sullivan

Well in the longevity it's budgeted for it looks to be this current fiscal year of \$21,950, and then it jumps to \$26,600, and then it remains at \$26,600.

Chairman Dowd

I believe that's because of the change in how much is being paid for longevity which...

Dan Alexander, President of NASAS

Those are Mr. Donovan's numbers. I'm not sure. All I can speak to is the longevity within itself. That maybe the number of members that are reaching the milestones for longevity payout.

Alderman Sullivan

Right and Appendix B there is talk of longevity payments and most of that is redlined. I would just be curious to know – that's page 24. We have 15 years at \$500, 20 years at \$1,200, 25 years at \$1,700. I'm just curious to know out of the – I believe it was 50 some odd people that this contract covers.

Chairman Dowd

If you look at the bottom, there's new payments.

Alderman Sullivan

Yup, that's exactly what I'm looking at.

Chairman Dowd

So yes the longevity payments have gone up based on the amount of years. It's simplified actually because there's fewer steps, especially for food service. So anybody on the contract if they have 15 years, it's \$500. If they have 20 years, it's \$1,200 and 25 years, \$1,700. So it also goes up because people have reached that new plateau.

Alderman Sullivan

I understand that. So essentially before – so if I'm looking at it and I'm reading this correctly in past contracts if you had 10 years of continuous employment, you got \$500. Now they're raising that to 15 years. Then if you're at 20 years that went from \$750 up to \$1,200 and 25 years went from \$1,000 to \$1,700.

Dan Alexander, President of NASAS

So we had two groups because we are a diversified union and we have multiple different bodies. Our food service coordinator group was what you just quoted. What we did was we combined that for the entire union and it became kind of flat across the board so that everyone now within the union at 15 years longevity receives the \$500 payment and at 20 years receives \$1,200. It takes all the complexities out if there's no more 10 year for one group, 15 for another, and 20 for another. It's fixed after 15 years for longevity for all bodies and reduced from \$600 for the one body to \$500 for every person in the union.

Chairman Dowd

So when they calculate the cost based on the number of people that are going to reach that plateau during the course of the contract. If it stays flat, it's because nobody else is bumping up in that time frame.

Alderman Sullivan

So in Fiscal Year 2022, it's at 4650. In Fiscal Year 2023 and 2024, no one else are going into those buckets so that's why there's no payout.

Chairman Dowd

Right.

Alderman Sullivan

Do have an idea of how many people in each bucket – the \$500, the \$1,200, and the \$1,700 out of those 50 people do we know how many people are in each or should I just do the math.

Dan Alexander, President of NASAS

I don't. That's something that HR and the Business Department tracks.

Chairman Dowd

Probably Mr. Donovan would have known that. It was calculated when they did the cost sheet.

Alderman Sullivan

Other question around retirement costs. Big jump – next year 18.3 percent and then at 2.7 and 2.4 respectfully.

Chairman Dowd

You're going to see that in all the contracts because that's driven by the State. That was part of that \$2 million bump that we got as a cost from the State of New Hampshire. We have no control over that.

Alderman Sullivan

That didn't go into this year's budget? It got kicked to next year?

Chairman Dowd

Evidently, yes.

Dan Alexander, President of NASAS

I'm not sure about that.

Chairman Dowd

Mr. Griffin in on line.

John Griffin, CFO

Hello Mr. Chairman. The reason for the increase in Fiscal 2022 is the employer rates as you indicated went up pretty substantially so there's an increase from Fiscal 2021 to Fiscal 2022. By way of clarification, the employer rates are charged by type of employee. In this case, Group I for every dollar of payroll. So as you can see, the rate is 14.06. It went up pretty substantially from Fiscal 2021.

Chairman Dowd

That was nothing that was determined by the union.

Alderman Sullivan

All right last question, I think. Insurance benefits – up 8.2 percent, and then fall 13.4 percent, and then go up 5.4 percent.

Dan Alexander, President of NASAS

I know the drop is due to accepting the new benefits of the city.

Chairman Dowd

Kim do you want to explain that? They agreed to the health changes for the city. We're trying to get that all in all the new contracts. It substantially lowers the cost to the city. That's why it goes down in the second year. It goes down in the second year because that's the first year they agreed to it. Gloria do you want to add anything to that?

Alderwoman Timmons

That's true Alderman Dowd. The contract was negotiated that way and it was negotiated with health and human services included in it. So that's the way it is and that's what they negotiated. We can't change the negotiation.

Alderman Klee

Thank you Mr. Chairman. I think if I have this correct the reason it went down in the first year was because it was a substantial cost savings but then it goes slightly back up because of the basic rate increase from year to year. There's still a slight rate increase but I think that's what the 5. – where it was costing us 13 percent every year, now this one would only cost (inaudible) but the drop was because we significantly dropped because they're doing larger co-pays, going from 20 to 25. They go from \$250 to \$1,500 and so on. So they're doing a higher co-pay. We did the high deductible plan which saves the city more money.

Chairman Dowd

All set Alderman Sullivan?

Alderman Sullivan

Yes.

Chairman Dowd

Any other questions?

Alderman Kelly

Thank you. I wanted to ask I know that right now it's especially hard to find workers everywhere especially at the school. I'm just wondering if the increases that are proposed in this keep us competitive so that we can keep great administrators and food service workers.

Dan Alexander, President of NASAS

So part of what took place in just over a year that we worked through negotiations on this was there was Municipal Resources out of Meredith was contracted to do a salary study. We looked at surrounding areas and from that helped to develop where we landed with the labor rates and the salary schedule. I think that what we developed with the ranges were the very steps keeps us competitive. Obviously we are close to Massachusetts so it's very hard to be competitive in Massachusetts but to surrounding towns in other cities nearby us.

Alderman Kelly

Thank you. Is it possible that we could see that study? That would be very interesting to know.

Dan Alexander, President of NASAS

You can speak to Mr. Donovan about that. He's the keeper of that.

Chairman Dowd

We'll see if we can get a copy. Any other questions?

Alderman Cathey

I apologize if this is a dumb question.

Chairman Dowd

There's no dumb questions.

Alderman Cathey

I noticed on Appendix A-1 that the bumps on the grade went from 1.5 percent pretty much across the board to a varying degree of 1 percent all the way up to 6 percent. Could you speak into how those numbers were arrive at and why? Is there an algorithm behind that?

Dan Alexander, President of NASAS

So everyone was placed on the salary schedule based on their current salary. We were not able to place people based on lining the steps up to experience. That would have been cost prohibited to do. There were some positions that I believe were adjusted differently based on the salary study and where they were hired at.

Alderman Cathey

So each one of these positions was sort of individually arrived at rather than just plugging in numbers?

Dan Alexander, President of NASAS

So each job was examined to look at where they would be within the labor grade. Some moved to a labor grade that increased them to a different salary schedule they have been on based on their current salary. The alignments were given everyone close to the next step in the schedule and then people moved through the schedule and progressed through there based upon what step their own. Steps 1 through 15 are 2 ½ percent and 16 through 20 are 2 percent increases.

Alderman Cathey

Okay, great. Follow up. For the steps and the grades, how does one progress through a grade? Are the steps years? A step is a year?

Dan Alexander, President of NASAS

Yes. So a step will be one year from wherever you were placed. If I'm on Step 4, I would move to step 5 next year, and 6, and so on, and after. However if someone is receiving disciplinary action, they can be held on the same step because of performance.

Alderman Cathey

And then the grades are inside of the steps the grades are what?

Dan Alexander, President of NASAS

So the grades are because we are a diverse union, everything from our Director of Student Services, to a Food Service Coordinator within the school building, we had to come up with and look at how to group the people appropriately based on what their job kind of entailed from their responsibilities, to their ability to work independently, to kind of their what would be the impact of a decision financially to the School District and the city. Those were factored in and those were done by the hiring managers and the senior administration at the District sat down so the Superintendent, Mr. Donovan, two Assistant Superintendents, and then again when I say the hiring managers, I'm talking really about the Director of Special Education, Director of Technology, Food Service Director - and I'm missing someone in there so forgive me - to really look at each of the different job categories from our computer techs. through someone like myself and appointing those jobs into those labor grades.

Alderman Cathey

One more follow up.

Chairman Dowd

Just if I could interject and you're doing now but before, if you're going to be recognized for a follow up question and when you answer it please for the stenographer, resay who it is. If you ask for a follow up, I'll say Alderman Cathey, follow up and then when you answer, please state your name. The stenographers have a heck of a time doing this to begin with.

Alderman Cathey

My apologies. Can I have a follow up?

Chairman Dowd

Yes.

Alderman Cathey

Thank you. Obviously you just mentioned it about if there's a performance issue they could be held back a step and I noticed there was a PIT in the contract as well. Is there anything in the positive direction as far as performance markers or is it everything locked in contractually?

Dan Alexander, President of NASAS

Unfortunately in education we don't receive performance bonuses and things of that nature. That is kind of what we enter into going into that. Our reward is the kids we work with and the people we work with. That is right down to the food service worker, or the tech. whose fixing a computer in the classroom and the kids are happy that things are back on line, or it's not chicken today for lunch its pizza. So those are our rewards and our performance bonuses and that's why we do it. We just try to look at kind of making sure that we are paid competitively. I think that's what Alderman Kelly had asked and that's really what our contract is about this time was really examining where are we within surrounding towns and trying to hopefully trying to project out over the next few years what we would be earning as a salary. Hopefully it would

keep some retention of some of our folks within that union because they know over the next three years what their salary would be versus what we're going to negotiate out year to year for an increase and can I get a better rate somewhere else in another school district.

Chairman Dowd

I think to clarify in any of our city contracts, we don't award bonuses.

Dan Alexander, President of NASAS

Okay.

Chairman Dowd

If they promote somebody to the next level, now they get the pay at the next level.

Dan Alexander, President of NASAS

So on the labor grades for this contract, they would remain the same. However if a supervisor were to feel that a job should be redesigned and require more responsibility, that would be at the end of the next contract to discuss. Like Alderman Dowd said that increase would come because that job now has more responsibility would move labor rates.

Alderman Cathey

Okay thank you. I appreciate it.

Alderman Klee

Thank you Mr. Chair. Just more for clarification on my part. I worked for the Department of Veterans Affairs and DOD. So I worked for the federal government. We had steps and grades as well. Our steps worked a little differently I think than yours did. Ours 1 through 4 we got every year. Actually 4 through 7 every other year and then 8 through 10 and we only went up to 10. We got every four years I think it was. Every single year they get it?

Dan Alexander, President of NASAS

Yes the step is every year and it's based upon that year to year service.

Alderman Klee

Thank you Mr. Chair. You mentioned that if they're disciplinary that they could be held back. Is it just disciplinary or is it just that they didn't really meet the full requirement of the job. I don't know if that would be considered disciplinary or just maybe they need more education or so on.

Dan Alexander, President of NASAS

So within the contract our body is evaluated every year based on performance. Performance evaluations should be not the first time that a person hears of corrective action that they need or improvement that they need. It should be an ongoing process because all of our folks develop goals with their supervisors at the beginning of every year to work towards that goal at the end of the year. That's part of the District's professional development as well. You have to be at a certain spot within that disciplinary action in order for that raise to stop and that is significant to you're either improving or you'll probably be leaving as the next step and you'd be much involved. We didn't want to make it seem like everybody just gets the raise every year but we're hoping that everybody is learning, and improving, and doing what's best for the city and the School District to continue to make progress and learn but also have a piece in there so that if someone was really underperforming and within that disciplinary area, that there's accountability as well.

Alderman Klee

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Alderman Sullivan

Thank you Mr. Chairman. You had mentioned at the beginning of the meeting discussions around cost items and then specifically redlined items.

Chairman Dowd

Well yes because if the cost items hadn't changed, then it's nothing new to the contract.

Alderman Sullivan

Follow up, please.

Chairman Dowd

Yes, follow up.

Alderman Sullivan

Thank you. If it is not redlined, it's already baked into the contract. It is non-negotiable at this point.

Chairman Dowd

Right because the Board of Education already agreed to that. At the end when we take a vote, it's either to approve the entire contract or not approve it. We can't renegotiate any of the lines, including any of the cost items. We can just say yes or no.

Alderman Sullivan

Thank you Mr. Chairman. When we vote because there are some items in the contract that I had requested some information on, what is the process for that?

Chairman Dowd

Who did you request them from?

Alderman Sullivan

Specifically the longevity. How many people fall into those buckets and then also the – I believe that was it for that and then there was just a follow up item to get those people.

Chairman Dowd

We'll have Mr. Donovan get us that answer tomorrow because this is going to be on the Board of Aldermen's agenda tomorrow for final approval. When we get any contract in, any of the contracts, we only have 30 days to get from the time we receive it to the time we approve it. Anything beyond that requires an approval the extension between the Board of Aldermen and the union or the Board of Education. I'm not sure which. We can't just arbitrarily delay it.

Alderman Sullivan

When did that start? Did it start on the first reading of Jan. 11th or when we actually received the contract? When did that 30 days start?

Chairman Dowd

That's a good question which I'll ask Corporation Counsel and I believe – I'm not entirely sure but I think it's when it's received by City Hall.

Alderman Sullivan

Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

But definitely no later than the first reading. I'll double check that too with Attorney Bolton.

Alderwoman Timmons

Yes, thank you. Just a clarification. We cannot re-negotiate the contract. We only say yes and no to what was already negotiated.

Chairman Dowd

Right.

Alderwoman Timmons

I've never heard that we go back and renegotiate the Board of Aldermen who go back and re-negotiate any items of the contract. You either can say yes or no. Is that true or not true?

Chairman Dowd

Yes, it's true. We cannot negotiate the contract. That's only for the Board of Education. If the contract were not approved by the Board of Aldermen and we go back to the Board of Education, then they would have to re-negotiate something.

Alderman Cathey

Thank you Mr. Chairman. Do we know the date that if in fact the 30 days clock started when City Hall received it, do we know when that date is? Is it in the contract somewhere?

Chairman Dowd

No I would say the first reading was the last Board of Aldermen meeting.

Unidentified Male Alderman

January 11th was the last Aldermen meeting.

Chairman Dowd

So it has to be final approval by February 11th at the latest.

Alderman Cathey

If indeed the first reading was the clock starting to tick on the (inaudible). Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

I think it was received just before that anyway. Any other questions? Seeing none, the motion on the floor is for final approval of the full Board of Aldermen on R-22-001.

MOTION CARRIED

R-22-002

Endorsers: Mayor Jim Donchess
Alderman Ernest A. Jette
Alderman Patricia Klee
Alderman Alex Comeau
Alderman Tyler Gouveia

AUTHORIZING THE EXPENDITURE OF \$1,810 FROM THE CONSERVATION FUND**MOTION BY ALDERMAN O'BRIEN TO RECOMMEND FINAL PASSAGE**ON THE QUESTIONAlderman Jette

I was asked to sponsor this. I'm the liaison to the Conservation Commission. I think Mr. Sullivan is on. He told me he was going to be here.

Matt Sullivan, Planning Manager

Good evening Committee members and members of the Board. Great to see you. I'll do a brief introduction of this. It's a relatively straightforward supplemental request for an appropriation from the conservation fund. For those that are unfamiliar with the fund, the Conservation Commission currently holds about \$1.6 million. That is the result of many transfers as a result of land use change taxation. That fund is used periodically to not only maintain Conservation Commission property and it's also used for new investments and easements.

This particular request is related to the Joyce Park Wildlife Sanctuary off of Burke and Ingalls Street. Back in 2021, the Aldermen approved an authorization of \$24,000 for some fairly substantial trail improvements at that site in addition to some substantial poison ivy spraying that was to be done to remove some invasives there. After the spraying activity, the company performing the spraying identified additional areas of respraying that needed to be done that fell outside the scope of the contract. They made a request for us to authorize \$1,810 to complete the spraying all in the interest of making the sanctuary more walkable (inaudible) for the visitors that go to it. Outside of that, I'm happy to answer any questions that the Committee might have but this is really just continuing the preservation and enhancement efforts at this (inaudible).

Chairman Dowd

Any questions from Mr. Sullivan?

Alderman Cathey

More of just an understanding of the work that you do. Is this a recurring expense or type of thing that you do since you mentioned that you noticed that there was more work that needed to be done after the initial? So is this more of a – this happens very frequently or is this more of a second part of a bigger job.

Matt Sullivan, Planning Manager

No, great question. The way I would answer it is by saying that for many (inaudible) Conservation Commission easements and properties, there's an active sort of maintenance and management plan. Joyce Park Wildlife Sanctuary is actually one that doesn't (inaudible) plan in place. The benefit to those plans is that they actually give the Conservation Commission its own unique authority to approve expenditures for that maintenance and management. Because the management plan is not in place, all expenditures must go through the Board of Aldermen for approval regardless of the amount of expenditure or the amount of (inaudible). I would say it is a recurring issue but there's been more attention paid to Joyce Park over the last two years and as a result, a new recognition that this has become a problem at the site. I would say that like many invasives, this will likely become an ongoing issue or is an ongoing issue as the park gets used more frequently. Our hope is that if we're making more consistent investments into removing those invasives that they can be resolved and perhaps will become a minimal issue as time goes on. Does that answer your question?

Alderman Cathey

It does. Thank you very much. I appreciate it.

Chairman Dowd

Any other questions of Mr. Sullivan? Any other questions on the motion?

MOTION CARRIED

NEW BUSINESS – ORDINANCES - None

TABLED IN COMMITTEE - None

GENERAL DISCUSSIONAlderman O'Brien

I think some of the new Aldermen bring up some very good questions. I just want to probably state something. When the city and some of our unions get into negotiations, there are other legitimate boards equal in authority such as us. In other words, we're not going to put on white hats and all become fire chiefs or banish weapons and become police chiefs and take over a bank robbery situation. So, therefore, we depend solely on what these particulars such as the Police Commission in that example or the Fire Commission of what they come up. There is autonomy with the School Board. There is a good reason why the Board of Aldermen do not negotiate contracts. I personally would not want to do it because I think we would be here 24/7. Anyways, we allow them to negotiate as best they possibly can to bring back the finished product for our perusal whether we support it or not and that is our right. We can't interject and for good reason because then we'll be in violation of unfair labor practice. We have to keep that in mind when it comes down to that. If you don't understand, I would probably some questions you can refer to Corporate Counsel.

Basically the unions come up and I can say being a former firefighter, they negotiate with the Board of Fire Commissioners and the Chief and I think you can see the complexity if you put the Board of Aldermen in negotiating with them into it. Basically we take so much within reason of what these particular boards do and recognize their legitimate authority and allowed them to do that. I understand the questions and everything are well stated but for good reasons why the Board of Aldermen doesn't get 100 percent too deep into the weeks on these particular things. That's why those people were elected by the vote of the people into those particular boards. Thank you.

Alderman Cathey

Thank you Mr. Chairman. Just a clarification since it's still on – tabled in committee means an ordinance or a resolution that was previously tabled in this committee that would be brought up again for vote, right? Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Right.

Alderwoman Timmons

Yes Chairman. I'd like to piggyback on what Alderman O'Brien said. Those negotiations was not done in a vacuum. They were months with the unions as well as with the Human Services and the team on the other side – the administrative team. They're no done in a vacuum. It takes months and hours of negotiation to come up with what we did come up with. The new board members to know that those negotiations was not done in a vacuum. They were vetted out (inaudible) before we even came up with a final contract. Just all my two cent is that it wasn't done in a vacuum (inaudible). We spent hours, I mean literally months and hours on those negotiation teams. Sometimes we have an impasse and sometimes we don't. Just by oh we just want to pay these people. We vet it, we look at other school districts, we looked at other pays, we looked at what you can get and what we'll get in the future, what you wasn't getting, and all of that was accompanied and how we came up with the contract that we came up with. We voted on it based on the lawyer's input, Human Resources, the District, everybody – the Superintendent. It wasn't done in a vacuum. I just wanted to say that. Thank you.

Alderman Comeau

Thank you Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to add on to what Alderman O'Brien was just saying. There is a certain level of trust into some of these boards and commissions to negotiate these types of things. At the same time, the public has also asked us to oversee (inaudible). So it's important that we also ask questions when they need to be asked and not to just

pass those through because (inaudible) an earlier body approved it otherwise the law wouldn't require our approval in the first place. So I do think that it's important that we take the time to (inaudible) things that we think are important to make sure that we get it right and you make sure that whoever approved it before it got to us also did it right.

Alderman Sullivan

Thank you Mr. Chairman. To speak to those comments. We were asked to vote on the cost items of the contract and when I saw – it's been my experience be it managing my home budget or a business budget that if they're double digit increases I ask why. That was a simple question as I just wanted some understanding of what that was. So those are the reasons for my questions.

Chairman Dowd

Yeah I didn't see any questions were out of line. Fair questions and we are going to be getting more contracts come through. Probably a lot more complex than this one which is basically fairly straightforward and there will be other things with a lot more cost changes. For instance the last Firemen's contract was years in negotiations. In the past, we've had issues with teacher's contracts. At one point, we tried to have a meeting of the Board of Ed. and the Board of Aldermen to talk about it and we got slapped by Legal. It's not allowed. We cannot step in the middle of negotiations. That's an unfair labor practice. We can go to jail for that kind of stuff. We'll stay out of that realm.

The next contract that's going probably be coming before us is going to be the Supervisors in the Police Department. Not the Patrolmen but the civil supervisors. So when we get the contract, I would suggest that you have questions similar to the questions you had this evening on the longevity. It's okay to reach out to Mr. Donovan in this case, or the Chief if it's the police, or probably Deputy Chief Testaverde I think. So you can call them, get answers to your questions, and be ready when we come before Budget. Either you'll know the answer to the question or you'll have a bigger question.

Alderman Thibeault

Thank you Mr. Chairman. This is a question not even related to this stuff. It seems like the audio from our side, because it's hard to hear these people that are coming in on the audio and I know we're going to have tons of people speaking tomorrow night. Is there some way that we can ensure that – I don't know about you guys, I'm hearing in and out on every single person. So it can't be their audio. It's got to be somewhere on city hall side.

Chairman Dowd

We noticed that early on before the meeting started. It's an issue with Zoom.

Alderman Wilshire

I was just going to say the same. The videographer said the internet was slow and hopefully it won't be tomorrow night because I think we'll have a few visitors tomorrow night.

Chairman Dowd

Tomorrow if we have a ton of people on Zoom, it could be an issue because your bandwidth is an issue. That's nothing that we have control over.

Alderwoman Kelly

I was just going to comment on that as well. This is one of the only meetings that I can remember where we've had this issue but if people turn off their video that will help with bandwidth issues. If you're not in the room and you're on Zoom, turn off your video and that will help a lot.

Alderman Comeau

I wanted to apologize. It sounded like you recognized me and that's the reason why I spoke. We can blame that on the internet also. I apologize.

Chairman Dowd

Okay no problem.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Laurie Ortolano

Good evening. This is the worst (inaudible) audio/video meeting I've experienced. It's rough for all of us and I do...

Chairman Dowd

Did you identify yourself?

Laurie Ortolano

Laurie Ortolano, 41 Berkeley Street. A couple of things. I'm wondering if anyone is tracking the expenditures of sick time associated with the new (inaudible) I believe in December to allow those vaccinated to not have to use their sick time if they catch COVID. I'm interested in that because it turns out this next variant that we're dealing with ended up being very contagious whether you were vaccinated or not. The Board of Health had to hospital Executives on the meeting on Wednesday I believe it was and they both said that their hospitalizations are 50/50 vaccinated and unvaccinated that it really didn't make a difference and they weren't seeing any impact or significant difference in the health between those who were boosted and those that weren't. So this is an equal opportunity infector and I'm wondering what the financial impact is of that policy. I was not a strong (inaudible).

Also I'm trying to get financial reports for the Board of Public Works. I think we are missing an opportunity to have the kind of oversight our elective body should be doing when it comes to finances. The Fire Department and the Police Department produce month financial reports that are very well done and excellent. The Police Department (inaudible) at their monthly meetings. I've been trying to get a hold of monthly or any kind of financial reporting for the Board of Public Works because the City Charter states the Board of Public Works will follow and track expenditures. That's part of I think Subsection 61. I think we have an obligation (inaudible) million organization to do that kind of tracking. I would like the Aldermen to support me on recommending (inaudible) financial reviews start happening and boards start becoming a little more educated about the money and the public be able to have access to these reports. The Board of Public Works meetings have changed to early afternoon and I haven't been able to go for three months and I won't be able to go any longer. That's fine. They're not geared toward the public to participate anyway and there is no interest to allow the public to participate. I would like the financial reports. I think its fair...

Alderman O'Brien

30 seconds.

Laurie Ortolano

...to help me get those. I would really appreciate it. Thank you very much.

Chairman Dowd

So relevant to the first question you had on how many people, I would direct you to Director Kleiner. Anything in the financial end, those all reports all go to Mr. Griffin and a question to him. I don't think any of those answers reside here on the Board of Aldermen. Anyone else for public comment?

REMARKS BY THE ALDERMEN

Alderman Klee

Thank you Mr. Chair. I appreciate giving me the time. I just wanted to remind the public that tomorrow at Temple Beth Abraham there is a walk in clinic for vaccines for all ages. It's Tuesday, January 25th, from 12 p.m. to 7 p.m. All ages including children ages 5 and older, as well as boosters, initial shots, second shots. Registration is not required. It's open to the public. Just go to the back parking lot and enter the social hall from there. This is being offered in partnership with the State of New Hampshire and Department of Health.

Alderman Cathey

Thank you Mr. Chairman. I'd first like to apologize for my tardiness. I could not find the keys to my truck. I'd like to thank the Aldermen for being patient with us as we learn the process. I appreciate allowing us to weigh through and figure out what's what and ask a lot of questions. I tend to be a very inquisitive person so there will be more of them I assure you. I really appreciate it and thank you.

Chairman Dowd

So, again, there's no such question as a dumb question. If you want something answered, just let us know and we'll try to answer it. If we can't, we'll steer you to the right person. On any of these bills, contracts, or anything that comes before Budget, if you have a question you can call me and I can either put you in touch with who should have the answer or if I know the answer, I can help you with it. I'm more than willing to do that. I think you all have my phone number. All right.

Alderman Sullivan

Thank you Mr. Chairman. I wanted to say that for the second consecutive year, Nashua Rotary has sold out 1,000 tickets for our annual BMW raffle. We just sold out today. I just wanted to recognize Nashua's Rotary Club for doing that. They're going to raise all sorts of great money for area charities. So that happened today. We sold the 1,000th ticket.

Chairman Dowd

That's good. Good luck to anybody who bought a ticket.

Alderman Jette

I would like to acknowledge the fact that Alderman Sullivan was one of the co-chair people of the Rotary raffle and spearheaded the sales of all of these tickets. As we get further into the budget as we find shortfalls, Mr. Sullivan would have some great ideas of how we could raise some extra money without going to the taxpayers.

Chairman Dowd

You have a challenge Alderman Sullivan.

Alderman Sullivan

Duly noted.

Alderman Wilshire

I didn't hear Alderman Sullivan say challenge accepted or anything.

Alderman Sullivan

I just made a note.

Alderwoman Timmons

You were cutting in and out. (inaudible) a lot of what was going on. Alderwoman Klee said something about was there a walk in at the clinic? Can an individual or can the public just walk into the clinic tomorrow?

Alderman Klee

Yes thank you and thank you for asking me to clarify that. It's a walk in for the entire public. You don't have to be a Nashua resident. It's a walk in clinic. It's available for all vaccines are available, including for children ages 5 and older and boosters for those eligible. Just walk in, go to the back of the Temple, and enter social hall from there. This is the second one they've done and it was extremely successful. I think they had like 230 people the last time around. They're holding it from 12 p.m. to 7 p.m. It's quite a length of time.

POSSIBLE NON-PUBLIC SESSION - None

ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting was declared closed at 8:01 p.m.

Alderman-at-Large Michael B. O'Brien, Sr.,
Committee Clerk