

PERSONNEL/ADMINISTRATIVE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

JUNE 3, 2019

A meeting of the Personnel/Administrative Affairs Committee was held on Monday, June 3, 2019, at 7:00 p.m. in the Aldermanic Chamber.

Chairman June M. Caron presided.

Members of the Committee present: Alderwoman-at-Large Shoshanna Kelly, Vice Chair
Alderman-at-Large Ben Clemons (arrived after roll call 7:07 pm)
Alderman Tom Lopez (arrived after roll call 7:07 pm)

Members not in Attendance: Alderman Ken Gidge

Also in Attendance: Alderman-at-Large Brandon Michael Laws
Alderman-at-Large Lori Wilshire (arrived after roll call 7:10 pm)

PUBLIC COMMENT - None

COMMUNICATIONS

From: Paula Johnson
Re: O-19-044

There being no objection, Chairman Caron accepted the communication and placed it on file.

INTERVIEWS

Downtown Improvements Committee

Phillip Scontsas, Alternate (New Appointment) Term to Expire: December 1, 2021

Chairman Caron

Usually the Mayor or Chief of Staff is here to give us a little background on you Phillip, but since he's not here, we'd like you to tell us why you'd like to be on the Downtown Improvement Committee.

Phillip Scontsas The reason why I am really looking forward to being on the Downtown Improvement Committee is because I have been involved in Downtown for many, many years on many of the Committees starting with Heart of Nashua back in the day down to Destination Downtown and now Great American Downtown. But this Committee is exciting because for years we always, downtown word meant that we had these meters and now that the meter money has, some of the money is funded to downtown which providing a wonderful resource for us, it will be a real pleasure to be able to help to decide where that is going to and what important project is next to do downtown.

I just left the Stella Blu where they are doing the Performing Arts Center. In all seriousness, it is extremely exciting to see the renderings and get a chance to meet with the architects and the planners of this. It is just really uplifting because it shows that there is a real vibrancy future ahead of us that we really, really or I am really looking forward to. My family has been involved Nashua since 1912 and I hope we will be here for many, many years. So I look forward to serving on this Committee if you will have me.

Chairman Caron

OK. Any comments from the Committee.

Alderwoman Kelly

I have had the pleasure of interacting with the Scontsas since I pretty much moved here to Nashua. I consider them part of the welcoming committee. They are a wonderful business to go to but also just wonderful people. I am really excited that you're stepping up to this and I think you can bring some good ideas to what we are doing with that because I think the downtown fabric and those businesses and this investment that we are doing, it will be really important to have the voices of the people who are there. And you have been there for a long time.

Alderman Laws

Well I am not sure if we've had the pleasure of being introduced but I know your family name very well and as the liaison or the Board of Aldermen to the Downtown Improvements Committee, I am excited to serve with you on that board.

Chairman Caron

Well Mr. Scontsas I've known you forever and your family. I am really excited that you are willing to serve. You are involved in a lot of things so I think this is a great testament to the Mayor's selections for the various committees that we have throughout this City. I know you will do well by that Committee and the community-at-large. So what will happen is we will make our vote later on in the meeting; but swearing in is next Tuesday at the Board of Aldermen meeting. I know you do have somewhere to be so if we don't have anything else, we thank you for coming to the meeting. Thank you, thank you for stepping up.

Phillip Scontsas Thank you for the honor, I appreciate it. Have a nice evening.

Environment and Energy Committee

Bob Hayden (New Appointment)

Term to Expire: January 21, 2020

Chairman Caron

So as I said to Mr. Scontsas, the Mayor is not here to give us a little background, so if you would please, Mr. Hayden, tell us about yourself and why you would like to be on this particular Committee?

Bob Hayden My name is Bob Hayden and I work with Standard Power here in Nashua. We are at 17 Technology Way. We are involved in many matters energy, but particularly renewable energy. I've lived in New Hampshire in Lyndeborough for well over 30 years in an earth-bermed passive solar house that I built. I have solar on it, recycle, compost, grow my own vegetables. So I kind of live a green life. The Committee is an appropriate place for me to help and be part of the community as my business resides here.

Alderwoman Kelly

Thank you, it's my Committee so ... I have had the pleasure of interacting with you at the Committee. He has been attending some before. I think he will be a great asset to the Committee considering your background and also you were talking about lifestyle, composting all those things that we are working on. So I appreciate you stepping forward and I know you will bring a lot to the things we are trying to get accomplished this year and in the future.

Bob Hayden Thank you kindly.

Chairman Caron

OK let the record show that Alderman Clemons and Alderman Lopez have joined us. Thank you. Do we have any other questions for Mr. Hayden? Well we will welcome you to the Committee and as I said earlier, we will take a vote later on in the meeting. If you are approved, you will get notified to attend the next Board of Aldermen meeting to get sworn in. Thank you so much for offering to join that Committee. I know it is new and they have some great and exciting ideas moving forward. Thank you.

Bob Hayden Alright folks have a nice evening.

Chairman Caron

You too, thank you.

APPLICATION TO LICENSE HAWKER'S, PEDDLER'S, ITINERANT VENDOR'S LICENSE - None

APPOINTMENTS BY THE MAYOR

**MOTION BY ALDERWOMAN KELLY TO RECOMMEND THE CONFIRMATION OF THE APPOINTMENT OF PHILLIP SCOTTSAS AS AN ALTERNATE MEMBER TO THE DOWNTOWN IMPROVEMENTS COMMITTEE FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE DECEMBER 1, 2021, AND BOB HAYDEN TO THE ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY COMMITTEE FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE JANUARY 21, 2020
MOTION CARRIED**

NEW BUSINESS – RESOLUTIONS – None

NEW BUSINESS – ORDINANCES

O-19-044

Endorser: Alderman-at-Large Brandon Michael Laws
Alderman Patricia Klee
Alderman June M. Caron
Aldermoman-at-Large Shoshanna Kelly
Alderman-at-Large David C. Tencza
Alderman Jan Schmidt
Alderman-at-Large Lori Wilshire

AMENDING THE BOARD OF ALDERMEN COMPENSATION ORDINANCE

Chairman Caron

Ok we have Alderman Laws who was the sponsor of this particular Ordinance. So Alderman Laws you are here so would you give us a little...?

Alderman Laws

Thank you Madam Chair. It occurred to me that one of our colleagues maybe inspired me to propose this legislation because Aldermoman Kelly is going to be having a baby soon, which is fantastic. I don't think it is fair for her necessarily to miss compensation because she might be out watching her child. It is 2019 and I feel like this is happening all over the place and I think we should set an example on the Board of Aldermen by taking care of our own.

Chairman Caron

OK any comments or concerns?

Alderman Clemons

Thank you. Yeah I fully support this. I am wondering if we can make an amendment to it to extend it to paternity leave as well. You know I think that, for example my employer that's a benefit that we just recently received and I think it's important that both parents have the opportunity to be with the child. Otherwise I think it is great legislation.

Alderman Lopez

So as I understand this, it doesn't give free leave, so the expectation isn't that when somebody delivers a child or their wife gives birth, there isn't the automatic expectation that they'll never come again. It just includes the conditions under which an absence would be excused. So I just find it to be a nod towards reasonable accommodations being made to people who are able to diligently represent their City but maybe on a specific night of a meeting there might be something going on that needs to be clarified.

Alderman Laws

I just wanted to say that I support that amendment from Alderman Clemons. We have spoken about it privately and I think it is a great idea.

Alderwoman Kelly

I didn't make a motion so do we make a motion and then amend it?

Chairman Caron

No I was just going to say Alderman Clemons since you are on the Committee, if you want to make the amendment to be added to that? Then we can have a discussion. Let it be known that Alderman Wilshire has joined the Committee. Thank you for coming.

Alderman Clemons

Yeah I would move to amend the Ordinance to add paternity leave. So where it says maternity I would add the words "and paternity".

MOTION BY ALDERMAN CLEMONS TO AMEND O-19-044 TO INCLUDE "AND PATERNITY"ON THE QUESTIONChairman Caron

You all heard the motion, any other comments? So we understand the amendment? Ok. So the amendment is to add in "paternity" in Section B along with maternity, paternity and adoption leave.

MOTION CARRIED

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN CARON TO RECOMMEND FINAL PASSAGE OF O-19-044 AS AMENDED
MOTION CARRIED****O-19-045**

Endorser: Mayor Jim Donchess
Alderman Linda Harriott-Gathright
Alderman Patricia Klee
Alderman Tom Lopez
Alderman June M. Caron
Aldermoman-at-Large Shoshanna Kelly
Alderman Jan Schmidt
Alderman-at-Large Lori Wilshire

UPDATING THE FINANCIAL STANDARDS FOR THE CITY'S WELFARE GUIDELINES**MOTION BY ALDERWOMAN KELLY TO RECOMMEND FINAL PASSAGE**ON THE QUESTIONChairman Caron

Ok you've heard the Motion and we have Mr. Mack from the Welfare Department here. If you would come forward and give us a little synopsis of the changes that you are looking to make?

Robert Mack, Welfare Officer

Thank you Madam Chair. My name is Bob Mack, I'm the Welfare Officer for the City of Nashua. As you see from the language in the Ordinance, "in accordance with the City of Nashua general assistance guidelines and the RSA 165 under which we operate, we are required to review and look at the financial standards which are the expenses upon which we base eligibility determinations and issue assistance in accordance with those guidelines. We utilize some reports to get those numbers. So for Fair Market Rental Allowances, we look at HUD and New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority residential rental cost survey information. We look at USDA Food Allowance Standards and we look at Cost of Living, the CPI Index to look at any sort of increase or decrease as there may be in those expenses for just basic costs of living.

So in looking at those things, these are the proposed financial standards which are updated from last year's financial standards. You will see some increases primarily in some of the rental costs. As you are probably well aware that the cost of rent in the City of Nashua have gone up a little bit over the past 12 months or so and so again, we just want to make sure what we are using for figures are in line with the current rental market. The other expenditure is around food and just personal care maintenance items have gone up about 1.85%.

Chairman Caron

Ok do we have any questions?

Alderman Clemons

So my question, you know I think obviously these standards need to be updated and that, but my questions is were these appropriately, the changes are they appropriately reflected in the budget that was proposed by the Mayor? So in other words, what type of impact do you foresee that having on the budget.

Mr. Mack

That's a good question Alderman Clemons. Yes we did consider the increase in proposing this increase in the Financial Standards when preparing the budget. If we look at the way the current budget year will play out, we should be coming in under budget so there should be some money going back to the General Fund. The Mayor and the Board have always been I would say conservative in making sure that there is sufficient funding in the General Assistance Budget because I know that some 17 years ago when I first started here with the City, I think the budget had been expended. It was mid-January and they had spent about \$1 million dollars out of \$650,000.00 budget. So it was a little overspent at that point in time.

So in order to make sure that we don't get in that situation again, we have budgeted pretty conservatively I would say to make sure we have enough funding. We were also able to use unexpended funds over the course of years to build up the Welfare Trust Fund which is you know a backup, so if we do over expend, we can tap into that. That is around \$370,000.00 I think at this point in time. So we are pretty secure. But that is a good question and we did consider that when we proposed this.

Alderman Kelly

Thank you. I just wanted to ask, this is a yearly thing that we do to make sure we are in line?

Mr. Mack

Yes generally we look at the expenses annually. Occasionally there's not much change and so we don't propose any changes. But typically it is about every 12 months or so that we propose these.

Alderman Wilshire

So you expect to have a surplus or money unspent?

Mr. Mack

It appears we will come in under budget for this fiscal year, 2019.

Alderman Wilshire

So the Expendable Trust Fund, this money wouldn't lapse into that?

Mr. Mack

I believe at this point it is kind of maxed out at what it was set to. It was set to like \$350,000.00 and then it has accrued some interest I believe. I'm not sure of all the financial nuances of that; I'd leave that to the Finance Department.

Alderman Wilshire

Well I just want to say thank you because when I got on this Board, I don't want to tell you how many years ago but it was a lot of years ago. The Welfare Department was not run as efficiently as it is under your watch so thank you for that. I mean we were spending \$1.3 million, we didn't have the right amount of people on the job, case manager. Thank you for bringing this up to where we can live with it. You do a good job with the budget, you do a good job serving the people that need you. Thank you for all of that.

Mr. Mack

Well thank you very much. I would just add that we have a very good staff and they are very knowledgeable about community resources and we rely heavily on our community partners as well. So I wouldn't want to let that go without saying.

Alderman Wilshire

Just to add to that, we have a great network of non-profits and Bob really does a good job collaborating with all of them. So thank you Bob.

Chairman Caron

I'll add to that because I sat on that Committee, that group, once a month and I was very impressed because you usually see agencies that don't really work well together because they get territorial. But that group really works well together to help the most vulnerable of our City. I appreciate that you are upgrading this more often and it is nice that we have that Trust Fund. Maybe we need to look at it and see if we should increase it and put some of that excess, unspent money aside in case of emergencies. But thank you for doing that.

Alderman Wilshire

Did you have a surplus last year?

Mr. Mack

We did have a surplus last year, I don't remember exactly what it was.

Alderman Wilshire

Alright, OK, I was just curious because if the Trust Fund isn't where it needs to be; but if you've had a surplus a couple years in a row, maybe it just should lapse to the General Fund. I would like to see going back the last 4 or 5 years if you've needed extra money and haven't had it; I don't think you have had to come back to us, right?

Mr. Mack

No we haven't had to do that for quite some time.

Alderman Lopez

I would just caution about the enthusiasm for surpluses and extra budgets because if a person is listening and they have not had their needs met, this could be interpreted in a very different way. So I think what I see here is that we are addressing the identified needs and we are acknowledging that the housing costs in Nashua are going up higher and higher so we need to increase the amount that we can give per person. I am personally not inclined to start declaring victory over all Welfare Assistance needs. I think there are several groups of organizations that are active in the City meeting needs and they are very helpful in making sure that the City doesn't carry too much of a burden. And Director Mack is very much a part of that but at the same time, there are people whose needs are not being met. They are not eligible for different services or resources for one reason or the other. So I would just want to be conscious of that?

MOTION CARRIED

TABLED IN COMMITTEE**Appointments by the Mayor**Downtown Improvements Committee

Edward Hayes (New Appointment)
 Terra Salon
 137 Main Street
 Nashua, NH 03060

Term to Expire: December 13, 2019

Mine Falls Park Advisory Committee

Lisa Hardy (New Appointment)
 7 Burritt Street
 Nashua, NH 03060

Term to Expire: March 1, 2022

R-19-128

Endorsers: Mayor Jim Donchess
 Alderman-at-Large Michael B. O'Brien, Sr.
 Alderman Richard A. Dowd
 Alderman Patricia Klee
 Alderman-at-Large Brandon Michael Laws
 Alderman Tom Lopez
 Alderwoman-at-Large Shoshanna Kelly
 Alderwoman Mary Ann Melizzi-Golja
 Alderman-at-Large David C. Tencza
 Alderman Jan Schmidt

EXTENDING AND ENLARGING THE NASHUA RAIL TRANSIT COMMITTEE

- Tabled 5/6/2019

Alderman Clemons

I don't recall why it was tabled?

Alderwoman Kelly

That was my question too. I don't believe I was at this meeting, I might have been absent at this meeting but I'm not sure why it was tabled.

Chairman Caron

I don't either.

Alderwoman Kelly

Do we want to keep it tabled?

Alderman Clemons

I think Alderman Dowd might have been or the Mayor wasn't able to come or something. I don't remember why this was tabled though.

Chairman Caron

Someone didn't show up to have a conversation so I think we should keep it tabled. So we will table R-19-128.

Alderman Lopez

Are we sure that there isn't going to be some kind of immediate and sudden progress with rail? I guess not.

Alderman Clemons

It's got several endorsers on it and I think if there is something between now and the next meeting that is urgent about it, we can, at the Full Board we can pull it from Committee and act on it. I know that's not necessarily the best strategy to do but it seems like it's something that has a lot of support. It doesn't seem very controversial so if there is some kind of need to get it passed at the next Board of Aldermen meeting, you know, one of the sponsors can come forward and let us know. I think we can handle it that way.

Chairman Caron

I'll have someone check with the Mayor's office and find out why we tabled it at the last meeting. OK, how's that?

DISCUSSION- None

PUBLIC COMMENT - None

REMARKS BY THE ALDERMEN

Alderman Kelly I'm talking a lot tonight. I just wanted to acknowledge that piece of legislation that Alderman Laws brought forward. I appreciate his thinking of me but I want to make sure that everyone knows that it is not just for me that it is really about future people who might sit on this Board and making sure we are open to all kinds of walks of life to be on this Board and making it flexible but also that you are here, you are still committed. I will be at as many meetings as I possibly can. So I just wanted to say that and I wanted to say thank you.

Alderman Laws

I hope I didn't give the impression that it was exclusively for Alderman Kelly. She was the inspiration but I believe the legislation is necessary and relevant.

Alderman Lopez

I just wanted to add that my youngest brother, his wife gave birth to twins and I know he's been working very diligently as a father over the last several weeks, has had like zero sleep. He is trying to manage his career and work at the same time. So I am particularly conscious now of the situation that parents both male and female might be in. So I appreciate Alderman Clemons addition to it and Alderman Laws' initiative.

Chairman Caron

Thank you. I think it was the wise decision and we don't know what the future Board will look like down the road. We certainly don't want to discourage people from participating in Government because of their needs and wants.

Alderman Lopez

Or from having children because they are elected.

POSSIBLE NON-PUBLIC SESSION - None

ADJOURNMENT

**MOTION BY ALDERWOMAN KELLY TO ADJOURN
MOTION CARRIED**

The meeting was declared closed at 7:26 p.m.

Alderman-at-Large Ben Clemons
Committee Clerk