

A regular meeting of the Board of Aldermen was held Tuesday, June 23, 2020, at 7:30 p.m. via teleconference.

President Lori Wilshire presided; City Clerk Susan Lovering recorded.

Prayer was offered by City Clerk Susan Lovering; Alderwoman Elizabeth Lu led in the Pledge to the Flag.

President Wilshire

As President of the Board of Aldermen, I find that due to the State of Emergency declared by the Governor as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and in accordance with the Governor's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, this public body is authorized to meet electronically.

Please note that there is no physical location to observe and listen contemporaneously to this meeting, which was authorized pursuant to the Governor's Emergency Order. However, in accordance with the Emergency Order, I am confirming that we are:

a) Providing public access to the meeting by telephone, with additional access possibilities by video or other electronic means:

To access Zoom, please refer to the agenda or the City's website for the meeting link.

To join by phone dial: 1-929-205-6099 - Meeting ID: 854 9424 5358; Password: 091623

The public may also view the meeting via Channel 16.

b) Providing public notice of the necessary information for accessing the meeting:

We previously gave notice to the public of the necessary information for accessing the meeting, through public postings. Instructions have also been provided on the City of Nashua's website at www.nashuanh.gov and publicly noticed at City Hall and at the Public Health Department.

c) Providing a mechanism for the public to alert the public body during the meeting if there are problems with access:

If anybody has a problem accessing the meeting via phone or Channel 16, please call 603-821-2049 and they will help you connect.

d) Adjourning the meeting if the public is unable to access the meeting:

In the event the public is unable to access the meeting via the methods mentioned above, the meeting will be adjourned and rescheduled. Please note that **all votes** that are taken during this meeting shall be done by **roll call vote**.

Let's start the meeting by taking a roll call attendance. **When each member states their presence, please also state whether there is anyone in the room with you during this meeting, which is required under the Right-To-Know Law.**

The roll call was taken with 14 members of the Board of Aldermen present: Alderman Michael B. O'Brien, Sr., Alderman Patricia Klee, Alderwoman Shoshanna Kelly, Alderman Richard A. Dowd, Alderman June M. Caron, Alderman Benjamin Clemons, Alderman Lopez, Alderman David C. Tencza, Alderwoman Elizabeth Lu, Alderman Ernest Jette, Alderman Jan Schmidt, Alderman Skip Cleaver, Alderman Linda Harriott-Gathright, Alderman Wilshire. Alderman Brandon Michael Laws was recorded as absent.

Mayor James W. Donchess, Corporation Counsel Steven A. Bolton, were also in attendance via teleconference.

Alderman O'Brien

I am present, I can hear the proceedings and I am alone.

Alderman Klee

I am here, I can hear the proceedings and I am alone.

Alderwoman Kelly

I am here, I can hear everyone, I am alone and I am social distancing.

Alderman Dowd

I am here alone, I can hear everyone and I am social distancing in accordance with the Governor's Orders.

Alderman Caron

I am here, I am alone and I am by myself, thank you.

Alderman Clemons

Yes I am here and I am staying home per the Governor's Orders and I can hear everyone.

Alderman Lopez

I am here, I can hear everybody and I am social distancing.

Alderman Tencza

I am present, I am alone and I am social distancing.

Alderwoman Lu

I am here, I can hear you, I am here by my lonesome and I am social distancing.

Alderman Jette

I am here, I am alone and I can hear you.

Alderman Schmidt

I am present, I can hear the proceedings and following the distancing orders.

Alderman Cleaver

I am present, I am alone and I am following social distancing orders.

Alderman Harriott-Gathright

I am present, I can hear you, I am alone in this room and I am practicing social distancing.

President Wilshire

I am here, I am alone and I am practicing social distancing.

Susan Lovering, City Clerk

You have 14 in attendance.

President Wilshire

Alderman Laws did contact me to let me know he would not be able to join us this evening. Mayor, do you wish to address the Board this evening?

REMARKS BY THE MAYORMayor Donchess

Yes, I am struggling with the computer, sorry. You went off the screen, a lot of things happened this. Yes, Madam President, I would. I have a few items to cover and I will try to do that succinctly because I know there is a lot of business tonight. First, one of our efforts to help small businesses recover from the COVID-19 closures was, of course, to expand the outdoor dining on Main Street consistent with the Governor's and State Orders regarding restaurants. We got some comments about that which I really wanted to relate, because this is definitely a group effort, a lot of people involved in making this happen. The first was from Michael Buckley, who owns two of the restaurants downtown on Facebook. He said, "I would like to deliver an overdue declaration of gratitude to the Mayor's Office, the Aldermen of Nashua and especially Tim Cummings, for having the vision and forethought to engineer on very short notice, the narrowing of Main Street to allow us to expand during these difficult times. I know I can speak for the entire restaurant community when I say it made an incredible difference and probably saved many of us. I for one will be forever grateful". Signed "Michael".

Secondly there was not a post but a letter from Stella Blu which is a restaurant on East Pearl signed by Jeff Bois one of the owners, which says, "I want to take a moment to express our appreciation" ... it is addressed to Mayor Jim Donchess and Team which includes the Board of Aldermen, "I want to take a moment to express our appreciation for your dedication and ongoing support for Nashua's restaurants and small business community throughout this pandemic. The steps you have taken to increase capacity and drive foot traffic has been a game changer. I feel like I can speak for all of us downtown when I say thank you. The ability to come together is essential for communities to heal, to innovate and to adapt. I am confident that Nashua will come back stronger, more resilient and better than ever. I am Nashua born and bred and it is incredible to see and feel the power of the community coming together through the various initiatives. Downtown Nashua has never been so vibrant and in a short time it has truly become a destination. Thanks and keep up the good work". Again, addressed to basically the whole City.

I wanted to read those because this is a project that we worked on together, one which has had a major effect, a major beneficial effect maybe has changed downtown forever and in the words of Michael Buckley "has probably saved many of us". So I thought you should hear those words directly because you were clearly very involved.

Secondly, Madam President, of course we have the Budget tonight. Now this is an issue which I know we are all concerned about under the conditions that we are operating, no Budget is easy to make. People can disagree and have reasonable points of view and still disagree about exactly how these issues should be handled. But we are dealing with three major challenges at this point, looking at this Budget and the ones that are coming, next year particularly. First, the rising healthcare costs; for two years of running up \$3 million dollars, that \$3 million dollar figure is a 1 ½ on the tax rate or the combined 6 is 3% on the tax rate just by itself. Now that was a condition when I proposed the Budget; I proposed the Budget back in February pre-COVID-19. We knew we had to deal with healthcare, we have a plan to reduce costs over time involving changes to the design of the healthcare plan that we offer. We have talked about the details of that before. Then we proposed the Budget, you began to consider it through the Budget Committee and then we get hit with COVID-19 which is an unprecedented disease, a pandemic, one that has had very large economic impacts. One that the economic impacts are being deferred as a result of aid that the Federal Government is providing to the thousands and thousands of unemployed workers in Nashua. So we haven't yet really seen the impact of that, but that \$600.00 a week aid is ending on July 31. So then we got COVID-19.

Then 10 days or so ago, the State hits us at exactly the wrong moment with up to, we are still estimating, but we will see, up to about a \$3 million dollar increase in pension costs. The pension bill that the City pays to the State Pension System will increase by \$3 million dollars, or \$2.8 or something in that neighborhood. Again, a major hit especially on top of the other two factors. I would like to say that we do not know what is coming with this economic – we know the \$2.8, the \$3 million dollars, we think we can deal with healthcare costs if everybody cooperates. But we don't know what is coming with economics. Automobile registrations are down to some degree. We expect that State Revenue could be off, we just don't know. And not all of you have been in City Government when a major recession hits if that's coming, we don't know. It has a significant impact on revenues and assessments, commercial assessments which could go down and cause the tax rate to go up, just based on that. So we don't know what is coming.

Jon Griffin, CFO has done a Memo where he looks at future tax rates, the one after this year, next year Fall of 2021 using a set of very middle of the road projections and we could at some point talk about what exactly all those factors are but those are the ones that create the tax rate. He projects at 7% increase for taxpayers. Now that is, in my mind, obviously far too high, much more than we want. Therefore, before COVID I had proposed 2.25% budgets for all the major Budgets; Fire, Police, and Schools. 2% for Public Works and City Hall Departments. But based upon input from our Police and Fire Departments, the Budget Committee has recommended increases in their Budgets. Now I have concerns about any increase to anything under this set of conditions. Of course we respect the Fire Department, the Police Department, we respect the Officers, we appreciate the sacrifice that they have made to the City over the years. We are grateful for their service. But we also need to factor in the interest especially in the uncertain times that we face of the hardworking taxpayers of the City of Nashua. Therefore, in my opinion really the Budget Committee has recommended some reductions, fine but increases but I don't think in my view are not a good idea. I know that obviously people disagree about that, but my priority would be to maintain services basically as we have them and hold fast and then try to do the best we can with the tax rate as circumstances develop.

I will now move to another subject, Madam President that being the Firefighter's Contract. As I mentioned, of course, we respect the Firefighters, we appreciate everything they have done and I think the way that negotiations were handled before the current contract was arrived at by the Fire Commission reflects that. We had offered, in mediation, 11% over four years. 2 ¾% every year a four year increase. As you, Madam President, and other members of the Board of Aldermen approved for the Police Sergeants. So we are trying to have equity, the same amount was offered, yet we don't have a contract. And there's different ways you can look at what this contract would do in terms of cost. Yes, it's four 3 1/2 % raises, which without any compounding equals 14%/ But sometimes when we consider the cost of contracts, we consider what they are actually going to cause in terms of the outflow of dollars. And because there are also step increases within the contract, the actual cost would be a 17% increase for one that, in my opinion, and again – with utmost respect, in my opinion one we, under these circumstances cannot afford.

Let me move to another subject, Madam President, and that is one of the Memos later on in the Agenda is a policy change, one that would cause our policy regarding people who need to be out of work as a result of childcare problems, childcare issues, it would conform our policy to the Federal Law that was passed, regarding the same issue. So we are asking there that you approve that change which is expressed in a Memo so we will be conformity with Federal Law and that requires that under certain conditions we pay people 2/3 of their pay when they are out as a result of childcare issues for as long as the COVID-19 issue is with us.

Finally, Madam President, I did want to update you on the Safe Stations Program. The way it has been operating will end on the 30th of June, which is what a week away. I want to thank the Fire Department for undertaking that project for those years. We think effectively addressed and attacked and worked with the opioid crisis and got a lot of people into treatment. But for various reasons it cannot continue and we could talk about this all night, so I won't. It won't continue in its present form. But I wanted to let you know that Bobbi Bagley, Director of Public Health and I and the hospital, which is the so-called Hub under the State's Plan and Department of Health & Human Services, even Commissioner Shabinette have been working to develop a plan that would replace Safe Stations and provide a place 24 hours a day where people could go who need to have help. The problem right now is that the hospital, the Hub – that's Southern NH on Main Street, very visible but they are only open during business hours on weekdays. So we've got all these other hours of the week. So we are working with Revive an agency that you are very familiar with. Jessica Parnell and others to put a substitute plan in place. In any event, that Madam President, is what I wanted to cover and unless there are questions, I will conclude my remarks. Thank you very much.

RESPONSE TO REMARKS OF THE MAYOR

Alderman Lopez

I just wanted to thank the Mayor for the efforts that he is putting forward with the Safe Stations. I cannot imagine how many things he probably has on his plate in combination with just the reopening's from COVID-19, addressing the concerns about additional flareups and the impact that it has had on all the different cities. There just wasn't a lot of time to address this and it has taken a very significant amount of effort to even get people to the table to kind of figure out a workable solution. This is something that is like very intimidating in my opinion as a process because the first time we put it together was sort of a miracle. So the fact that we are so far along now ready to find partners and gaps is very impressive. And I really want to thank Revive Recovery for being willing to step forward like that. I would encourage the community to find out what they do and how they do it because this is going to be a very important part of that partnership and they are going to need your help. They represent the community that is in recovery and has committed to the lifestyle of recovery. They are exactly the people that we want taking the lead on this issue. So I just wanted to thank the Mayor for helping put all of that together.

Alderwoman Lu

Thank you, Madam Chairman. Just a couple of things regarding the Mayor's comments. I have spoken with a couple of people who have enjoyed dinners downtown and it has been wonderful increasing business and it seems like a really joyous atmosphere. However, I still feel that, I don't understand why we are not doing a directed patrol – the Police Department is not trying to address the modified exhausts. Sitting outside in the summer in downtown is not a pleasant experience. The mufflers are illegal and a couple of weeks ago when we were asked to provide funding for an x-ray for a bomb situation, you know, to have on hand for a bomb threat. I spoke with one of the members from the Police Department and I was told that we don't have the hardware that will measure decibels and decibels on exhaust and that just really surprises me that we don't have something that seems to me to be so simple. It is a State Law, it's a law that should be enforced and we are not enforcing it. And I think it would make a big difference to the downtown dining experience.

The other thing that I wanted to just ask, for the Firefighter's Contract, I can see that they are asking for something similar to a recent contract by the Police Department. For that reason I do feel conflicted because I know we have huge budget issues that are coming around the horizon, over the horizon.

And I wonder if the Mayor, if you are just considering holding back on any of the other projects of the City to contain costs over the next year while we reassess our financial situation. I am thinking of just some of the projects that are in their early stages (audio cuts out) project that I love. But I wonder where the Mayor's Office stands on halting those expenditures for (audio cuts out).

Mayor Donchess

Would you like me to respond, Madam President?

President Wilshire

Sure Mayor that would be great.

Mayor Donchess

Well, of course we need to continue to evaluate circumstances as they evolve and as I have said, we don't know what is coming. I would say that we need to, in looking at future projects, one thing we need to consider is that often infrastructure projects create stronger economy. Even though they require an expenditure of money, they create economic activity, they build a stronger economy. And in a situation like we have where small business especially may need a real jumpstart, anything we can give them to recover from the downtime they have suffered, sometimes making an infrastructure investment is worth doing, because it will, in the end, produce more for the community than it costs. Think about the impact that we could have here, I mean we have 10,000 people unemployed, many of them getting \$600.00 a week that's \$6 million dollars a week if you multiply that. When that ends, there could be a downturn and at that point we certainly, that may be exactly the wrong time to decide, "Oh we are not going to build anything that could boost our downtown economy or our City's economy". That may be the time that we need to invest to make sure that we come back stronger than we did before the Coronavirus, before the COVID-19 crisis.

President Wilshire

All set Alderman Lu?

RECOGNITION PERIOD - None

READING MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

There being no objection, President Wilshire declared the minutes of the regular Board of Aldermen meeting of June 9, 2020, and Special Board of Aldermen meetings of June 10 and June 16, 2020 accepted, placed on file, and the reading suspended.

COMMUNICATIONS REQUIRING ONLY PROCEDURAL ACTIONS AND WRITTEN REPORTS FROM LIAISONS

From: John L. Griffin, Chief Financial Officer/Comptroller
Re: NHRS Lower Assumed Rate of Return from 7.25 to 6.75 Percent

From: Kim Kleiner, Director of Administrative Services
Re: Health Insurance Fund and FY21 Health Insurance Enrollment by Union

From: Donna Graham, Legislative Affairs Manager
Re: Communications Received from the Public

From: John L. Griffin, Chief Financial Officer/Comptroller
Re: 7.03% Tax Rate Increase Projected for FY2022

From: Jim Donchess, Mayor
Re: Coronavirus Disease COVID-19

There being no objection, President Wilshire accepted the communications and placed them on file.

PERIOD FOR PUBLIC COMMENT RELATIVE TO ITEMS EXPECTED TO BE ACTED UPON THIS EVENING

President Wilshire

Now we have a 15 minute Public Comment Period. Those of you that want to speak, if you could raise your hand or get my attention? Anyone?

John

I am raising my hand, I think.

President Wilshire

Ok, John?

John McAllister, IAFF Local 789

Good evening, President Wilshire. Thank you for allowing me to speak this evening. Good evening to the Mayor and the Board of Aldermen. I am here tonight to speak on a Resolution before you this evening of the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the City of Nashua and Local 789, Nashua Firefighters. Alderwoman Lu, I appreciate that question that you had just asked the Mayor and I would like to just say that one of the most important infrastructures or benefits to the City, any City, would be the employees that are employed there. And that's not just the firefighters, I am talking about the teachers, the Police Officers, the DPW Workers, all of them. And it's about time that the City of Nashua invests in those employees.

We started this negotiation back in March of 2019, we finally came to a tentative agreement with the City of Nashua, yes the City of Nashua because they were across the table from us. We are negotiating with them in good faith and we finally came to an agreement the end of January / beginning of February. I ask one question tonight after speaking to a few of you and listening to the comments this evening. If there was so much respect for the firefighters in the City of Nashua, why did it take us almost a year to come up with this agreement? I understand the Mayor stated earlier that the offer on the table was 11% but quite frankly the members of the negotiating team weren't ready to just accept 11%, we felt as though we wanted more, we deserved more, our member deserved more.

We have been on the front lines of this pandemic, we've been on the front lines of anything that the City throws at us. We are asking for a fair wage, fair for the City of Nashua as well as the employees of Local 789. I urge you all to do the right and vote in favor of this contract this evening. Thank you.

President Wilshire

Anyone else, public comment? Chief Rhodes?

Brian Rhodes, Nashua Fire Chief

Good evening, Madam President, Honorable Board, Mr. Mayor. Just to be perfectly clear, the decision to end the Safe Station Program was my decision with my command staff based upon the rules of engagement, sort to speak that had changed. Our task our charge is to provide public safety to the citizens who are taxpayers of the City of Nashua.

Any delay in our employees getting to our citizens in emergencies is unacceptable when we are trying to deal with people who are coming from other communities. We have documentation that they have come from around the country to come to our Safe Station Program. I just want that to be perfectly clear to all. The firefighters had nothing to do with this. They have done their job in the past, they are doing their job today and they will continue to do their job. They are not looking for anything exorbitant but some of you know I spent time as an elected official in Concord. I understand, we don't have a crystal ball. But we have employees who have done an incredible job over the last four years of this opioid crisis when no one knew what to do, your firefighters in the City of Nashua, stood up. They took care of the problem.

The Fire Department is not nice to have, it is a need to have. We have a safe city, we are constantly rated as one of the safest cities in the country. We are rated as the safest city in New Hampshire because of the dedicated employees that you have working. And again, I'll reiterate what John just said, and not just the Fire Department, your Police Department, your Fire Department, your Public Works, your School Department, our Libraries, everyone. All we are asking for is to take a serious look at this and yes we don't know what the future is going to bring, but your employees have put it out there for the citizens of Nashua to create a safe and vibrant community for all in the past. And now they are looking for a little something for that. So I thank you for your time. I know this is a very tough decision, but in the end, without our employees we have nothing; we are not the Number One City in the United States, Safest City. We are not the Best in New Hampshire. Again, I apologize for hopping in again because a lot of this stuff was said before, but I just think it is very important because you have an extremely dedicated group of employees at Nashua Fire Rescue who are not looking for anything exorbitant they are ;just looking for what I believe is due. Thank you very much.

President Wilshire

Anyone else? Public Comment? Anyone else, before we move on? Ok.

COMMUNICATIONS REQUIRING FINAL APPROVAL

From: Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director

Re: Communication – Approval & Place on File A Contract for Great American Downtown to assist with implementation of the Nashua Downtown Riverfront Project

MOTION BY ALDERMAN SCHMIDT TO ACCEPT, PLACE ON FILE, AND APPROVE THE PROFESSIONAL SERVICES CONTRACT RELATED TO THE NASHUA DOWNTOWN RIVERFRONT PROJECT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$24,000 TO THE GREAT AMERICAN DOWNTOWN AND TO AUTHORIZE THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR TO SIGN ALL RELATED DOCUMENTS, BY ROLL CALL

ON THE QUESTION

President Wilshire

You've heard the Motion, discussion on that Motion?

Alderman Jette

Yes, I have a question.

President Wilshire

Alderman Jette?

Alderman Jette

Thank you. I looked at the contract and under what appears to be the scope of work, the number one thing I see is, "provide strategic advice and assistance with management and execution of Dancing in the Streets Project". I am just wondering if there is anyone that can explain with COVID-19, are we actually going to have a Dancing in the Streets Program and what exactly does that have to do with the Riverfront?

President Wilshire

Anyone want to take a stab at it? Mayor?

Mayor Donchess

Yes, Madam President, I was struggling with the computer again, sorry. Alderman Jette's question had to do with the GAD Contract and the Dancing in the Street. So this has been something that has gone very well, but I think we believe that a change in location would greatly benefit what has been a really high energy project for the Downtown. Up in Portland at a park called "Congress Square" they run like a program almost every night or several nights a week. So we were thinking of expanding what we've done and bringing it down to Renaissance Park where it is more in the middle of things in the down. At Renaissance Park you have a couple thousand people living within you know sight of the park, between the apartments at, of course, Clock Tower, at Cotton Mill Square and at Loft 34. Maybe it's not 2,000 but it is over 1,000 people, we don't know how many live exactly in each apartment. Therefore, we thought we could run a very energetic, improved, exciting program of dancing.

Now we are hoping, we don't - as we have already talked about COVID-19 of course affects everything but we are seeing more reopening. Depending on conditions, we want to be sensible and safe but given that these are mostly adults, not you know, small kids or anything. This could be run in a way that enforces social distancing and still provides people a good opportunity. Masks could be required, things like that, a good opportunity to enjoy the downtown. So this can be paid for out of the TIF, this would not affect the tax rate. It can be paid for out of the TIF because this is within the TIF District and activities such as this can be paid for. So that was the - and Great American Downtown also needs a little bit of a lift financially. So this was part of the idea in terms of this contract.

Alderman Jette

Ok, thank you for the explanation.

President Wilshire

Are you all set Alderman Jette?

Alderman Jette

Yes I am, thank you.

President Wilshire

Thank you. Any other discussion? The Motion is to accept and place on file and approve the professional services contract related to the Nashua Downtown Riverfront Project in the amount of \$24,000.00 to the Great American Downtown and to authorize the Economic Development Director sign all related documents. Alderman Klee?

Alderman Klee

Thank you, Madam President. I guess my question would be to the Mayor. I want to see as much life downtown as possible with everything that we are doing. My concern is when we cancel fireworks and we are not opening the polls and we are not doing all these other things because of COVID, yet we would be promoting some type of dancing where people are going to be exhaling. While I do appreciate that we probably can try to do as much social distancing as possible, is it realistic, I guess is my question. And I am sure that the Mayor or anybody doesn't really know that answer. But I wanted to ask when would this be scheduled for us to do this particular event?

Mayor Donchess

Well as you've suggested, we want to be safe and sensible about this, so I can't really say when exactly we would do it. We were planning to begin in June, obviously that didn't happen. We would need to wait to see how conditions evolve. And if it seems like it could be done in a safe, sensible manner under the conditions that we face at the time, then we would proceed, if not, we wouldn't. We have seen, but I agree with your concern about safety, no question about it. But we have seen some significant progress in the last couple of weeks – well the last 6 or 8 weeks with the decline in positive tests in New Hampshire. And then in Massachusetts there have been dramatic changes in the last few weeks where they are down to 1.3% or something like that, 1.5% positive tests, I mean they are way down.

So clearly in this part of New England we are making progress against the disease, but still we have to be careful and we would definitely work with Public Health with the medical people in deciding whether and how to proceed.

Alderman Klee

May I have a follow up question.

President Wilshire

Yes.

Alderman Klee

I guess my next kind of like roll into a couple of questions; what is the lead time that they would need to be able to have this contract in order to get moving forward with some kind of decision. I understand that it's the TIF money. Are you saying that it definitely could be the TIF money, I guess would be my question and they don't need a whole lot of lead time, would it be better to just kind of hold off making this decision until we had a better indication as to how things are going. I agree with you all the numbers are going – New England is looking great. I just have anxiety that if we do something such as this we are going to be seeing numbers going up, maybe just here in Nashua or people who that are coming to it. I think this will bring people from other areas beyond Nashua. So I guess my question is, is this something we could put off and is it definitely coming out of TIF Fund. And it's not the money as much as it the health.

Mayor Donchess

TIF Funds definitely, that's the source of funds. So it doesn't hit the tax rate. We think late August, early September is the earliest this could go but maybe it would be in the Fall as well. So Public Health is looking carefully at each of the alternatives we are considering for anything, you know, pools, where we are not sure we can keep kids apart. So, so far the decision has been to keep the pools closed, but in a situation like this, where a late summer, early fall we may have much better health conditions where we are dealing with adults, it may be possible to safely run the event. But we would not, again, do this except in consultation with Public Health.

I mean I think Director Bagley has done an exceptional job, I mean in balancing the need for safety with the desire to open things up a bit. She's been involved in all the decisions regarding downtown and everywhere else. So she is well equipped to help us work through this or to decide it can't be done.

Alderman Klee

And I agree with you and thank you very much for your answers.

President Wilshire

Alderwoman Lu.

Alderwoman Lu

Thank you, Madman Chairman. My concern is we are talking a lot about finances and fiscal concerns and this is a dance party and I just feel that is a dance party, do we really need to spend \$24,000.00 to plan one. And my other concern is maybe we can get City Hall opened, because it seems strange to have a City where City Hall is still not opened, but we are having dance parties in the streets. So that's my feeling about this. Thank you.

Mayor Donchess

I should have mentioned, Madam President that our tentative plan, our target date to open City Hall to a certain number of people at any one time and there were so many subjects I didn't get into this one, but it's July 6th. So there are going to be significant physical changes at automobile registration, City Clerk's Office and the Assessing Office and to some degree in the Mayor's Office where there's a lot of public interaction. But City Hall is going to open, at least in part, before those physical changes can be made. The GOFFER funds, the Federal Money can pay for these improvements.

So come July 6th, assuming we can get the technology to work by that time, which I am optimistic we can do, we will have automobile registration up in the Auditorium so that people can be spaced apart. There will be a limited number of people allowed in City Hall, people will need to wear a mask. But we will open and for most city functions, for many city functions. Some will be by appointment only, but our goal is to continue to improve the accessibility, again sensibly, consistent with safety. But we believe the first steps can be taken on July 6 or thereabouts.

Alderwoman Lu

Thank you, Mayor.

Alderman Schmidt

Thank you. Several times in the last couple of days people have questioned the optics that they are seeing coming from our decisions. This kind of decision being made at this time is probably bad optics. It may not be coming from the Budget, it may be planned for the future. Perhaps I should change my Motion to table t this. That would be my suggestion at this point.

MOTION BY ALDERMAN SCHMIDT TO AMEND HER MOTION FOR FINAL PASSAGE TO TABLE THE PROFESSIONAL SERVICES CONTRACT RELATED TO THE NASHUA DOWNTOWN RIVERFRONT PROJECT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$24,000 TO THE GREAT AMERICAN DOWNTOWN AND TO AUTHORIZE THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR TO SIGN ALL RELATED DOCUMENTS, BY ROLL CALL

ON THE QUESTIONPresident Wilshire

Is that your Motion?

Alderman Schmidt

Yes.

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

Yea: Alderman Klee, Alderwoman Kelly, Alderman Caron,
Alderman Lopez, Alderwoman Lu, Alderman Jette,
Alderman Schmidt

7

Nay: Alderman O'Brien, Alderman Dowd, Alderman Clemons
Alderman Tencza, Alderman Cleaver, Alderwoman Harriott-Gathright
Alderman Wilshire

7

MOTION FAILEDPresident Wilshire

And that Motion failed. Do I have another Motion?

Alderman Schmidt

I guess we could go back to the original Motion.

MOTION BY ALDERMAN SCHMIDT TO ACCEPT, PLACE ON FILE, AND APPROVE THE PROFESSIONAL SERVICES CONTRACT RELATED TO THE NASHUA DOWNTOWN RIVERFRONT PROJECT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$24,000 TO THE GREAT AMERICAN DOWNTOWN AND TO AUTHORIZE THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR TO SIGN ALL RELATED DOCUMENTS, BY ROLL CALL

ON THE QUESTIONPresident Wilshire

Any discussion? Alderman Dowd.

Alderman Dowd

Yes, GAD is right at the moment is having financial difficulties because a good part of their funding is related to the casinos and casinos donating to the charities, which have not been able to do that for some time. Also, GAD is responsible for a number of things that keep Nashua vibrant such as the Meals downtown, the Stroll and numbers of other things. If there's nothing to keep them going, they may disappear and I think that would be a tragedy for the City, because the one thing we are really going to need when we come out of this pandemic is things to get people's spirits back up and get the vibrancy of the downtown again. And it is important that we, you know, it's not that it necessarily would be a dance. If that doesn't happen we will find other things that GAD can help us with and take some of the burden off of, because I see Mr. Cummings just joined us, off of his group. That's why we are looking to have GAD get involved in that. They have a number of other things to do. But we want to keep GAD vibrant and busy and helping the City of Nashua. And this is one way we can do it. I would strongly suggest that we approve this.

Alderman Klee

Thank you, Madam President. I agree with everything that Alderman Dowd just said. I have a follow up question to that, if we approve this and it is being approved for the thing such as the dance and so on. If they decide to use the funds to do something else in that same area with the Riverfront, do they need to come back to us? If they decided that wasn't what they wanted to do, because that's kind of what Alderman Dowd indicated that maybe they would do something else if they couldn't come through with the dance. I just want to get that clear?

Tim Cummings, Director of Economic Development

Madam President? Thank you for allowing me to join this evening. For the record, Tim Cummings, Director of Economic Development. I apologize for my casual attire, I wasn't planning on joining, I was watching the meeting remotely. I thought it may help to chime in and clarify some questions that were just raised. So first and foremost, this contract that is being put before you was brought about in a lot of ways to help me and my office. For those of you who may or may not know, I have been working a lot and I haven't been able to spend some time on some other projects. So having an extra set of hands through a contracted service type basis to actually implement the Downtown Riverfront Project, is what this is trying to achieve and trying to do it on a limited scope. So there are some things that I've asked Paul Shea, because of his unique knowledge of the downtown, his unique knowledge of the Riverfront and GAD's mission, it made sense to bring him in temporarily through GAD to help so we stay on course with this major project that I think is a priority for the City.

So a couple of things that we have discussed in the Downtown Implementation of the Master Plan, which I believe we are working towards having a presentation to this body or a sub committee of this body on July 8th. And then in addition to that execute on some plans to operationalize the Downtown Riverfront. What does that mean? Some of you may have seen, we did yoga along the Riverfront recently. That was through GAD's efforts. I mean, and already they are trying to do things like yoga, like kayak promotion, like Dancing in the Streets. So we are trying to look at the Riverfront in a different way, we are trying to use it as a natural asset that is competitive advantage for us, that makes our downtown unique. But we need to start looking at the downtown in that way and we want to have GAD promoting those types of activities. So it was along those lines that we were looking to bring GAD on board temporarily to help move this overall project forward. Thank you.

President Wilshire

Thank you, Director Cummings.

Steve Bolton Corporation Counsel

Madam President, Steve Bolton. I think I can answer Alderman Klee's specific question about whether if the Dancing in the Streets Program doesn't happen, are other programs contemplated by the contract. And the fact is that the Dancing in the Streets program is actually one small part of the scope of the work of the contract. It contemplates the yoga program as well, it contemplates general other activities in that Riverfront TIF District, Marketing support, Communication with the Stakeholders. So this is not \$24,000.00 to have a single Dancing in the Street program. That maybe one or more Dancing in the Streets, but it is also going to be apparently several other things.

Alderman Klee

Madam President, may I follow up. Thank you Attorney Bolton and thank you Director Cummings, I appreciate both of those explanations. It does answer a lot of the questions I have. I am definitely all for this. I have seen the yoga, I have heard back positive things from the yoga. I think using our Riverfront is brilliant, I think putting somebody like Paul Shea there to do this kind of work is also another thing that

would be brilliant. He is a hard worker and someone who has a lot of energy to take care of all these things. Hearing all of these things, I am definitely for this and I am glad it's coming from the TIF and not the taxpayers even.

Alderwoman Lu

Thank you, Madam Chairwoman, Madam President rather. Thank you for the information, I still feel the same way that I did and perhaps, would it be helpful, well I think over the period of the pandemic I think that there has not been the contact with the City Departments, maybe just the updates with the General Board of Aldermen that I had expected. Maybe I need a better understanding of how the Great American Downtown Organization intersects as a (audio cuts out) our City employees but I think part of my objection to this is just being presented with we want to spend \$24,000.00 on this and now it turns out, well it's not really that. I guess I would feel a lot better if the communications and the contracts were written with the expectation that they are going to be read and that we don't have to wonder why a dance in the middle of COVID-19 would be a good idea to spend \$24,000.00. I know that the Riverfront Project is great, I thought that the yoga at the Greeley House was simply an effort of a private enterprise (audio cuts out) into the open where they could have people come and join a class without the restrictions of 50%. Just a thought that we are off-sourcing the business of the Community Development or rather the Economic Development without a clear understanding. I would just feel better if it was described more precisely or more exactly as, no this isn't \$24,000.00 for a dance. We need to keep this guy going, or this organization going and I don't know, it sounds like they need a steady stream of income from the City to do their mission. And that is what I am hearing and I just would like more, for it to be a little bit more upfront. Thank you.

President Wilshire

I don't think anybody was not trying to be upfront. I think what's in the contract is in the contract. Great American Downtown has done a lot here in the City. They are having financial troubles because of COVID, because they haven't had any income because their fundraisers have been down. But I think they were on the up and up with all of this. I don't think there was anyone trying to pull anything over on us.

Alderwoman Lu

I don't – may I follow up on that. No I don't mean that Director Cummings or Great American Downtown, we just need better communication about, you know, to start off saying this is for the Riverfront Project for a dance and then to say, well no it is for whatever we might decide. That's what I am saying is not, ok, let's not say (audio cuts out).

President Wilshire

Alderman Lu, we can't hear you. Are you all set?

Alderwoman Lu

Yup.

President Wilshire

Anyone else on the motion to accept, place on file and approve the contract? Alderman Clemons.

Alderman Clemons

Thank you. So just a quick question, did this go before Finance Committee? Or is this the first time we are hearing it?

Director Cummings

If I may, Madam President? So it's technically that \$24,000.00 it would not actually be required to go before Finance Committee. Putting that whole issue aside, the way that the TIF Legislation that was written and adopted by the Board of Alderman a while back, says that any contract has to be approved by the Board of Aldermen. So any contract that is TIF related, needs full Board of Aldermen approval and is not a Finance Committee process.

Alderman Clemons

OK, so just to sort of back up what Alderman Lu said, if there's anything like this coming in the future, if you could just provide an explanation for us, I think that would be helpful. But I do think that the contract itself, if you took the time to read it, was pretty upfront. I kind of understood where it was going but I wasn't sure if it was something that had gone before Finance before. So thank you very much.

President Wilshire

Anyone else? Alderman Lopez.

Alderman Lopez

Yeah just a reminder, my fellow Aldermen that when all have our video on it slows down the bandwidth, so those of us with less bandwidth can't be heard. But I wanted to say some of what Alderman Clemons had said is for the public, we did get this in advance and we did have the opportunity read it. Obviously living in Ward 4 I am more familiar with GAD so I kind of understood both the contract and the Dancing in the Street happened for several years. So there is nothing I think that was insinuated to be "under the table" and I definitely don't think there actually was anything. If anything, Alderman Jette did his job a little more thoroughly than usually and was the one who brought up the whole Dancing in the Street thing. And I think it was a completely logical concern that was raised by Alderman Klee and Alderman Schmidt, I mean we can't just have something called, "Dancing in the Streets" go by and not comment on the social distancing aspect and all of that.

I would just say that unless we want to start micromanaging events and I have put in my time doing that, so I would not recommend it. GAD does it well, they are doing it in concert with Economic Development, who is also doing things well. I have not always agreed with their decisions in the past but we can't really argue with how effectively the concrete blocks are going or how businesses that would otherwise be struggling, are doing business in a very, very different way. So this is a time when we have to be a little flexible and we have to let the people who are going to spend all week working on passion project, do that kind of stuff. I also appreciate the attention to process that we have seen, and it is important that we communicate to the public effectively.

But I think GAD has a pretty solid track record. As a non-profit they exist almost exclusively to do things for us. So I think we can trust them to kind of take this project and do it really well. And I don't just mean the Dancing in the Streets because I am probably not going to go to that. But I think they will find a way to use this effectively and in a way that promotes downtown and vibrancy in whatever shape it takes, I think we will all be happy with it.

President Wilshire

Anyone else? I see five hands raised but no one wants to talk. So if you don't want to speak, can you un-raise your hand, put your hand down. Ok the motion is to accept, place on file and approve the contract. Further discussion? Seeing none, would the clerk please call the roll?

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

Yea: Alderman O'Brien, Alderman Klee, Alderwoman Kelly, Alderman Dowd,
Alderman Clemons, Alderman Lopez, Alderman Tencza,
Alderman Jette, Alderman Schmidt, Alderman Cleaver,
Alderwoman Harriott-Gathright, Alderman Wilshire 12

Nay: 0

MOTION CARRIED

From: Jim Donchess, Mayor

Re: Temporary Policy on Emergency Leave due to Coronavirus (COVID-19) – July 6, 2020

MOTION BY ALDERMAN CARON TO ACCEPT, PLACE ON FILE, AND ADOPT THE TEMPORARY POLICY ON EMERGENCY LEAVE DUE TO CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) EFFECTIVE JULY 6, 2020, BY ROLL CALL

ON THE QUESTION

Alderman Caron

And I have a question, please?

President Wilshire

Alderman Caron.

Alderman Caron

Thank you. Thank you. I think this is great that we are following the Federal Law. But I do have a question for the Mayor. A couple of weeks ago at our last meeting, we talked about the vacation time for non-affiliate employees of the City because obviously no one has taken vacation time and we certainly would not like them to lose any of that. I was wondering where we stand with that, at this point in time, Mayor. Thank you.

President Wilshire

Mayor?

Mayor Donchess

Yes, thank you for bringing this up Alderwoman Caron. So, the unaffiliated employees, the policy we did on the Public Health employees allowed them to carry forward personal days which they moved. But they can carry forward vacation days under the Ordinance. But beyond that, Director Kim Kleiner, Administrative Services Director, has been checking this out and can report further.

President Wilshire

Director Kleiner.

Kim Kleiner, Director of Administrative Services

Good evening, Madam President, Members of the Board. So we are researching, the Legislation that brought before you prior, the Mayor is correct. That was addressing personal days that would be lost at the end of the year as of June 30th. That's what the policy was addressing, we hadn't addressed vacation days as of yet, it is something that we are working on. We are speaking with Division Directors and we are gathering more information.

The reason that we brought forth the personal days is as you know unaffiliated employees have their 5 days and they'll lose it at the end of, as of June 30th. But there are other unions like UAW who have earned time. So it's different for different employee groups. We felt that the Public Health Employees that had personal days and we did reach out to all Division Directors and we discussed this. We felt pretty strongly that the Public Health Employees that were all unaffiliated deserved to have those days carried forward because they absolutely hadn't had a chance to take those personal days. Where when we looked at the balances of other employees, they had either taken the days earlier in the year or they had very little time left and, again, as of July 1st, they receive another 5 days for the unaffiliated. So that was just addressing those personal days and we will certainly update the Board more in regards to vacation.

Alderman Caron

So my question would be to either Director Kleiner or the Mayor, if I remember correctly, your vacation days, you lose them on your anniversary not the fiscal year. Am I correct?

Director Kleiner

So you can only carry forward two times your annual allotment. So it is different for many different people, but you're right, it's certainly not on the fiscal year. It's on your anniversary date.

Alderman Caron

Ok so you have time to look at this to make sure no one is losing anything as they are moving forward in the next few months. I just think it is important that we look at all our employees. I think everyone has really done a fabulous job with this horrendous thing that has taken place, so that's why I am asking. I just want to make sure that we are doing our due diligence for all of our employees and I appreciate that.

Director Kleiner

Absolutely and we want to be very careful to make sure that we are reaching out and getting all of the Division Director's input on their employees.

Alderman Caron

Thank you.

President Wilshire

Anyone else? Ok seeing none, would the Clerk please call the roll?

Alderwoman Lu

I have to sign back in, could you please tell me what we are voting on?

President Wilshire

We are voting on – the motion was to accept, place on file and adopt the temporary policy on emergency leave due to COVID-19 effective July 6th.

Alderwoman Lu

Thank you.

President Wilshire

You're welcome.

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

Yea: Alderman O'Brien, Alderman Klee, Alderwoman Kelly, Alderman Dowd, Alderman Caron, Alderman Clemons, Alderman Lopez, Alderman Tencza, Alderwoman Lu, Alderman Jette, Alderman Schmidt, Alderman Cleaver, Alderwoman Harriott-Gathright, Alderman Wilshire	14
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Nay:	0
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MOTION CARRIED

PETITIONS - None

NOMINATIONS, APPOINTMENTS AND ELECTIONS - None

REPORTS OF COMMITTEE

Human Affairs Committee..... 06/08/2020

There being no objection, President Wilshire declared the report of the June 8, 2020 Human Affairs Committee accepted and placed on file.

Budget Review Committee..... 06/10/2020

There being no objection, President Wilshire declared the report of the June 10, 2020 meeting of the Budget Review Committee accepted and placed on file.

Pennichuck Special Water Committee..... 06/15/2020

There being no objection, President Wilshire declared the report of the June 15, 2020 Special Pennichuck Water Committee accepted and placed on file.

Planning & Economic Development Committee..... 06/16/2020

There being no objection, President Wilshire declared the report of the June 16, 2020 Planning & Economic Development Committee accepted and placed on file.

Finance Committee..... 06/17/2020

There being no objection, President Wilshire declared the report of the June 17, 2020 Finance Committee accepted and placed on file.

CONFIRMATION OF MAYOR'S APPOINTMENTS - None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS – RESOLUTIONS

R-20-023, Amended

Endorsers: Mayor Jim Donchess

RELATIVE TO THE ADOPTION OF THE FISCAL YEAR 2021 PROPOSED BUDGET FOR THE CITY OF NASHUA GENERAL, ENTERPRISE, AND SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS

Given its second reading;

MOTION BY ALDERMAN DOWD TO AMEND R-20-023 BY REPLACING IT WITH THE GOLDEN ROD COPY OF AMENDMENTS MADE AT THE BUDGET REVIEW COMMITTEE, BY ROLL CALL

ON THE QUESTION

Alderman Dowd

Ok the changes to Mayor's Budget the Mayor gave us an appropriation of \$284,584,488.00. We reduced that by \$1,700,00.00 via the following actions. We reduced the Library Plaza Renovations by \$1 million dollars; we replaced the Mayoral bottom line reduction in the Police Department by \$207,062.00 and we reduced a portion of the CERT transfer by that same amount of \$207,062.00 having a zero impact financially on the Budget. Then we reduced a portion of the Contingency for Educational Priorities by \$1 million dollars and we reduced a portion of the CERF transfer by \$245,000.00.

We then increased a portion of the Contingency Education Priorities by \$300,000.00, adding the \$300,000.00 back to the \$1 million dollars in the motion a couple of motions ago. And then we reduced the Mayoral bottom line budget for Citywide Communications by \$20,394.00 and we reduced a portion of the CERF transfer for the \$20,394.00 leaving a General Fund Appropriation for this Budget from the Board of Aldermen of \$282,884,408.00.

President Wilshire

Ok the Motion is to amend Resolution 20-023. Further discussion on the Motion to Amend.

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

Yea: Alderman O'Brien, Alderman Klee, Alderwoman Kelly, Alderman Dowd, Alderman Caron, Alderman Clemons, Alderman Lopez, Alderman Tencza, Alderwoman Lu, Alderman Jette, Alderman Schmidt, Alderman Cleaver, Alderwoman Harriott-Gathright, Alderman Wilshire	14
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Nay:	0
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MOTION CARRIED

MOTION BY ALDERMAN DOWD FOR FINAL PASSAGE OF R-20-023 AS AMENDED, BY ROLL CALL

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

Yea: Alderman O'Brien, Alderman Klee, Alderwoman Kelly, Alderman Dowd,
Alderman Caron, Alderman Clemons, Alderman Lopez, Alderman Tencza,
Alderwoman Lu, Alderman Jette, Alderman Schmidt, Alderman Laws,
Alderman Cleaver, Alderwoman Harriott-Gathright, Alderman Wilshire 14

Nay: 0

MOTION CARRIED

Resolution R-20-023 declared duly adopted as amended.

Alderman Dowd

Before we address the final vote, I would like to make one more amendment to the R-20-023. You all received a Memo from Director Kleiner on June 9th relative to the monies set aside for Workplace Benefit Solutions for healthcare. In that Memo it said that we could reduce the \$3 million dollars that we were going to allocate out of the 2021 Budget by \$348,334.00 therefore still maintaining a balance in our healthcare account that would carry us through the next year. In further discussions with Director Kleiner and the Mayor and others including President Wilshire, it was determined that we could adjust that number to \$500,000.00 and I would like to make a motion to amend the Budget to take the half a million dollars and place it in General Contingency for the Budget so that it could be allocated later if and where needed.

MOTION BY ALDERMAN DOWD TO FURTHER AMEND R-20-023 BY REDUCING \$500,000.00 FROM THE HEALTHCARE LINE AND MOVING THE \$500,000.00 TO GENERAL CONTINGENCYON THE QUESTIONPresident Wilshire

Discussion on that motion to amend? Alderman Jette?

Alderman Jette

Yes so a point of clarification, are we reducing the Budget by \$500,000.00 or are we just moving the \$500,000.00 around so it really doesn't lower the Budget it just takes it out of the healthcare contingency and puts it into some other contingency fund?

President Wilshire

That's correct.

Alderman Dowd

That's correct. It is moving it out the healthcare and into a General Contingency so that it could be used for something else. And the reason that it is not taken toward the tax are is if we take any more towards the tax rate based on the motions we have taken before, that if you really need a detailed explanation, you'd have to get it from John Griffin. But it would exacerbate the issue that we might have in FY22. So we are not really changing the end number on the Budget, all we are doing it we are taking it out of that Healthline and moving it into General Contingency where it could be used for other things during the year.

President Wilshire

All set, Alderman Jette?

Alderman Jette

Yes, thank you.

Alderman Clemons

Thank you. So I had originally looked at that Memo and thought that the money, my initial thought was that the money could go towards the tax rate, reduce the tax burden further. I can understand putting it into Contingency. However, I feel that a better use of the money would be to put \$255,000.00 back into the Fire Department Budget so that they can fully fund the Firefighter's Contract. So I don't know if it is appropriate to amend the motion or if I can do that but that's what I would vote to do.

Alderman Dowd

My suggestion would be do we do this one step at a time or it is going to get too confusing. So let's do the one change and then we will address anything else that people have towards the Budget.

Alderman Clemons

Sounds like a good idea.

Alderwoman Lu

Thank you. Alderman Dowd could you just help me understand, what is the purpose of moving it from (audio cuts out).

Alderman Dowd

It gives us more flexibility when we determine how we would want to spend that money. The Healthcare Account can handle the loss of that amount of money because of all the explanations in the June 9 Memo and further discussions that we had. And the reason is that that was available was because a lot of the things that we had anticipated paying for in health expenses, were not realized because people weren't going to the hospital for normal things because of COVID-19. We also feel that given a couple of days from now that that's also going to be the same reason that people aren't going to be rushing to the hospital under the same conditions to get what I would call normal medical things taken care of. They will put them off for a bit further, the longer they put them off, the more savings we have. It has been determined that a half million dollars would be better placed in General Contingency so we can address other things, if necessary.

Alderwoman Lu

Just a follow up, so essentially we are doing it now so we don't have to do it later.

Alderman Dowd

Easier to do it now.

Alderwoman Lu

Thank you.

John Griffin, CFO

Madam President, John Griffin, CFO. I completely understand Alderman Dowd's request. It is a little bit more complicated in that the by us putting the pensions and benefits in each Department's Budget, there is no one account that you folks would be able to reduce to end up with what Alderman Dowd is requesting. So as a suggestion I would increase the Contingency amount as Alderman Dowd suggested, but I would reduce, take \$100,000.00 out of Police and \$100,00.00 out of Fire and \$300,000.00 out of the School Appropriation for benefits and that will create the desired result. And I say that because we drew up based on actual experience, we drew up the expenses every year at the end of the year. So you will basically be reducing \$500,000.00 within the Budget from those 3-line items and you will get the desired result which will put the \$500,000.00 into Contingency. So if I could offer that, that would be recognized by our auditors and regulators and all of those folks. Thank you.

President Wilshire

Thank you, Mr. Griffin. Alderman Dowd, do you want to amend your motion to do that?

Alderman Dowd

Yes, I had had that discussion with Mr. Griffin, I thought it was going to be very confusing to people that is in essence what we are doing in this. Because those are the places where this money would anticipated have been spent but it is not going to be, we believe. And we feel confident that it hasn't been spent in the 2020 Budget so that money stayed in the Healthcare Accounts for those Departments that he just talked about. So those reductions in those Departments will not impact them and it meets the requirements of this motion so I will amend so that the language reflects what Mr. Griffin just said.

MOTION BY ALDERMAN DOWD TO AMEND SO THE LANGUAGE REFLECTS \$500,000.00 INTO GENERAL CONTINGENCY AND REDUCING \$100,000.00 FROM POLICE DEPARTMENT BENEFITS; \$100,000.00 FROM FIRE DEPARTMENT BENEFITS; AND \$300,000.00 FROM SCHOOL DEPARTMENT BENEFITS

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

Yea: Alderman O'Brien, Alderman Klee, Alderwoman Kelly, Alderman Dowd,
Alderman Caron, Alderman Clemons, Alderman Lopez, Alderman Tencza,
Alderman Jette, Alderman Schmidt, Alderman Cleaver,
Alderwoman Harriott-Gathright, Alderman Wilshire

13

Nay: Alderwoman Lu,

1

MOTION CARRIEDAlderman Dowd

The Motion is for Final Passage of R-20-023 as amended by roll call. Now I believe somebody can ...

MOTION BY ALDERMAN DOWD FOR FINAL PASSAGE OF R-20-023 AS AMENDED, BY ROLL CALLON THE QUESTIONAlderman Clemons

Thank you. I'd like to make an amendment and the Motion would be to take \$255,000.00 from Contingency and to put the \$255,000.00 from Contingency into the Fire Department Budget.

MOTION BY ALDERMAN CLEMONS TO AMEND R-20-023 BY TAKING \$255,000 FROM CONTINGENCY AND PUTTING THE \$255,000.00 INTO THE FIRE DEPARTMENT BUDGEON THE QUESTIONAlderman Clemons

And I'd like to speak to that Motion.

President Wilshire

Alderman Clemons?

Alderman Clemons

So as we have heard from the Chief and other folks, when the Budget was crafted by the Mayor, there was a \$500,000.00 cut, roughly a little bit over that, but \$500,000.00 cut from the Fire Department Budget. And we, in the Budget Committee, put \$245,000.00 back. And we did that a few motions ago by amending it – the budget – with the Golden Rod copy. So now that we have seen \$500,000.00 in additional savings from the healthcare line, which I might add a lot of that comes from the Fire Department. My opinion is we ought to make that whole so that we can have a clear conscious in voting for the Fireman's Contract. It will at least enable the funding to be there for that. That was one of the chief concerns that were brought forward was that if we don't have enough funding in the Fireman's Budget, in the Fire Department Budget, then there won't be enough money to fund the contract because we are not going to have enough money for that in next year's Budget.

So if we take \$255,000.00 which we just put into contingency, (audio cuts out) sorry about that, back into the Fire Department Budget, that money will be there and so that would be the purpose of this motion and I would hope that you all could support that. So that is the motion.

President Wilshire

The motion is to cut contingency by \$255,000.00 and add it to the Fire Department Budget, \$255,000.00. Discussion on that motion? Alderman Klee?

Alderman Klee

Thank you, Madam President. I agree wholeheartedly with Alderman Clemons. I think that the fact that we are putting this into contingency and we are not using it to reduce the taxes, I think we should make the Fire Department whole. If I remember correctly we did something similar to the Police Department with some of the amendments that we made. And I think it's just fair to kind of make them as whole as they had requested and so on. So I completely support that.

Alderman Jette

Yes, so I think Alderman Clemons is much more experienced in dealing with these budgets than I am as is Alderman Dowd. But if we keep it the way it is, in other words, if the money goes into the contingency as we just voted on and we left it there, then if, in fact, we vote to approve the Firefighter's Collective Bargaining Agreement, the money could then be transferred from contingency into the Fire Department Budget to fund that, I think. However, if we vote to put it into the Fire Department's Budget now, we are kind of putting the cart before the horse. I think we ought to wait and vote on Collective Bargaining Agreement and if that passes, then a transfer could be made. If it doesn't pass, then that money is sitting in the Fire Department Budget and it would no longer be required until a further Collective Bargaining Agreement came out of negotiations or fact finding or whatever. So I am going to vote against doing this now; I think it is premature.

President Wilshire

Anyone else? Alderman Cleaver and then Alderman Tencza.

Alderman Cleaver

I thank Alderman Clemons for this idea, I think it is a brilliant idea and I am all for it.

Alderman Tencza

So Madam President, just a point of order, a question for either Attorney Bolton or Mr. Griffin. If this amendment does not pass, what opportunity would we have if the Firefighter's Contract passes later on in the meeting to assign this money from contingency back into the Fire Department Budget.

Steve Bolton, Corporation Counsel

You do it whenever you want.

John Griffin, CFO

Control, as Attorney Bolton, as Alderman Jette indicated you do it now or you do it later. I would suggest one change. What you want to do is basically eliminate the Mayor's bottom-line cut. That's where you'd need to put a positive where there's a negative. You don't need to increase the salary lines as we reviewed a few times. That would be my only change. Thank you.

President Wilshire

Alderman Clemons, did you want to amend your motion.

Alderman Clemons

Yeah that was my intention was to make that whole or roughly whole with the \$255,000.00 but it was to restore that bottom line cut.

President Wilshire

Ok, anyone else? Alderman Dowd?

Alderman Dowd

Mr. Griffin at some point we should be transferring the money for negotiations in the Fireman's Budget just like we would with any other to the contingency negotiations account, is that correct?

Mr. Griffin

Yes, as Alderman Dowd indicated, whatever that final number is on the line inside the Fire Budget, my recommendation is to move that amount down to contingency negotiations, so it is out of the Fire Budget before it is approved by the Board of Aldermen to transfer it back into that Budget. So that makes sense Alderman Dowd.

Alderman Dowd

So whatever that number, as soon as we decide on what that number is, that amount of money should be transferred just like we always do with contract negotiations. I'm sure Alderman Clemons knows this from the past and we put it in a contingency for negotiations so that it can be strictly for negotiations.

Alderwoman Lu

Thank you. Based on that point, I want to thank Alderman Jette because I think that his reasoning makes perfect sense. If we are going to have to move it then why don't we just make one vote on this and otherwise we are going to have make another vote by the end of the evening. So I would like to suggest we go along Alderman Jette's recommendation. Thank you.

President Wilshire

Anyone else on the motion to amend. Would the Clerk please call the roll?

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

Yea: Alderman O'Brien, Alderman Klee, Alderwoman Kelly, Alderman Clemons, Alderman Tencza, Alderman Schmidt, Alderman Cleaver, Alderwoman Harriott-Gathright,	8
Nay: Alderman Dowd, Alderman Lopez, Alderwoman Lu, Alderman Jette Alderman Caron, Alderman Wilshire	6

MOTION CARRIEDPresident Wilshire

So the motion before us is for final passage of Resolution 20-023 as amended. Further discussion?
Alderman Dowd.

Alderman Dowd

Mr. Griffin, what's the amount of money that we need to make a motion to transfer into contingency for negotiations?

Mr. Griffin

That number is \$1,144,325.00.

Alderman Dowd

Ok, so I would like to make a motion to transfer \$1,144,325.00 out of the payroll line in the Fireman's Budget to Contingency Negotiations so it can be used for when the contract is settled.

MOTION BY ALDERMAN DOWD TO AMEND TO TRANSFER \$1,144,325.00 OUT OF THE PAYROLL LINE IN THE FIREMAN'S BUDGET TO CONTINGENCY SO IT CAN BE USED FOR CONTRACT SETTLEMENT FOR THE FIREFIGHTERS

ON THE QUESTION

President Wilshire

You've heard the motion, discussion on that motion? Alderman Clemons?

Alderman Clemons

Yes, I have a couple questions on that. So on this motion here, is this something that has to be done this evening or can this be done after July 1st of next year?

Alderman Dowd

I was told by Mr. Griffin that we should do it this evening, we always do it at the end of the Budget Hearing. If there is anything that came up that needs to go in Negotiation Contingency, we need to move it.

Alderman Clemons

So may I ask a further question?

President Wilshire

Alderman Clemons.

Alderman Clemons

What happens if we move this money out of the Department Budget and then the contract fails?

Alderman Dowd

It's still there for negotiations as far as I know, I don't know if somebody wants to chime in on that?

Mr. Griffin

The money would be there and would not be transferred. The amount that would be transferred would be the amount to pay for the contract in Fiscal '21.

Alderman Clemons

Could Corporation Counsel comment on that.

Attorney Bolton

If you move the money from a payroll line in the Fire Department to Contingency Negotiations and the contract before you tonight, the cost items, does not pass, the money is there and presumably at some point a Collective Bargaining Agreement will be negotiated. The cost items will pass this Board and then the money will be available for transfer into the Fire Department to meet those expenses.

Alderman Clemons

Thank you.

Alderwoman Lu

Thank you. Just curious and as August approaches, how is payroll met for that Department. Do transfers need to be made from negotiations to payroll again?

President Wilshire

Mr. Griffin can you answer that or Attorney Bolton – one of you.

Attorney Bolton

I can't. The amount left in payroll will be enough to pay the payroll at the current rate of pay. OK? The amount in Contingency Negotiations is an amount that would be available to transfer in if wages increase under a new Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Alderwoman Lu

Oh, I see, thank you.

President Wilshire

Anyone else on the motion to amend by taking \$1,144,325.00 out of the Payroll Fire Department and put it into Contingency Negotiations. That is the motion. Would the Clerk please call the roll?

Alderwoman Kelly

I'm sorry Alderman Wilshire.

President Wilshire

Alderwoman Kelly?

Alderwoman Kelly

Thank you. I just want to make sure that I fully understand what is before us here and perhaps through you to Attorney Bolton my question is, if we put this amount in but the negotiations use less, do we have to then make another motion to move it. What happens with that surplus?

Attorney Bolton

Well you don't have to. It would be available if you desired to. If it wasn't spent it would be a surplus which would be assigned to another project or could just remain in the General Fund, increasing the General Fund Balance. Or, it could be applied to reduce the amount that would have to be raised in taxes for the next Fiscal year.

Alderwoman Kelly

Ok so it's not – OK thank you, I appreciate that.

President Wilshire

Anyone else? Would the Clerk please call the roll?

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

Yea: Alderman O'Brien, Alderman Klee, Alderwoman Kelly, Alderman Dowd,
Alderman Caron, Alderman Clemons, Alderman Lopez, Alderman Tencza,
Alderwoman Lu, Alderman Jette, Alderman Schmidt, Alderman Cleaver,
Alderwoman Harriott-Gathright, Alderman Wilshire 14

Nay: 0

MOTION CARRIED

President Wilshire

The Motion before us is for final passage of Resolution 20-023 as amended; further discussion on that?
Seeing none would the Clerk please call the roll?

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

Yea: Alderman O'Brien, Alderman Klee, Alderwoman Kelly, Alderman Dowd,
Alderman Caron, Alderman Clemons, Alderman Lopez, Alderman Tencza,
Alderwoman Lu, Alderman Jette, Alderman Schmidt, Alderman Cleaver,
Alderwoman Harriott-Gathright, Alderman Wilshire 14

Nay: 0

MOTION CARRIED

Resolution R-20-023 is declared duly adopted as amended.

Alderman Dowd

Thank you everyone. We now have a passed Budget for FY2021.

R-20-026, Amended

Endorsers: Mayor Jim Donchess
Alderman-at-Large Michael B. O'Brien, Sr.
Alderwoman Linda Harriott-Gathright
Alderman Patricia Klee
Alderwoman-at-Large Shoshanna Kelly
Alderman Jan Schmidt
Alderman Richard A. Dowd
Alderman-at-Large Lori Wilshire

**ADOPTING THE 2020 CONSOLIDATED PLAN AND AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO APPLY
FOR AND EXPEND THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT ("CDBG") AND HOME
INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM FUNDS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021**

Given its second reading;

**MOTION BY ALDERWOMAN KELLY TO AMEND R-20-026 BY REPLACING IT WITH THE GOLDEN
ROD COPY OF AMENDMENTS MADE AT THE HUMAN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE, BY ROLL CALL**

ON THE QUESTIONPresident Wilshire

The Motion is to amend, discussion on that motion? Anyone? Would the Clerk call the roll?

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

Yea: Alderman O'Brien, Alderman Klee, Alderwoman Kelly, Alderman Dowd,
Alderman Caron, Alderman Clemons, Alderman Lopez, Alderman Tencza,
Alderwoman Lu, Alderman Jette, Alderman Schmidt,
Alderman Cleaver, Alderwoman Harriott-Gathright, Alderman Wilshire 14

Nay: 0

MOTION CARRIED**MOTION BY ALDERWOMAN KELLY FOR FINAL PASSAGE OF R-20-026 AS AMENDED, BY ROLL CALL**ON THE QUESTIONPresident Wilshire

Alderwoman Kelly?

Alderwoman Kelly

I would like to speak to that. Thank you, so this is just the final vote on the work that the Human Affairs Committee has been doing to allocate the CDBG Funds for the year. Thank you to Carrie Schena for all of her work in terms of what our consolidated plan would look like this year. I think the Committee did a wonderful job of really prioritizing putting a good amount towards the Rental Improvement Program, knowing that housing was one of our number one things on the Consolidated Plan. So I thank everyone for their hard work and I appreciate all that went into this.

President Wilshire

Ok the motion before us is for final passage of Resolution 20-026 as amended. Any further discussion? Would the Clerk call the roll?

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

Yea: Alderman O'Brien, Alderman Klee, Alderwoman Kelly, Alderman Dowd,
Alderman Caron, Alderman Clemons, Alderman Lopez, Alderman Tencza,
Alderwoman Lu, Alderman Jette, Alderman Schmidt, Alderman Cleaver,
Alderwoman Harriott-Gathright, Alderman Wilshire 14

Nay: 0

MOTION CARRIED

Resolution R-20-026 declared duly adopted as amended.

R-20-039

Endorser: Alderman-at-Large Lori Wilshire
Alderman-at-Large Michael B. O'Brien, Sr.
Alderman-at-Large David C. Tencza
Alderman Richard A. Dowd

AUTHORIZING PENNICHUCK CORPORATION AND PENNICHUCK WATER WORKS, INC. TO ISSUE TAXABLE BONDS OF UP TO \$75,000,000

Given its second reading;

MOTION BY ALDERMAN O'BRIEN FOR FINAL PASSAGE OF R-20-039, BY ROLL CALL

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

Yea: Alderman O'Brien, Alderman Klee, Alderwoman Kelly, Alderman Dowd,
Alderman Caron, Alderman Clemons, Alderman Lopez, Alderman Tencza,
Alderwoman Lu, Alderman Jette, Alderman Schmidt, Alderman Cleaver,
Alderwoman Harriott-Gathright, Alderman Wilshire 14

Nay: 0

MOTION CARRIED

Resolution R-20-039 declared duly adopted.

R-20-040

Endorsers: Mayor Jim Donchess
Alderman Linda Harriott-Gathright
Alderman-at-Large David C. Tencza
Alderman-at-Large Michael B. O'Brien, Sr.
Alderman Richard A. Dowd
Alderman Jan Schmidt

AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND CITY TREASURER TO BORROW FROM THE NEW HAMPSHIRE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES STATE REVOLVINGLOAN FUND AN ADDITIONAL AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED TWO MILLION FIVE HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$2,500,000) FOR PUMP STATION UPGRADES

Given its second reading;

MOTION BY ALDERMAN JETTE FOR FINAL PASSAGE OF R-20-040, BY ROLL CALL

ON THE QUESTION

President Wilshire

Alderman Jette?

Alderman Jette

And I would like to speak to it. So this is authorizing the Mayor and the City Treasurer to borrow \$2.5 million dollars for upgrading the pump stations. This is normal maintenance and normal replacement. The City Wastewater System – not every part of the City is above sea level so we need pumps to move the wastewater from low levels up to the point where it can reach the treatment plan and the river. So this is just normal, it's a lot of money but it's normal money – it's normal maintenance that has to be spend. And the State provides an opportunity to borrow this money at a low interest rate. So it makes a lot of sense for us to do this.

President Wilshire

Thank you, Alderman Jette. The motion is for final passage of Resolution 20-040. Further discussion on that motion? Seeing none, would the Clerk please call the roll?

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

Yea: Alderman O'Brien, Alderman Klee, Alderwoman Kelly, Alderman Dowd, Alderman Caron, Alderman Clemons, Alderman Lopez, Alderman Tencza, Alderwoman Lu, Alderman Jette, Alderman Schmidt, Alderman Cleaver, Alderwoman Harriott-Gathright, Alderman Wilshire	14
Nay:	0

MOTION CARRIED

Resolution R-20-040 declared duly adopted.

R-20-041

Endorsers: Alderman-at-Large David C. Tencza
Alderman-at-Large Ben Clemons
Alderman Skip Cleaver
Alderman Linda Harriott-Gathright

APPROVING THE COST ITEMS OF A COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE MAYOR AND THE BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS OF THE CITY OF NASHUA, NEW HAMPSHIRE AND LOCAL #789, INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE FIGHTERS FROM JULY 1, 2019 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2023 AND AUTHORIZING A RELATED TRANSFER AND SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION

Given its second reading;

MOTION BY ALDERMAN TENCZA FOR FINAL PASSAGE OF R-20-041, BY ROLL CALLON THE QUESTIONPresident Wilshire

Alderman Tencza?

Alderman Tencza

I'd like to speak to it, thank you. So I appreciate Mr. McAllister and the Chief being here tonight. I hope everyone had a chance to also, if they weren't at the meeting where Mr. Davidson, Chair of the Fire Commission, spoke about this contract. And also the Chief and John McAllister spoke a little bit more at length. I know we have also received a lot of some communications from members of the Fire Department about what this contract means to them and I think they have really put it into words much better than I ever could about the level of their frustration and how they are compensated versus members of the Police Department who have similar years of experience, who are earning a significant more amount of money than they are.

Both Police and Fire in our City are very well trained, very well disciplined, great Departments. And I think everyone agrees that we are very lucky to have them. In order to keep Departments and to keep people motivated and wanting to work and achieve for the City what they have achieved, I think we have to do what's right and do what's fair even when it is tough. It is tough for people to ask, especially at this time.

A couple things I just wanted to point out is that really what we are debating here tonight is a difference of 1% per year in my opinion. As the Mayor mentioned earlier, the City believes that the increase should be about 2.75% per year over four years. The Fire Department and the Union is looking for about 4% per year so we are not talking about the whole 4%; what we are talking about is just the difference, really what we are debating is just the difference between what the Fire Department is looking for and what the City has been willing to negotiate for other Union, which is a much smaller number than some of the ones that we have received throughout this process.

The other thing I'll say is that I think every year we have tough Budget cycles since – you know – this is the third time that I've been through the Budget on the Board of Aldermen and each year we hear there are expenses that are coming from either Concord pushed down on to us or unexpected expenses like the healthcare costs. Each year the City to the Mayor's credit, to Mr. Griffin's credit, to Alderman Dowd's credit and everyone else who is on the Budget Committee. Everyone works together to craft a Budget which is reasonable, which maintains services and which provides for everything that taxpayers in the City need.

So I have faith that even if we pass or even when we pass this contract for the Fire Fighters, that we will be able to continue to work on Budgets that are fair to both our employees and to the taxpayers in the City of Nashua. So I hope that people will look at this, especially after the conversation that we just had regarding the contingency funds. I hope that they will be able to support this, pass this contract tonight and let the Fire Fighters know that we appreciate them and we are willing to do what is right and fair and in their favor. Thank you.

President Wilshire

The motion is for final passage of Resolution 20-041. Further discussion? Alderman Klee?

Alderman Klee

Thank you Madam President, I want to echo what Alderman Tencza said. I have been on the Board now, this is my second term and I agree. Each year there is always something that is coming down. This year it is the devastating COVID. And the shifting of the retirement system costs and so on; it is always going to be something. I know that there was expressions used "if not now, when". But I remember last year when we were talking about the Budget itself and I sat right next to Chief Rhodes as he was talking about accepting cuts if necessary and that he would work with whatever Budget he was given. And there were some cuts and I remember him saying, "next year we can't do it, next year we can't do it". Well then the next year rolls around and we have COVID.

We did make them whole in the Budget and I appreciate Alderman Clemons stepping up and all of working to try to get that to happen. I don't think we can punish the Firefighters, I should say any employee just because of what's going on. At the same time, I don't want to see the taxes go up, I don't want to hurt our taxpayers and our residents. But sometimes we have to do the right thing and I think passing this contract is the right thing.

President Wilshire

Anyone else? Alderman Schmidt?

Alderman Schmidt

Thank you, Madam President. When you talk to citizens about what is important in the Budget they don't talk about the little things, they talk about the big things. And the big thing right now that we are dealing with is the Fireman's Contract. And it's hard because it's big but it is essential. And Alderman Tencza was right, you know, every year there's something else that comes down that is pressure on the City. I don't think there's anything that could be pressure enough to make me vote against this budget of this particular contract. It is fair, it is needed and it's timely. It has my vote, thank you.

Alderman Jette

Yes, thank you. We have all received letters and e-mails from firemen, explaining how difficult their job is and they are very compelling, well written letters and really drive home the point that they are trying to make about the risks that they face in their jobs. But at the Budget Review Committee meeting I said that certainly we should pay the firefighters fairly, we should pay all of our employees fairly. But the firefighters are asking for a 3 ½% increase per year for four years, which when you compound it, the actual cost to the City is going to be 17% over those four years.

Now if that's what it takes to pay the firefighters fairly then that's what we ought to do. We ought to find some way of coming up with that money. But at the Budget Review Committee meeting, you know, I said, you know, I looked around at other comparable departments, the Manchester Fire Department, Portsmouth Fire Department. And I saw that we are paying our firefighters more, much more than they pay theirs. That's true of Manchester Portsmouth, Concord. So the question is, certainly a cost of living increases have only been – they have been under 2% for a number of years. So what the firefighters are asking for is not just a cost of living increase, they are asking for raises. They are asking that in addition to the cost of living, that their salaries go up.

Remember, we are not just talking about whatever the cost of living increase is. I mean every position has a schedule of what people in that position are paid. And as they achieve longevity, the more years they serve, they get an increase in pay in addition to the cost of living increase. As they get promoted, they also get an increase in pay. When I look at what other Departments are paying and I see that we are paying our people more than anyone else in the State, we are also paying our people more than what they pay in a lot of the Massachusetts cities. We pay more than Worcester pays; we pay about the same as Lowell. We don't pay as much as Boston. But remember, those Massachusetts – the firefighters in Massachusetts have to pay an income tax of 5%.

I came to the conclusion that our firefighters are being paid fairly. To say that they are not being paid fairly, you'd have to say that the beginning point, the starting point, what they are getting paid now is much less than fair, much less than what they should be paid. I just don't see that the evidence is there to support that. And of all the mail and e-mails that I got and I think you all got the same e-mails, these wonderful letters about the job that the firefighters do, no one challenged me on whether or not we were the best paid Fire Department in the State. In fact, some of the letters said just the opposite, that we were the best paid and that's why they came here. That we are the best paid, the best trained, the best equipped and so to say that our firefighters are being unfairly compensated, that argument just hasn't been made to me. No one has presented any evidence to support that view.

Now if this agreement is not approved tonight, they will go back, there will be fact-finding and I think that's one of the roles of the factfinder is to look at what other Departments are paid. And if in fact we are not paying our people appropriately, that can be brought out in the factfinding and I would, if I am wrong in what I am saying, I will admit it and I will support the increase that they are looking for. But that case just has not been made. So I cannot support this agreement as it is before us tonight.

Alderman Cleaver

Yes thank you very much Madam President. We are very, very fortunate to have this tremendous firefighting professional group representing Nashua. Yes, we have the best in Northern New England and the best comes with difficult price tags sometimes, that is to say, you have to pay for what you get. And these guys do a great job, these men and women. I've seen them operate, they are well trained, they are very professional and also morale is very, very important. And to maintain that morale, to maintain that professionalism, to maintain the level of the best in Northern New England, we need to compensate them reasonably and fairly. The negotiations are over. Negotiations were taking place for months and months and months, negotiations are done. We are ready to get the contract done.

I think we need to get this contract approved to maintain morale and also to keep these guys coming back to maintain the high level of professionalism you need to attract the right people year after year, as replacements and new people. So I am strongly in favor of the contract, strongly in favor of the Union and the negotiations were reasonable, fair and let's just get it done.

Alderman Lopez

So I think I am struggling with this a little bit more than some of the other Aldermen who have spoken because while I understand what the Fire Department's value is to community, it is potentially you have two close to superheroes in the world and it is usually firefighters and police. And making sure that the firefighters are treated fairly and making sure that they are one of the municipal services that we offer at a high level of quality, I think it's essential. I mean we've been seeing like a 3,000% increase in fireworks that are being purchased and launched from urban areas. That is concerning to me because those can come down and start fires obviously. We have had a record heat wave, we had a fire in Jaffrey, we provide fire services to our City very effectively and are called upon as a regional leader as well.

So I understand the role that the firefighters have what I haven't heard a lot about is, at least during this motion, the impact that it is going to have on the taxpayers. I was not on the Board during an economic downturn, but I was working at a homeless shelter at the time and I saw what happened when people lose their homes. I saw what happened when they weren't able to make ends meet. I am very concerned about the impact that COVID-19 has had on multiple industries and across multiple sectors. I am not of the opinion that we are done with it yet. I think we are still very much likely to see another outbreak in New Hampshire. I say "another" with the understanding that we didn't have one last time; we closed down and prevented one from even happening.

There's so much that is not understood about this that I don't think this is fair to compare this to any other year. I think I heard several people say, every year is going to be a tough year. Well this year was already going to be tough year, because we had the health insurance issue. That was a big problem. And last year we narrowly managed to dodge the bullet in some ways by getting more support from the State. But I don't know that if we get ourselves into financial trouble here, we can really count on the date because I would imagine it is going to be in the same situation itself. So I am really concerned about what we are doing with the tax rate and I am really concerned about how this is going to impact taxpayers. I don't have an easy answer and I can't really come up with a specific recommendation for any other Aldermen right now, because I am still listening. Because despite my understanding of how important it is for taxpayers to be able to balance their budgets and to be able to stay in the City, that the fire department protects so carefully. You don't really have a place to stay if the fire department is slow to a call or not able to respond to something.

This is obviously a very difficult situation. I don't think it's quite as simple for me as – are firefighters good or are taxpayers good? I think we have to navigate very carefully here.

Alderman Clemons

Thank you, Madam President. So this evening, we earlier we passed a motion to put the money back into the Fire Department Budget and then we moved the appropriate amount of money out of there into contingency, in other words for this Budget if it passes the money is there. So we've done Step 1. And it wasn't going to be very easy. I remember throughout this conversation it's always been a matter of where are we going to find the money? Where are we going to find the money? And there was a couple of alternatives that I had suggested earlier where we could have bonded something in place of, or done some money shifting around and things like that. It ended up being a lot simpler and part of the reason it was a lot simpler was because we were able to save some money in the healthcare line.

A good portion of the reason why we were able to save on the healthcare line is because of the Fire Department and its employees. There was a sheet that we accepted I think at the last meeting, where it showed that the Fire Department's employees do the Lion's Share of the high deductible plan that the City

is promoting. So, you know, it is through things like that, that we have been able to come up with the money that is needed in order to support the firemen and to save money elsewhere. So I am hopeful that this will pass. I think it is a fair contract. I think that the, I look at the parity between this group of people and some of the other fire departments where pay is similar. We have the best Fire Department in my opinion and because we have the best Fire Department, we need to pay them accordingly. I don't think that what they are asking for is too much and I don't think that what we are going to have to pay them in the future is going to be detrimental to our Budget.

I was on the Board of the Aldermen, I was one of the Aldermen on the Board in an economic downturn. And not only that, but I was on the Board when there were 16 outstanding Union Contracts on the Board in 2008. And prior to that, we had a decent economy 2006/2007 it was the bubble so people were doing ok. But we had a more conservative board then and contract after contract, and I am talking years, were rejected and then 2008 came and the Board changed a little bit. We finally were able to get stuff done. We did that in 2008, 2009, 2010, right in the middle of the Great Recession. And the reason we were able to do that was because we started to look at the value that we were getting from our employee. So in other words, what is the right thing to do as far as paying them, what is the fair compensation. How can we come up with the money to afford to be able to pay for what they were asking?

In many cases it took creative financing like looking at the healthcare savings and applying that to other things, looking at the end of the year, to find the money. We have always budgeted this way and we used to do it because we were under the spending cap and we had to, we didn't have a choice. But we had to pay our employees and we had to pay them fairly. We were on the verge, I believe it was 2008 we were on the verge of a strike for the Teacher's Union; our Schools were going to shut down. And we averted that; I was on that Board that averted that. I am very proud of that. I have seen when contracts, when it looks like things might be too expensive. This is not too expensive, we will be able to manage this and we will be able to do it. What this is going to accomplish is going to get the Fire Department closer in parity to where they need to be so that in the future when they are looking for raises and they are looking for things like this and they are looking for their next contract, they won't necessarily have to come out with something as big as it is right now. They might have something more reasonable.

I say that in relative terms, because I think that this contract is reasonable. But I think what we are getting hung up on here is we are comparing it to what they have gotten in the past and what they have done in the past. And to me what they have gotten in the past hasn't made up that parity difference that they are looking for. So, in my opinion, what we have here is a very fair contract, it is something that we can afford. We have proven we can afford it for the next two years anyway out of the years that are in there because we approved the Budget earlier for it. So next year will not be a problem for the firefighters contract. The retro is retro so that's not going to be a problem either. So if we are really concerned about this, we are concerned about the out years and what I would tell some of the Aldermen who may be on the fence is that we will figure it out. And I know that that sounds like I am looking at a crystal ball, but I have been through this enough to know that when you put your priorities first, when you are doing a Budget you put your employees first and you say, these are the things that are important.

We did that with the Budget this evening and we did it very well. We had to compromise, we had to cut things, and they weren't easy cuts. But the School Department is getting its extra employees, that's important. I wasn't sold on that to begin with. I wasn't, I had to have a lot of hard conversations and you know what? I came around to it. It is something that I could support because I understand why they need it. The Firemen need us now and they need this contract passed because they need this pay increase to get them to the level where they should be in getting paid. And I think this will make up the difference and we can afford this. So I would hope that my colleagues would take a leap of faith with me, knowing that I have been there, that I've seen these things and that we will get through it and vote for this contract. So thank you.

President Wilshire

Alderman Dowd?

Alderman Dowd

Yes, as was mentioned I have received e-mails and read Facebook comments making the inference that if we don't approve the current contract that is before us that we disrespect the members of the Fire Department, we don't feel that we deserve this raise. Speaking strictly for myself this is as far from the truth and it pains me to hear it. I have always and still do respect the members of the Nashua Fire Rescue and feel proud to stand by them when I can. I fully believe that they deserve a fair raise for their continued efforts to protect the citizens of Nashua and make Nashua one of the best cities to live in this country. They have always gone the extra mile to do an outstanding job, protecting us as professionals who save lives and property daily.

Unfortunately the City of Nashua is in the middle of a pandemic through no fault of the members of Nashua Fire & Rescue and Nashua has many people out of work and many people who have taken a serious hit in their finances due to this outbreak. Many of us that are familiar with the pandemic and its financial issues understand there are so many unknowns in FY21 that we have to take a serious look at the Budget and that's why we reduced is significantly to get the proposed tax rate down from 4.5, it is around probably 3.7 and even that's high. But there are so many things that we don't know that might happen in 2021.

First of all, I want to say that if the contract passes, I won't be upset, I think you know they certainly deserve to be compensated well. However, I think that if they restructured their contract a little bit and looked towards a higher increase in 2022 and 23 when the economy is going to recover, because it has to if it doesn't we are all in more trouble. That I would be more in favor of it and still get the endpoint I think that they are shooting for or close to it.

As Chairman of the Budget we looked at the property tax rate for FY21 and as I said, it didn't look good and we've done things to try and get that impact down. Now we are hearing that we are going to have issues in 2022. But I agree with Aldermen Clemons that we need to dig our heels in and do something to reduce these impacts that we are going to feel in 2022, whatever we need to do. But this contract, just the way it is structured right now, with the percentages and the fact that the percentage increases in '20 and '21 impact pensions and other benefits that add to the cost, that's why the over all cost is about 17%. If we can just reduce that impact in the short term and help them make it up more in the long term, I would be more in favor of that. As I said, if the Board feels that they want to pass it, I am not going to be upset, I fully think the Firemen deserve an increase. I am just concerned, really concerned that if we get into FY21 and we start having issues, that we may not be able to afford the salaries that we just passed. And that's a bigger issue. I for one would not like to see that. I've been on the fence, but right now, they way it's structured and we can't do anything to change the structure of the contract it has to go back and be discussed if it's not passed, and I for one just think that restructuring a little bit and bringing it back to us would get enough support if it doesn't pass tonight. So having said that, I'll listen to anyone else, as well.

Alderwoman Kelly

Thank you, President Wilshire and thank you for the debate from everyone on the Board here. I think there have been very valid arguments on both sides with this. I want to start by saying I appreciate our firefighters very much. We are very lucky to live in Nashua where we have such an incredible force. 2020 is full of a lot of uncertainty, I think we have been living day by day and week by week in terms of what things are happening in our City, in our houses, with our own jobs. I currently, after listening to all of this cannot support something that puts us directly in a way where we are locked into a Budget that we may not be able to support in the future. I think, I am not as confident as my other Aldermen who have said that, you know, "we will figure it out".

Things are changing every single day, we are in the middle of a global pandemic and I think we have the responsibility to our taxpayers to make sure that we can sustain a reasonable tax rate. And 3.75 is nothing to you know, it's not low and we are working on it. But I think that we can't just throw caution to the wind and say we are going to pass this and figure it out later. Thank you.

President Wilshire

Anyone else? Alderman Lopez?

Alderman Lopez

I had my hand up. So I had a question for CFO Griffin if he's still here. I was just wondering, I am getting a little bit confused by the 1% raise versus the 14% raise, versus the based on the individuals who are going to individually receive more but collectively it is 1%. So I just wanted to ask CFO Griffin, the impact to the overall budget of the firefighters. We are looking at an overall firefighters compensation increase of 14% on paper but 17% in live reality. Am I getting even close to this right?

Mr. Griffin

Maybe I can help out. The way we have done cost historically is a year. I know when my predecessor Mike Gilbar was here in '08, '09, '10, they toyed with cumulative impacts. But if you look at the bottom of the cost sheet, you have that and you take the compensation per fire fighter and it is an average. It takes all of the fire fighters in the bargaining unit and divides into total compensation you get a number, that's the base year. You look down to the fourth year and that number you subtract the base number and divide by a base that's where you get the 17%.

Now as far as the numbers in the unit, they get step increases based on years of service. They get other things. But predominantly there's the base costs and then there's other salary cost and then there's retirement which is predominantly NH Retirement System and then there's the benefits.

Alderman Lopez

I just have one other question too if you don't mind because you might happen to know. Before it was referenced, Alderman Jette did some research on comparing the firefighter's fee or compensation rates to other ones in New Hampshire, I don't really have anything to doubt him. But is the goal that they are trying to reach equality with the Police Department and how does their compensation levels compare? Are the Police compensated more?

Mr. Griffin

I mean if you take, the range of difference that I see is the Police Department has two uniform officer bargaining units. The Fire Department, on the other hand, all the members are in the same bargaining unit. But I've never done an analysis dividing salaries by headcount and comparing that to Manchester or Portsmouth. I'm not sure of the analysis that Alderman Jette had performed. But I had never done an analysis like that.

Alderman Lopez

Ok it was worth a try.

Mr. Griffin

You have different ranks, on the Fire Department you have new hires; Police Department you have new hires and there are different ranks and so forth. The bargaining has taken place over decades and it's hard to compare.

Alderman Lopez

I guess my last question is the step improvements they get for being here longer, are those competitive do you happen to know, for New Hampshire?

Mr. Griffin

I wouldn't know if they are competitive, but in the particular Collective Bargaining Agreement they are laid out pretty effectively. Folks on the meeting here know a lot more about it than I do. I'm not sure if they are the same as other firefighting units in New Hampshire.

Alderman Lopez

My fault for not looking it up first. I guess for my own comments all I can say is that this isn't any easier. I am acutely aware of the irony right now that our number one disaster preparedness plan is coming into conflict with our anticipation of economic disaster. So I really don't have any idea where to go from here. Thank you, President Wilshire,

President Wilshire

Alderman Lu, did you have your hand raised?

Alderwoman Lu

Yes, I did. It's been so long though, thank you, Madam President. I just wanted to emphasize that the one really logical way of looking at this to me is just to look at apples to apples. I do see, it does look to me that over the last 10 years, this contract would put the increases over time at parity, pretty much parity with the Police Department. But I really don't think that's an appropriate way to look, I mean I think you have to look at what the actual salaries are. And I think that Alderman Jette did us a great favor by looking into, I mean I think that's the only way to assess this, is what do other Fire Departments pay? And I think that's an important question but I think that determines my feelings on this.

And I also just wanted to point out that in this Fiscal situation that we are in, I don't want anyone to feel, it's the first contract we have come upon this year since COVID-19. So it is very contentious, I mean, I would love to vote in favor of this contract. But as some point we have to exercise our Fiscal restraint, I feel. I wish it was a shorter contract, because then there would be less risk there. But it is not a punishment, ok? Whatever we decide, if we were to vote against it, I just want to emphasize that there's no punishment here at all. For me, it's looking at cost of living increases and are you asking for more than that. And if you are, then we have to weigh that against the people who are paying these salaries. And if they are not getting a comparable cost of living increase in their salary, which we pretty much know no one is, then why should we fund this? Thank you.

Alderman O'Brien

Thank you, Madam President. I speak on using compatibility but I am going to choose not to. I will reserve my comments of comparing to the end because I really do have an issue with apples and oranges. I know the difference. Thank you.

Alderman Tencza

Thank you, Madam President. Just to clarify a few comments and questions that were asked before. First, this would not bring parity between the Police Department and Fire Department. Over the years, the Board of Aldermen have raised the salaries for the Police Department for the Police Patrolmen's Union at a greater rate than they have for the Fire Department. So a second-year officer in the City of Nashua right now is going to make more than someone who has been on the Fire Department for 4 years.

And even if we pass this, that is still going to be the case. The Fire Fighters are not looking to compare apples to oranges but they are, I think they are pointing that out in a way so that we can understand why they feel that this is a fair deal for them.

The other thing I would say is that in response to Alderwoman Lu's comments, you know, I don't think we can look and think and compare what everyone else's cost of living increase is going to be. But I think if we look at the level of service that the Fire Department has provided for the City, and the increased number of calls and extra responsibilities that they have taken on over the last 5 years without asking for anything more and with just agreeing to just a cost of living increase. I have no doubt that they will continue to do that going forward regardless, because they are professional and that's who they are. But I just wanted to clarify that this will not bring parity, it may move pay rates a little bit closer, but the Police Department would still be paid more than firefighters with comparable years of experience.

Alderman Clemons

Thank you, Madam President. In regards to a comment that was made earlier about throwing fiscal responsibility to the wind, I just want to state for the record that this is the opposite of that. We know what the costs are going to be because the contract states them. With the Fire Department, we know how many employees they have at one given time because there's a minimum number of employees that they need to have in order to maintain a fire company. So we can fairly accurately budget this for year to year. The other thing is the other Departments in the City have a lot of flexibility and a lot of different demands and needs, so a lot of times they can balance their budgets on the back of vacancies and things like that. It's much harder to do with the Fire Department.

I think that it is important that we all understand that we have the cost in front of us. And the fact is, that this is a retroactive contract if it were to be passed. So it would take care of 2020, we just passed the Budget for 2021 so we know that those two years would be taken care of. So really the question is, can we afford it for the outlying years and my thought of that is, yes we can. We have done it before in the past and we can certainly do it in the future. I would encourage my colleagues to vote yes.

Alderman Klee

Thank you, Madam President. I think a lot has been said about parity and so on and I've never been one to want to compare one person to another so I am going to leave that conversation to others. I do want to make a comment, please anybody correct me if I am wrong, but in my homework that I've been doing, one of the things that I've found which was quite surprising to me was that the firefighters don't get overtime until they hit 52 hours, unlike other employees when they hit 40 hours they will get overtime. But for the firefighters, it's not until they hit 52 hours.

The other thing is that steps don't happen every year, they happen every 5 years, and where this is a 4 year contract, there may actually be some people that aren't going to be getting steps during this time. I understand where Mr. Griffin is coming with the 17% because he's very good at his job and I'm sure he's calculated that based on the employees that will be getting steps. So I am not to disagree with that; but I just want that to be known to the public that these are some of the information that we don't see as part of the contract that is there.

I also don't disagree with anything that Alderman Jette said about the other – Concord, Portsmouth and so on and that we are above those. I did a superficial and I apologize for not getting more detail when I went to Concord and talked there, I want to say the Fire Commission but I don't think that's what it is. But I asked them to kind of give me a general feeling as to where Nashua's payroll was, the equity of pay and so on. They told us for New Hampshire, we were right down the middle. So I know that's probably comparing us to some towns and so on. But I looked at us as being one of the best Fire Departments in the State as far as I was concerned and yet our pay fell more towards mid-line. They may be higher than what Portsmouth or Manchester and so on but Manchester is a much bigger – I don't know the size of Portsmouth or even Concord. That's all I wanted to say I think.

Alderman Jette

Yes, thank you Madam President. I just want to clarify where I got my information. So all of these Collective Bargaining Agreements are available on-line. So you can go to I think the State has all of the Collective Bargaining Agreements through all the cities and towns in New Hampshire. And each City has available on its web site. So that's where I got my information. I looked at the proposed Collective Bargaining Agreement that's before us. There's a – I don't remember what the appendix number is – but there's a schedule showing what the range of pay is. And for firefighters in Nashua the range is from \$52,460.00 to \$69,757.00. And in Manchester it's \$44,650.00 to \$63,661.00. So they are a lot lower than us. In Portsmouth the range is \$43,899.00 to \$57,362.00. In Nashua, Lieutenants their range goes from \$82,000.00 to \$90,000.00. In Manchester, it's \$55,000.00 to \$78,000.00. In Nashua, Captains earn from \$91,000.00 to \$99,000.00 and in Manchester it's \$67,000.00 to \$95,000.00.

So I don't pretend to be an expert on labor statistics, but that's where I got my information and I said this at the Budget Review Committee and no one contacted me since then and said, "hey you screwed up, you got your numbers wrong" or "you interpreted them wrongly". No one has said that. That may be true, maybe I am way off base here, but based upon the numbers that I reviewed, I came to the conclusion that our firefighters are being paid fairly and certainly not being paid unfairly. And when you look at how our Fire Department is rated in the State, I think everybody agrees it is the top Fire Department in the State if not New England.

Now when you look at our schools, our schools don't fare so well. How we rate Statewide, in a Statewide comparison we are nowhere near the top. What we spend per pupil is way less than the average, not only less than other comparable cities and towns, we don't even spend the average statewide, the average amount So if there's an area that needs help in this City, to achieve more parity, I would suggest it is the schools not the Fire Department. Thank you.

President Wilshire

Alderman Kelly did you want to weigh in again?

Alderwoman Kelly

No I just never lowered my hand, thank you.

President Wilshire

Ok. Alderman Klee?

Alderman Klee

Thank you, Madam President. Alderman Jette if you thought that I was stating that your numbers weren't correct, please understand I will say this to the public, I was not disputing your numbers under any circumstances. I was just saying that I didn't do as well of homework as you had done. And I just had a general comment about throughout the entire State that we were paid more in the middle than being at the highest rate. So my apologies to you if you felt that I was being critical of your comments; I absolutely was not.

But I did want to make one more comment about something that I forgot about the steps and that is while they are contract wise, they don't have a contract sort to speak no one is getting steps either. So that is something that we should be keeping in mind is while they are not, while they don't have a signed contract there are members that aren't getting steps that were due steps this past year.

President Wilshire

Anyone else? Seeing none, the motion is for Final Passage of Resolution 20-041 by roll call?

Attorney Bolton

Madam President, I think it is worth pointing out that this measure requires a 2/3 majority to pass.

President Wilshire

Thank you. Ok, would the Clerk call the roll?

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

Yea: Alderman Klee, Alderman Clemons, Alderman Tencza, Alderman Schmidt, Alderman Cleaver, Alderwoman Harriott-Gathright,	6
Nay: Alderwoman Kelly, Alderman Dowd, Alderman Lopez, Alderwoman Lu, Alderman Jette, Alderman Caron, Alderman Wilshire	7
Present: Alderman O'Brien	1

MOTION FAILED

Alderman Clemons

Madam President?

President Wilshire

Alderman Clemons.

Alderman Clemons

That's out of order. We haven't disposed of the Fire Fighter's contract.

President Wilshire

Ok, you're right. What is the Committee's pleasure, the Board's pleasure?

Alderman Tencza

Madam President, just a point of order. Well maybe Corporation Counsel can advise us on what is the next necessary step because my understanding is that now the contract has to go back to the Board of Fire Commissioners for reconsideration.

Alderwoman Kelly

Madam President?

President Wilshire

Alderman Kelly.

Alderwoman Kelly

Please correct me if I'm wrong, but I think we either have the chance to indefinitely postpone or table in order for them to go back, we would need to table. Is that correct?

President Wilshire

I'm going to let Corporation Counsel weigh in here.

Attorney Bolton

If you table it remains within your authority, you have not fully resolved it. But what you will do is you will go past the 30 day time limit for your consideration, which theoretically could result in an unfair labor practice complaint being brought that we would lose because you are supposed to dispose of it one way or the other in 30 days. So typically what would be done in a case like this is someone would move to indefinitely postpone and if the vote follows what the previous vote, follows the same path, it will be indefinitely postponed and essentially its back to the Union on one side and the Board of Fire Commissioners on the other side to negotiate a different proposal.

President Wilshire

Do I have a Motion?

MOTION BY ALDERWOMAN KELLY FOR INDEFINITE POSTPONEMENT OF R-20-041

ON THE QUESTION

President Wilshire

Discussion on that motion? Alderman Klee?

Alderman Klee

Thank you, so the indefinite postponement allows it to go back for them to negotiate it if we tabled it then that's not allowed to go back?

President Wilshire

That's right.

Alderman Klee

Thank you.

Alderman Lopez

I have a question.

President Wilshire

Alderman Lopez?

Alderman Lopez

Just for Attorney Bolton, you frequently say we can do whatever we want, can't we just send it to the Fire Commissioners, vote to refer it back to them?

Attorney Bolton

Well you can do that but it would be illegal.

Alderman Schmidt

No, we don't want to do that.

Alderman Dowd

Chief Carignan is on-line, he can take care of you Tom.

Alderman Lopez

Can we refer it to Attorney Bolton and then he does whatever must be done. I'm sorry I just didn't want to indefinitely postpone it because it is not my intention, but apparently the lawyers use language that isn't exactly what we want.

President Wilshire

The motion is for indefinite postponement. Further discussion on that motion. Would the Clerk call the roll?

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

- Yea: Alderman Klee, Alderwoman Kelly, Alderman Dowd, Alderman Lopez, Alderman Tencza, Alderwoman Lu, Alderman Jette, Alderman Schmidt, Alderwoman Harriott-Gathright, Alderman Wilshire 10
- Nay: Alderman Clemons, Alderman Cleaver 2
- Present: Alderman O'Brien 1

MOTION CARRIED

Resolution R-20-041 is indefinitely postponed.

R-20-043

- Endorsers: Alderman-at-Large Lori Wilshire
- Alderman-at-Large Michael B. O'Brien, Sr.
- Alderman Richard A. Dowd
- Alderman Patricia Klee
- Alderman-at-Large David C. Tencza
- Alderman Linda Harriott-Gathright
- Alderman Thomas Lopez
- Alderman Brandon Michael Laws

AUTHORIZING PENNICHUCK CORPORATION AND PENNICHUCK EAST UTILITY, INC. TO ENTER INTO A TERM LOAN AND RENEW A FIXED ASSET LINE OF CREDIT WITH COBANK, ACB

Given its second reading;

MOTION BY ALDERMAN CLEAVER FOR FINAL PASSAGE OF R-20-043, BY ROLL CALL

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

Yea:	Alderman O'Brien, Alderman Klee, Alderwoman Kelly, Alderman Dowd, Alderman Caron, Alderman Clemons, Alderman Lopez, Alderman Tencza, Alderwoman Lu, Alderman Jette, Alderman Schmidt, Alderman Cleaver, Alderman Harriott-Gathright, Alderman Wilshire	14
Nay:		0

Resolution R-20-043 declared duly adopted.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS – ORDINANCES**O-20-017**

Endorsers: Alderwoman-at-Large Shoshanna Kelly
**AUTHORIZING FREE PARKING AT METERS AND PAY STATION SPACES THROUGH
 NOVEMBER 15, 2020**
 (Tabled at May 21, 2020 BOA mtg)

NEW BUSINESS – RESOLUTIONS - None

NEW BUSINESS – ORDINANCES - None

PERIOD FOR GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

REMARKS BY THE MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF ALDERMEN

Alderman O'Brien

Thank you. What I alluded to earlier, I think comparing one Fire Department to another and I am speaking from 35 years' experience in firefighting. The comparison kind of made me chuckle. I have a cousin that was Battalion Chief in the 12 Battalion on FDNY in New York City and he served in Harlem. I think he would laugh to see the comparison to somebody say, "well in another part of New York, Staten Island that the fire is affected by some other physical vortex that they are hotter in Staten Island than they are in Harlem". They are not, fires occur and they occur in every single community. So when you start comparing, what Alderman Jette brought up, and that's true, you can go on-line and you can look. But I wonder if Alderman Jette looked at Manchester.

Now Manchester is a community probably us and Manchester a population, they might have 20,000 people more than we do. They also have, probably square mileage, possibly may two square than we do. Yet, Manchester covers their City with 11 engine companies and 4 ladder companies. In comparison, the City of Nashua minus the 20,000 people and the square mileage, covers that duty with only 6 engine companies and 3 ladder companies. The workload in the City of Nashua is much greater for our Firefighters than they are in Manchester. Yet, those facts were never really brought up and that's the danger, in my opinion, of the comparison. Each community puts a value on what they want to pay in fire protection. And 32 years ago, the City of Nashua spent taxpayers money on a Fire Report that said we needed 2 more additional engine companies.

We had a meeting, come up with a development in the northern part of the City in the Tinker Road area; granted they are covering that area now. But the more that you build, and let's look what we built, we built down on Marshall Street, Loft 34 down on Franklin Street. All these buildings that we have now, and living spaces put up, create more traffic so there's car accidents. More people are going to have heart attacks so there is medical emergencies and there's also those calls with a type of building fire. So it is kind of dangerous when you compare.

And then also was not brought up with the contract agreement, what is the life of the Manchester agreement? It seemed pretty much pretty close; is it up this year? Would they get more money when they go into their negotiations? So it is kind of really challenging to really compare the fire departments. I encourage everybody on this Board to look at that original Five Pro Report and weigh the balance. I think previous Boards and Mayors have not really treated this Fire Department fairly and I can speak from my experience. Where are the two additional engine companies that were suggested in the early 80's? They are not here. Yet the Fire Department still answers the call volume. We've got engine companies that are doing 3,000 runs a year and on top of that, this City asked them to step to the plate to do the Safe Stations. And they did it. And then also too, when COVID came in, there was not enough masks to put the face covering on the firefighters, what they wore were bandanas in the beginning and saved the masks for the patients. And yes, they went into the homes where the people actually had COVID. Everybody that got transported to the hospital, the first person that they saw was a member of an engine or a ladder company of the Nashua Fire & Rescue that came in to assist them.

Taken all of that into account, it is apples and oranges and it goes back to what I said earlier. It is what you or I, the value of each of us in the community and what you want to put on your fire department, what it is worth. It is the same with the schools, same with the police department. I am disappointed that this Board took a duly, fairly negotiated contract that was with the City of Nashua and with Local 789 of the Fire Fighters, it was agreed by both parties. I am very disappointed that this evening we sent it, cast the ropes off, and cast the contract to drift. Yes it has a procedure, it will go back and it depends on what the level of comfort is going to be and what you're going to pay or what you feel is paid.

I think Alderman Tencza did bring up a very good point in the discussion and I thank him for doing so. I don't think the Firefighters are looking for parity, and I know that they are not looking for parity with the Police Department. But there is many discrepancies and I think if you look at what the Police Officers are paid, I think Alderman Klee brought up a very good point. It refers back to the Garcia Decision. What the Garcia Decision said that a municipality does not have to pay overtime until 56 hours. The Fire Department did negotiate it down from 56 to 52. If you own a business in the City of Nashua, Federal Law says you've got to pay overtime after 40 hours, but for some reason in the Garcia Decision, it said that – well it said 56 hours and the Firefighters like I say negotiated it down to 52.

As we look over to our very well qualified and great Police Department, they are on the clock at 40 hours, they get time and a half. If you look at Manchester and I wish Alderman Jette would look at that. I think Manchester also gets paid shift overtime at time and a half. If you ever wonder why the firefighters do not call extra shift duty overtime, it's because they don't get overtime pay. They call it shift coverage and that's reflecting on the amount of pay that we are paying them. So there's many different things, I think now when it goes back to negotiation, I kind of hope that the parties will come to an agreement and bring up some of the disparities and hopefully get to correct some of the misinformation that was not entirely put out there.

And like I say, I hope in the future that when we look at things, there is a difference in the Fire Service and the Police Department, I think as we see in the troubles that are out there today. I think we have a very good Police Department. I have seen other communities that have done very bad things, cops that have done bad things. To say that they are all same is wrong. And I would agree with that completely. In comparing the two Fire Departments together, it is up to us to decide what we want to do.

So Madam President, thank you for – I could not say this because – and let me clearly say if I had my chance to vote I would have voted for that contract. It was duly negotiated and fairly by the City and the Local. By due to my son, the reason is that my son is on the Fire Department and because of - I challenge and I will challenge the future of my vote because I got elected to vote. And I feel that Charter needs to be changed that we all vote.

Some of us have other things that we are close ties. Many members of this Board were on the School Department, yet they strongly support the School Department, I do as well. But to say that where you were on the School Board, does that affect you and your way of thinking. I think right now the Charter is a little bit too tight and too restrictive on that. And I do have the common sense in my 35 years of experience of firefighting to make an informed decision on what we qualify is adequate fire protection for the City. Unfortunately, the Charter did not allow me to express my opinion. So Madam President, thank you for this opportunity to speak, thank you.

President Wilshire

You bet. Alderman Klee.

Alderman Klee

Thank you, Madam President. I wanted to make a comment that actually has little to do with this, our meeting today and yet in some respects does. Last night the county met and we did our Budget for the County and I am really happy to say that we passed a budget that is increased but there will be no tax increase. So nothing will be coming down to the residents here in Nashua or actually anywhere in our County anyways. We were able to do a zero increase on the tax rate so that's one tiny little bit of help for our taxpayers, thank you.

Alderman Lopez

So I guess first I just want to comment that I agree with Alderman O'Brien, I wish I had some of the information that he has in the conversation. I think I was one who started the parity aspect because I understood some of the earlier comments to be saying that there were goals that the firefighters were trying to reach. But I don't know what those are, I am not aware of a strategic funding plan or anything like that. So I did not have all of the information that I needed in that particular area, so I think set everybody off on a wild goose chase. My impression was that there was an understanding that there's certain levels the firefighters were trying to reach and that they were potentially able to work somewhere else and I did not understand exactly what was being referred to. So I apologize, the only information that I really had to work with was Alderman Jette's numbers. I appreciate the work that he did in researching it and I had no doubt when they were brought up that he would have them sitting on the desk.

So there is plenty of good information that was shared, although I don't think I had a complete picture. So I have received plenty of letters and e-mails regarding how important it is for the firefighters to be compensated in Nashua and the importance of their job and even some stories of people that I know being pulled out of fires. But I didn't hear that part; the goals and what they are trying to do and how this might affect their cost of living and that kind of stuff. So I would appreciate that being sent in my direction so that whatever negotiation process happens between the Fire Commission and the Union, I am able to approve it. Because as far as I am concerned, I am not in the negotiation process; I get whatever their agreement is sent here. I don't think the Mayor was particularly in favor of it, he made some reasonable points about funding. I never really disagreed over whether the Fire Department deserved a certain level of pay; my concern was whether we would literally have it if other issues started to come up over the next couple of months that we can't anticipate.

So I don't know when that's going to happen, I do know that the negotiation can continue at least in the appeals format. So I would like to see that come back and figure out what to do with it when that does. I would like to make some comments to the public.

There were some pretty recent announcements made with regards to COVID-19 and how it behaves in Public Health fields and in Medical Fields where a number of medical studies that typically take a long amount of time and don't happen, you know, happen long before outbreaks of new diseases hit the US, were still taking place. So we still don't really know exactly what COVID-19 even does to your system. I was looking, based on some of these papers, more like it attacks your arteries, your blood system, your heart and there are neurological impacts too that you can COVID-19, you can be asymptomatic and you could still have long-term impact.

You can get COVID-19 and you are not immune a couple of months later. There are still a lot of really strange things going on with this disease and as much as we have been working to support businesses and get people back out into downtown and working, where we go from here is probably going to be a result of how people treat that situation. I know that it's very hot in the kitchen and that people working in the kitchen don't like to wear masks. I know that other people may take their masks off or lose them or find them uncomfortable and all I can say is that the two states that had the highest numbers of fatalities and infection, now have the lowest transmission rate explicitly because they have face mask ordinances. New York and Massachusetts have basically stopped it in its track and are very effectively managing what was a catastrophic situation, because they are taking that step. So earlier we were talking about Dancing in the Streets, I was like, "I'm not going to go". I have that opinion and I am not going to go into any crowds right now if I can avoid them. I am going to be very careful with how I wear my mask. I don't even take it off when I am walking down Main Street; that is a personal choice, that's not required by the Ordinance. But I don't know who is going to come walk up to me randomly and start talking to me. And more than once it has been somebody coming up to say, "hey you don't need to wear your mask on the sidewalk" and I'm like, "well now I do, like back up a little".

So we are still learning a lot and I know people are frustrated with this they are really exasperated but you need to be listening to public health officials. You can't be debating with them all the time. You need to listen to restaurant owners who are trying to maintain their business. I don't want to see restaurants close again and I don't want to see another period of lock down. I don't think we can handle it. So I just ask everybody to be very careful with you are treating it.

And then also I don't know if the other Aldermen are experiencing this, but fireworks are booming literally. With the Fire Department pay being negotiated, I feel like it's only fair not to put them in a situation of dealing with more fire danger than necessary. If people could show a little bit more consideration about how they are celebrating randomly, I think it would be well appreciated by many. I would like to point out that the 4th of July Fireworks run by the City are cancelled and that means there's no schedule for veterans or people with PTSD to be aware that they need to be shielding the ears or doing something or distracting themselves. So popping off fireworks at 3:00 in the morning or whenever you feel like it, there are people living all around you and it's not fair to them.

So I appreciate all the patience everybody has had up to this point with the COVID-19. I think largely our results here in New Hampshire where we haven't had any community-based transmission really, we've just had outbreaks in the long term care facilities, that was you. That was because you went home and you stayed home and you made sacrifices. I don't want it to be for nothing. I mean I know that everybody has the instinct that they just want to move on but I don't think we are ready to do that yet. Thank you.

Alderman Clemons

Thank you, Madam President. So a little bit of a lighter note to go with what Alderman Lopez just said. I was in a gas station the other day and these two guys, workers whatever, were in there. And they didn't have a mask and the attendant said, "Oh can you please put your mask on" and he said, "Oh I thought we were in New Hampshire" and we didn't have to do that. And she explained "Oh we have a City Ordinance" and the guy said, "Oh well I guess that's better than Mask-achusetts". And I thought that was kind of funny because people tend to think that New Hampshire is a little bit more of the Live Free or Die but there is a reason that they call Nashua, Nashua-achusetts. So I just thought that was amusing.

But I will say that I was disappointed with the vote this evening, I thought we had a fair contract in front of us. We had folks like Don Davidson a Fiscal Conservative himself supporting the contract. You had lots of people that from all sides really, saying that it was a fair deal and that it is a shame that it went down., particularly because we put money into the Budget to support that. We would have been able to fund it for this year. We will see what the Mayor does, if he is going to Veto the Budget and have that come back to us, I guess that remains to be seen.

I was proud of the work that the Budget Committee did, I think that we definitely took a Budget that was pre-COVID and we really pared it down by almost \$2 million dollars out of it. I think that, you know, that's not an easy task. I was happy that the Police Department is going to be fully funded and they are going to have their employees that they need. We didn't de-fund the Police in Nashua, we funded the Police in Nashua and I am proud that we did that.

We also took care of our School Department and we put some money, lots of money in there, we got money from the State. They are going to hire 17 new employees. I hope that those employees stay on next year considering we are going to be facing a 7% tax increase and it seems most of the Board is worried about next year. I happen to think that they will make it through. But I was very disappointed in the fact that while we took care of our Police Department and we took care of our School Department, we neglected the Fire Department. I thought that was a shame. I hope that when they go back to the negotiating table, as far as the Budget is concerned, we put \$1 million dollars, over a million dollars in contingency there for negotiations so there's some money to work with and hopefully they can come up with a deal that uses that money and get some well needed raises to get those folks what they deserve. Thank you very much.

Alderwoman Kelly

Thank you, Madam President. So I have just a few remarks, I know it's getting late here. I wanted to first thank you for taking into consideration changing the format so that we could take public comment virtually. I think it worked out well and I appreciate you making that adjustment for everybody. Secondly, I wanted to say thank you to Great American Downtown for an amazing first Farmer's Market. There were a ton of Nashuans out just enjoying what was put on there and there were plenty of complimentary comments around the new location by City Hall. So that was a really great event, I am looking forward to – I think it's like 17 more weeks. So make sure you come out on Sundays 10 to 2 at the City Hall Plaza. There are plenty of really great vendors.

Lastly, the Pride Committee is really proud to be able to put on a virtual pride this Saturday from 2 to 4. It will be available through our Facebook as a livestream. It will be on Nashua Community Television Channel 16, Access Channel 96 and through the City of Nashua Web Site as well. Don't miss it, there's an incredible group of people who have come forward from speakers to talent and it just going to be an incredible event, so I hope you all can tune in.

Alderwoman Lu

Thank you, Madam President. I just have three comments I'd like to make. First of all, some of the correspondence we've received (audio cuts out) meetings, correspondence has concerned me, particularly regarding the Assessor's Department. And I wonder if it would be a good time, we haven't had an update from the Assessor's Department in awhile and I wonder if we could hear from them possibly at the next meeting.

I just wanted to comment on the concern, I really wish that Alderman O'Brien had been able to express his arguments prior to the vote. It would have been (audio cuts out). I also just want to express that unfortunately, you know, I hate hearing that the Fire Department had to work without proper equipment, the proper masks. But I think that is an argument, you know, a complaint that's reasonable, but not really a basis for a raise. Certainly we should try to make that not happen in the future. Thank you.

Alderman Jette

Yes, thank you, Madam President. I too want to thank you and compliment you for arranging for public comment. It was kind of disappointing that nobody from the public, I don't know if they couldn't figure out how to do it or just weren't interested, just a couple of employees who took advantage of it. But thank you for doing that.

Also, I took Alderman O'Brien's invitation to look more closely at Manchester and I know he's going to accuse me of comparing apples and oranges again, maybe this is a grapefruit. When I look at the total budget for Manchester's Fire Department, it is \$21 million dollars. Nashua's is \$27 million dollars. So we are spending \$6 million more on our Fire Department than Manchester is. I don't pretend to know what the significance of that is I just find it interesting. And I am sure that the Firefighters and the Union and the Commissioners will, in the future, provide us with more data more information about wages and why they feel that they are being unfairly compensated; and I look forward to hearing that. Thank you.

Alderman Tencza

Madam President, sorry just very quickly and I am disappointed by the comments about not having more information about the Fire Fighter's Contract because there was a much longer public hearing where a lot of that information was shared with us, not specifically as it relates to Alderman Jette's concerns about comparing the different cities and towns. But I mean I'll just say that I think the point of our meetings are not to rehash everything that is said in the Committee meetings, but I think it would behoove members of the Board if there is an important or something that they have questions about and look at the work that the Committee did especially in this case where there was a negative recommendation by the Committee, because I think that might have answered a lot of folks questions on this issue, at least. Thank you.

Alderman Cleaver

Yes, I would like to say that year after year Nashua is recognized as one of the safest cities in the country. There's two really good reasons for that; one is our excellent Police Department. They do a fantastic job and everybody recognizes that. And the other reason, of course, is the Fire Department, they do an equally great job and I am very disappointed in the outcome of the vote. I think they deserve this contract, they negotiated in good faith with the City and we don't want to rehash that again. But I just wanted to point out that parity is a good thing, there's no reason why the Fire Fighters who face the dangerous job should not be near parity with the Police Department. I don't think that should be a negative at all.

The other thing that I wanted to point out having created a lot of road races and events over the years, the Police get detail money over time money a lot with construction and other things. Firefighters don't have that opportunity, even though they might be called out for a broken leg or whatever happens during the event, they don't get money for the details. That makes a lot of extra money for the Police Officers, which they deserve. But when you look at parity, there's a lot of different angles to look at. So thank you very much.

President Wilshire

I just want to say that this was a difficult vote for me, I've always been a supporter of our Fire Department. It wasn't about the Fire Department, my vote – it was about the affordability of a contract, no matter whose it was. I have the utmost respect for our Fire Department.

Alderman Harriott-Gathright

I too was sort of disappointed with the decision that was made tonight, because I remember when the Chief talked about, you know, the training and all that our firefighters get that basically it doesn't mean that those other fire departments are getting that same type of training and on the job type of training as well as going away for training.

And I think that the equipment that they are afforded each year, because we do give equipment and everything, that it also helps with the firefighters and what they have to do. The fact that they are also used by other cities, they help wherever necessary, I just feel that we sort of let them down. And I do understand the issue around money, that I do understand very well. But I also heard all the testimony over several years how we have not given them. And with that said, I think that we all should be ashamed of ourselves because it is just snowballing over and over again. I can't say exactly where the money is supposed to come from or what we need to do, but we have done an injustice to them not just this year but previous years. Thank you.

Committee announcements:

Alderman O'Brien

Thank you, Madam President. As you know, we have a Special Board of Aldermen Meeting tomorrow night and immediately following we are going to jump right in to Infrastructure. Many of the things that are on the Agenda for the Special Aldermen's Meeting will be discussed immediately afterwards in the Infrastructure Agenda. So please, stick around. You are more than welcome. Also to the public, what is, we are expecting a presentation from Director Marchant for renovations to the Transit Center Plaza located at 30 Elm Street behind City Hall. The renovations will include the updates for the plaza, the transit center building and bus platform. So any of our citizens that use that facility, please tune in tomorrow night and catch the presentation. And the meeting is at 7:00 correct? Thank you.

Alderman Dowd

Yes, Thursday night Joint Special School Building Committee Meeting, 7:00 – on-line meeting. I just wanted to quickly state that we have commenced work at Fairgrounds Middle School. If you by there, you will see the construction trailer, the area has been marked off for the portables that will be needed and they are in the back of the school and they will be starting with the new security enhancements in the front of the school. And very shortly thereafter we will be moving over and starting at Pennichuck as well. So a lot of work going on and we will be approving some vendors contracts Thursday night.

Alderman Tencza

PEDC will be meeting Monday night, it's actually a public hearing to discuss the Ordinance relating to umbrellas on Main Street.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION BY ALDERMAN O'BRIEN THAT THE JUNE 23, 2020, MEETING OF THE BOARD OF ALDERMEN BE ADJOURNED BY ROLL CALL

A viva voce roll call was taken to adjourn the Board of Aldermen meeting which resulted as follows:

Yea:	Alderman O'Brien, Alderman Klee, Alderwoman Kelly, Alderman Dowd, Alderman Caron, Alderman Clemons, Alderman Lopez, Alderman Tencza, Alderwoman Lu, Alderman Jette, Alderman Schmidt, Alderman Cleaver, Alderman Harriott-Gathright, Alderman Wilshire	14
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Nay:		0
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MOTION CARRIED

The meeting was declared adjourned at 11:06 p.m.

Attest: Susan K. Lovering, City Clerk