

**Rochester City Council Workshop
October 16, 2018
Council Chambers
7:12 PM**

COUNCILORS PRESENT

Councilor Abbott
Councilor Bogan
Councilor Gates
Councilor Gray
Councilor Hamann
Councilor Keans
Councilor Lachapelle
Councilor Lauterborn
Councilor Torr
Councilor Walker
Councilor Varney
Mayor McCarley

OTHERS PRESENT

Blaine Cox, City Manager
Terence O'Rourke, City Attorney
Gregg DeNobile, Resident
Paul Martin, Resident
Larry Cocarus, Resident
Sandy Averill, Resident
Ray Barnett, Resident

COUNCILORS EXCUSED/ABSENT

Councilor Hutchinson

Minutes

1. Call to Order

Mayor McCarley called the City Council Workshop meeting to order at 7:12 PM. Deputy City Clerk Cassie Givara took a silent roll call. All councilors were present except for Councilor Hutchinson, who was excused.

2. Public Input

Mayor McCarley invited members of the public to come forward and address the Council.

Gregg DeNobile, resident, spoke about proposed amendments to Chapter 23 regarding Fire Code, the City purchase of private land, and usage of the new Department of Public Works building.

Paul Martin, resident, addressed Council about City processes in regards to right-to-know requests and having citizen documentation added to the public record.

Larry Cocarus, resident, spoke about the general fund increase being used to offset taxes.

Sandy Averill, resident, addressed Council in regards to code violations on private single-family properties.

Ray Barnett, resident, spoke about impact fees and methodology of water bill fees.

3. Communications from the City Manager

3.1. Adopt-a-Spot Awards

City Manager Cox gave an overview of how the Adopt-a-Spot program works and advised anyone interested in participating in the program to contact Public Buildings at 335-7563

City Manager Cox presented certificates to the Adopt-a-Spot participants present.

4. Communications from the Mayor

None

5. Department Reports

Councilor Keans stated she had been receiving phone calls in regards to code compliance. She requested a breakdown on types of code violations being issued.

City Manager Cox said he would reach out to Jim Grant, Director of Building, Zoning and Licensing and Joe Devine, Code Compliance Officer, and have them present a more detailed report on what these violations entail.

Councilor Walker pointed out that the Codes report in the packet showed the bulk of the violations were in wards 4 and 6, the older parts of the City. Councilor Walker expressed concern that the Code violations were being issued to elderly or low-income residents for items such as chipped paint or missing shingles.

Mayor McCarley suggested having Codes and Building, Zoning and Licensing make a presentation at the next City Council workshop meeting.

6. Other

Councilor Gray spoke about the School Department's budget which exceeded the tax cap. He spoke about the approximately \$1,500,000.00 which is being returned to the City and which the City intends to place into undesignated fund balance. This will bring the undesignated fund balance to 18%, which the City Charter states is a surplus.

Councilor Gray discussed Council using this opportunity to take a look at how these funds could be used to offset the tax rate for Rochester citizens.

Councilor Varney stated that although the tax cap was overridden, it was not exceeded by as much as it should have been. The City diverted almost \$900,000 from host fee accounts to offset taxes which now needs to be paid back. This is typically done with a surplus from previous year's budgets. There have been expensive projects that have come up in past years which have been paid for through fund balance. Councilor Varney stated that using these funds to offset the tax rate would just artificially lower the current rate and cause a greater tax increase in the future to make up the difference.

7. Non-Public/Non-Meeting

Councilor Lauterborn **MOVED** to enter a Non-Public Session under Land, RSA 91-A:3 II (d) and Personnel 91-A:3 II (a) at 7:53 PM. Councilor Lachapelle seconded the motion. The **MOTION CARRIED** by a unanimous voice vote of 12 to 0. Councilors Lauterborn, Keans, Walker, Lachapelle, Gates, Gray, Abbott, Torr, Hamann, Bogan, Varney, and Mayor McCarley voted in favor of the motion.

7.1. Non-Public Session, Personnel, RSA 91-A:3,II (a)

7.2. Non-Public Session - Land, RSA 91-A: 3, II (d)

Councilor Lauterborn **MOVED** to exit the non-public session at 8:27 PM. Councilor Lachapelle seconded the motion. The **MOTION CARRIED** by a unanimous voice vote.

Councilor Lauterborn **MOVED** to seal the minutes of the Non-Public Session because disclosure would render the proposed action ineffective. Councilor Lachapelle seconded the motion. The **MOTION CARRIED** by a unanimous roll call. Councilors Gray, Gates, Hamann, Abbott, Keans, Varney, Lauterborn, Lachapelle, Walker, Torr Bogan and Mayor McCarley voted in favor of the motion.

8. Adjournment

Councilor Lachapelle **MOVED** to **ADJOURN** the City Council Workshop meeting at 8:28 PM. Councilor Walker seconded the motion. The **MOTION CARRIED** by a unanimous voice vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cassie Givara
Deputy City Clerk