

CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP
January 19, 2016
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
7:00 PM

COUNCILORS PRESENT

Councilor Barnett
Councilor Bogan
Councilor Gates
Councilor Gray
Councilor Hamann
Councilor Keans
Councilor Lachapelle
Councilor Lauterborn
Councilor Torr
Councilor Varney
Councilor Willis
Mayor McCarley

OTHERS PRESENT

City Manager Daniel Fitzpatrick
Deputy City Manager Blaine Cox
City Attorney Terence O'Rourke
John Storer, Director of Public Works
Steven Murdough, Senior Vice President
Metrocast

COUNCILORS EXCUSED

Councilor Abbott

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

Mayor McCarley called the City Council Workshop to order at 7:00 PM. Assistant City Clerk Nancy Carignan took a silent roll call. All councilors were present, with the exception of Councilor Abbott, who was excused.

2. Public Input

Mayor McCarley asked if any member of the public wished to address the City Council. There was no public input. Mayor McCarley closed public input at 7:01PM.

3. Communications from the City Manager

There were no communications from the City Manager.

4. Communications from the Mayor

4.1 Mayor McCarley wanted to briefly discuss the City's polling locations for the upcoming September State Primary and November General elections. She informed the Council members that she has had an open dialog with the School Board for the possibility of using the schools by coordinating the dates around the teachers workshops.

Mayor McCarley said that the September election may be too soon to have a teachers workshop; however, it was her belief that the schools are willing to work with the City on this.

Councilor Varney felt that the Ward Three could be fixed. He handed out a map of the ward area and explained that the ward line could be adjusted in an effort to use the middle school. Councilor Varney also stated that the State Primary will not be as large as the General election and the schools would need to be closed for that election.

Councilor Bogan stated that there are security issues when schools are in session. She explained that the schools are locked now when in session.

Councilor Keans voiced her concerns when it came to using the schools. She said that it appeared that the concerns were to accommodate the voters and not taking the students into consideration. Councilor Keans wanted the Councilors to think further ahead for a solution.

Councilor Bogan felt that they need to take the teachers contracts into considerations because there could be some backlash. She stated that first and foremost it is the safety of the students that needs to be considered.

Councilor Lachapelle felt that Councilor Varney's suggestion in regards to Ward Three was a good starting point. He mentioned that Ward Three is not the ideal situation, but he is happy with Briar Ridge and that they have allowed the City to hold the elections there. He explained that lighting and parking are the apparent issues and they need to look at all options.

Councilor Lachapelle said that the City Clerk's office had been looking into various locations. He explained that the building has to be ADA compliant and have sufficient parking. He said that schools could be an option.

Mayor McCarley cited that some of the schools have separate gymnasiums from the cafeterias and they have separate entrances from the main school entrance. She said this issue is not a huge emergency, but the Council needs to do something about the locations. She looks to have a conversation with Superintendant Michael Hopkins and School Board Chair Paul Lynch so she can have more information for the City Council meeting on February 2, 2016.

Councilor Keans suggested that Councilor Varney add McClelland School to his map since Ward Four used that location in the past.

5. AB 88 Public Access Television Channel

Dan Fitzpatrick, City Manager, wanted to discuss the public access channel. He explained that as of March 1, 2016, channel 12, which is the local origination programming channel, will be going away. This channel televised such things as the Christmas Parade, Church events and school sports events. Mr. Fitzpatrick commented that some municipalities have taken on the responsibility of handling this type of programming. He mentioned that this was something to think about. Mr. Fitzpatrick explained that the City has no control over losing channel 12 and citizens are not going to receive the service of this channel after March 1, 2016.

Steve Murdough, Senior Vice President of Operations for Metrocast, addressed the City Council about Metrocast ceasing channel operations.

Councilor Varney wanted to know what resources are required if the City wanted to pick up that channel. Mr. Fitzpatrick said that he had Celeste Plaia from the MIS Department looking into that possibility. He explained that maybe it can be looked at as "Issues and Options" for the budget process.

Councilor Varney asked Mr. Murdough how many employees work for this programming channel. Mr. Murdough stated that they were down to one employee working and they have since resigned. He explained that this is a local origination channel and it is not the same as public access.

Councilor Keans asked about the televised church programs. It was discussed that the churches do their own recording and deliver the program to the station. She wanted further information. Mr. Murdough explained this further to her. He stated that after March 1, 2016, they will not be taking the prerecorded videos and channel 12 will be just for PSAs and bulletin announcements.

Mr. Fitzpatrick said that the City could obtain the channel from Metrocast and they would have to manage it. Mr. Murdough said the City could, but they would not necessarily get channel 12. Currently the City has channel 25 and channel 26, so using a channel in that line, such as channel 24, would be better. Councilor Lauterborn asked if channel 12 would be exclusively for Metrocast and their PSAs. Mr. Murdough said that was correct.

Councilor Lachapelle asked if the City Council could get more information on the cost associated with taking this channel on prior to the budget season as Mr. Fitzpatrick had suggested it be listed under "Issues and Options."

Councilor Willis asked if the studio for channel 12 will be closed. Mr. Murdough said that it would be closed. Councilor Willis asked if the City could lease the studio. Mr. Murdough stated that the City would need to discuss this further with Metrocast

because the studio would need to be staffed and currently the facility is dealing with a parking issue.

Councilor Willis asked if the equipment was portable. Mr. Murdough said that the cameras are, but items such as the editing equipment are fixed.

Councilor Keans asked if the channel 12 programs could be aired on the other City channels.

Councilor Lachapelle explained that channel 26, the Government Channel, is limited to what programs they can air per the "Rules of Order." He said that channel 12 was run by Metrocast. Councilor Lachapelle explained this further.

Councilor Lauterborn wanted to explore adding the school sporting events to channel 25, the school channel, and the Christmas Parade and Chamber programs could be aired on channel 26, the Government Channel.

Councilor Gray explained that with the various school programming the allotted time is very tight. The City Council discussed that channel 26 has become tight, as well, due to more meetings being televised.

Councilor Gray said that the channel 12 would be more of a commercial endeavor. He explained that with the candidate forum for the last Municipal election was sponsored and a banner was displayed. Councilor Gray mentioned that some organization might step in, such as the school booster clubs, to pay for the programming.

Mayor McCarley felt that the City needs to decide something by the March date. Mr. Fitzpatrick said there are no time constraints. The City Council needs to look at the cost and making rules and regulations. He mentioned that if the City wants the channel Metrocast would need to supply it.

Mr. Fitzpatrick wanted the City Council to know that citizens have been contacting his office to request having another company to service the City such as Comcast or Time Warner. He explained that Metrocast does not have an exclusive franchise so another company could come into the City and sell their services. Federal law would require them to negotiate a franchise agreement.

Councilor Keans mentioned that the franchise agreement that was signed years ago did not include channel 12. She asked if Metrocast could shut down the channel. Terence O'Rourke, City Attorney, said yes, they could.

Mr. Murdough suggested that they check with the local group NHCCM (New Hampshire Coalition for Community Media) for help on the process of running the channel. The City Council thanked Mr. Murdough for coming.

6. Columbus Avenue/Knight Street (One way Street Recommendation)

Mayor McCarley explained that at the City Council meeting on January 12, 2016, there had been a motion and a second to make Knight Street one-way. The City Council at that time felt that they needed an aerial map for more information on the area.

Councilor Hamann said that the Public Safety Committee had received concerns in the area of Columbus Street by Cumberland Farms. The resident who brought the issue to the committee lived on Knight Street.

Councilor Varney asked in which direction would the one-way be routed. Councilor Hamann said that it would go toward Charles Street to Upham Street.

Councilor Keans stated that there are a few entrances to Cumberland Farms and that is part of the problem. She asked Mr. O'Rourke if they could change their site plan. Councilor Varney felt that they could not do that. Mr. O'Rourke said that they could change the traffic flow and he has talked with the Planning Department regarding this. He said that they could go back and discuss this concern with Cumberland Farms.

Councilor Varney did not feel that the area was an ideal design, but if drivers pay attention this should not be an issue.

Councilor Torr asked how many complaints have come in regarding this. Councilor Hamann stated that the committee only had one complaint, but that person had almost been hit several times with her children in the car.

Councilor Willis did not feel that it was a problem, but asked if the City Council needed to legislate it as a right turn only. The City Council had discussed that possibility. Councilor Hamann agreed with Councilor Willis for the right turn only coming out of the Cumberland Farms. Councilor Lachapelle did not feel that they could do that. Councilor Willis asked if they had accident data for that location and if there is no data then maybe there is no problem. Councilor Gates agreed and said that drivers need to be responsible.

Councilor Lachapelle stated that the next Public Safety Committee meeting is slated for the next day so they can address the issue of getting data. Councilor Keans would like the Public Safety Committee to look at other issues. She pointed this out from the map.

7. Department Reports

Mayor McCarley said that the department reports are in the packet. She asked if any of the City Councilors wanted to address any of the reports.

Councilor Varney wanted information about the extra \$42,000 for the Granite Ridge Development District.

John Storer, Director of Public Works, explained that this was an anticipated cost. He referred to this amount as a place holder in the budget to carry over for supplemental engineering costs. Mr. Storer detailed the explanation for this. He stated that his department has not spent any of the \$42,000, and at this point he did not feel that they would need to touch it if they could use in-house staff to do the inspections. Councilor Torr discussed this further with Mr. Storer in regards to the types of inspections.

Councilor Gray wanted to know about the Fire Department \$18,000 for preparedness at the Seabrook Nuclear Power Plant. Mr. Fitzpatrick explained that this amount pertained to accepting a Federal grant for the \$18,000.

Mayor McCarley wanted to ask the City Council members if anyone of them might be interested in serving on the Recreation and Arena Committee. She said that they could reach out to her if they have any interest in this position.

8. Adjournment

Councilor Lachapelle **MOVED** to adjourn the Workshop at 7:50 PM. Councilor Gates seconded the motion. The **MOTION CARRIED** by unanimous voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Carignan
Assistant City Clerk