

**City Council Workshop Meeting
September 21, 2021
Council Chambers
6:34 PM**

COUNCILORS PRESENT

Councilor Abbott
Councilor Bogan
Councilor Fitzpatrick
Councilor Gray
Councilor Hainey
Councilor Hamann
Councilor Hunt-Hawkins
Councilor Hutchinson
Councilor Jean
Councilor Rice
Councilor Walker
Mayor Lauterborn

OTHERS PRESENT

Blaine Cox, City Manager
Katie Ambrose, Deputy City Manager
Terence O'Rourke, City Attorney
human, resident
Richard Woods, resident
Mark Klose, Rochester Fire Chief
Kenny-Lynn Dempsey, E911
Tim Wilder, Assistant Fire Chief

COUNCILORS ABSENT/EXCUSED

Councilor Lachapelle

Minutes

1. Call to Order

Mayor Lauterborn called the City Council Workshop meeting to order at 6:36 PM. Deputy City Clerk Cassie Givara took a silent roll call. All Councilors were present except for Councilor Lachapelle, who was excused.

2. Public Input

human, resident, addressed the Council regarding the renumbering of Tebbetts Road and the issues which could arise. human suggested that if the street were to be renumbered, it could also be renamed for mail, deliveries and services. He suggested this could help avoid confusion and help distinguish between updated addresses and the original numbers.

Richard Woods, Tebbetts Road property owner, spoke in favor of the renumbering of Tebbetts Road, not only for the safety aspect for first responders, but also for current development and future subdivisions which will require this renumbering in order to move forward.

Mark Klose, Rochester Fire Chief, gave a farewell address to the Council in

anticipation of his retirement at the end of September.

3. Communications from the City Manager

City Manager Cox thanked Chief Klose for his service and praised him for the work he has accomplished over his 4-year tenure and the positive visibility he has brought to the Rochester fire department.

City Manager Cox passed along an update on the new Department of Public Works facility provided by Director of City Services Peter Nourse. He stated that the facility was just over 80% complete and summarized the progress being made as well as what remains prior to opening. He stated that there is a projected ribbon cutting in spring 2022. Mr. Cox reported there would be a tour of the facility offered to Council members on October 19 at 10 AM.

4. Communications from the Mayor

Mayor Lauterborn read excerpts from a document of thanks and recognition for first responders, which had been submitted by the Knights of Columbus. Mayor Lauterborn stated that the document would be displayed at the police station.

5. Update: E911 Recommendations for Tebbetts Road

Assistant Fire Chief Tim Wilder introduced Kenny-Lynn Dempsey of the State of NH E-911 Emergency Communications. Ms. Dempsey gave an overview of the mission of the E911 department in standardizing addresses for first responders and public safety officials as well as to clear up confusion resulting from non-conforming or duplicate addresses.

Ms. Dempsey stated that Tebbetts Road had been recognized as an area in Rochester which needed to be addressed and gave an overview of the current issues being experienced, who is being affected, and the implications of the non-standard addressing currently in place.

Councilor Gray asked who has the statutory authority to change the addresses. Ms. Dempsey replied that the City of Rochester has the statutory authority to make these changes. Councilor Gray said that the E911 Committee did not have statutory authority to change addresses and asked for a document detailing the State guidelines that E911 follows. Ms. Dempsey confirmed that the E911 Committee is an advisory group and can only make recommendations. She gave information on where the guidelines can be found.

Assistant Chief Wilder detailed the three options that the E911 Committee

has discussed to resolve the addressing issue on Tebbetts Road and the potential drawbacks of each option. Option 3 involved renumbering the road with a new address number every 50 feet. This option would allow for future development and subdivisions, with designated numbers already in place.

Councilor Gray suggested that if the road were renumbered from number 148 and above, it would take care of the current issue being experienced. He acknowledged that there is one house with an even number on the odd side of the road and stated that this house could be renumbered without changing the house numbers surrounding it. He spoke about one additional house at the far end which the committee recommended renumbering. Ms. Dempsey stated that she would supply a map showing the current numbering and the suggested renumbering for a better visual on the current issues and potential solutions.

Assistant Chief Wilder cautioned that if the renumbering is done on an individual lot basis or on small sections of Tebbetts Road, this same approach might be expected on future renumberings. He also said that it made things more complicated for first responders if half of the road is properly addressed and geo-coded with the other half in a non-standard format.

Councilor Rice spoke of his firsthand experience as a dispatcher dealing with communities with non-standard addressing, and how it can affect response time and potentially put residents' safety at risk. Councilor Rice spoke in favor of human's suggestion of renaming Tebbetts Road at the same time as renumbering to eliminated some confusion between old and new addresses. Mayor Lauterborn agreed that the suggestion of renaming the road as well as renumbering would be beneficial and asked Ms. Dempsey if this was a solution that had been undertaken in similar situations. Ms. Dempsey confirmed that she was aware of other communities who had renamed as well as renumbered roads and acknowledged that this solution does help to avoid confusion.

Councilor Hunt-Hawkins asked if the road name could be kept the same with an entirely new sequence of numbers being used instead of the current numbers; such as starting the numbering at 200 and going upwards. Ms. Dempsey stated that the problem with this solution is that the road would not geocode properly if the numbers were sequenced in this manner.

Councilor Walker remarked that the renumbering solution being presented was the same numbering that was presented previously, which the Council had rejected in favor of an anticipated better solution. He spoke about the large number of residents who had spoken against this proposed renumbering. Assistant Chief Wilder clarified that there were additional options explored, but these options would just require renumbering in the future if there was additional development on the road. He said that if the subdivision waiting for numbers is

given its own numbering system, it would cause the same number discrepancies in the future. Councilor Walker expressed that he would like a renumbering solution that would affect the fewest number of residents. Assistant Chief Wilder acknowledged that the individual subdivision in question can be given a number system; however this goes against the State guidelines and it would cause the same problems with numbering for any future development. Ms. Dempsey agreed that changing or renumbering a small portion of the road would simply delay fixing the problem, which would arise the next time there was development proposed.

Councilor Gray spoke about the required road front footage required by City ordinance in order to develop a subdivision and how this would require a special exception, which would likely be denied with this proposed addressing standard. He suggested that future subdivisions could be given a shared driveway or an access road, which could be given a new road name as opposed to renumbering the existing road.

Councilor Hunt-Hawkins stated that she was in support of the proposed renumbering; in not choosing a solution, the problem would simply be pushed forward to future Councils. She acknowledged that there was a desire for creative solutions to the renumbering issue, but cautioned that public safety was not an area in which she felt the City should be getting creative.

Councilor Jean spoke about past road renumberings of which he had taken part on Council. He asked Assistant Chief Wilder if the renumbering process or format had ever been deviated from once it had been started. Assistant Chief Wilder said that the same process has always been followed through the E911 Committee since its inception. Ms. Dempsey expressed concern that if the City deviated from the regular renumbering process and guidelines, it would set a precedent and affect future renumberings; with residents pointing to Tebbetts Road as a reason their issue should not have to be fixed following the State guidelines. Councilor Jean acknowledged that the prospect of renumbering streets is never easy for the residents, but cautioned against deviating from the process which has been followed for the past 20 years. He said this could make it difficult for future Councils to have to defend why the previous Council allowed a "one off" deviation for the renumbering process.

Councilor Jean addressed the residents and landowners who were awaiting a street number in order to move forward with the building process. He stated that the Council needed to take action in order to allow this development and to stop holding up the process. Councilor Hamann agreed that the renumbering process should be completed in its entirety instead of dealing with the issues piecemeal as they arise.

Councilor Walker reiterated Councilor Gray's assertion that the Planning Board could potentially authorize a private road with a new name to deal with new subdivisions as opposed to having to renumber the entire road.

Councilor Abbott spoke about emerging technology used for first responders to navigate to their calls, and how 911 was becoming an outdated system. He spoke about a specific software used in other municipalities, which would link to the City's GIS and negate the need for the "every 50 feet" numbering format used in geocoding. Assistant Chief Wilder said that although the system mentioned by Councilor Abbott is a great solution for first responders, the numbering issue would still remain for the post office, delivery services, and others needing to navigate to a particular location.

Councilor Gray reiterated that the residents on Tebbetts Road are currently able to receive mail and services with no problems and questioned whether geocoding and accommodating corrections to a small handful of residences was reason enough to renumber an entire road. Councilor Hailey stated that there are landowners who are unable to build their homes on Tebbetts Road until the numbering issue is resolved.

Councilor Rice inquired if there was any interest in supporting the renaming of Tebbetts Road along with renumbering to follow State guidelines, as discussed earlier. He reiterated that this issue is time sensitive because there are residents who are unable to build their homes until the issue is resolved.

6. Department Reports

No Discussion.

7. Other

Councilor Hunt-Hawkins announced that the Rochester Art Awards would take place at 6:00 PM on Monday, September 27 at the Governor's Inn.

Councilor Rice passed along an announcement by Director Nourse that the Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation would be holding two hearings on October 4 at 2 PM in Dover and 7 PM in Somersworth. He referenced the Route 11 corridor and the need for State funding for this area. Councilor Rice said he would supply the information to the rest of Council.

8. Non-Public

8.1 Non-Public Session – Personnel, RSA 91-A:3, II (a)

Councilor Rice **MOVED** to enter into a non-public session at 7:47 PM under RSA 91-A:3, II (a) Personnel. Councilor Walker seconded the motion. The **MOTION CARRIED** by a unanimous roll call vote with Councilors Abbott, Hutchinson, Bogan, Fitzpatrick, Rice, Jean, Hamann, Hunt-Hawkins, Walker, Gray, Hailey and Mayor Lauterborn all voting in favor.

Councilor Rice **MOVED** to exit the non-public session at 8:43 PM Councilor Walker seconded the motion. The **MOTION CARRIED** by a unanimous roll call vote.

Councilor Rice **MOVED** to seal the minutes of the non-public session because it is determined that the divulgence of this information would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, other than a member of this Board. Councilor Walker seconded the motion. The **MOTION CARRIED** by a unanimous roll call vote with Councilors Hutchinson, Abbott, Hailey, Walker, Gray, Rice, Bogan, Jean, Fitzpatrick, Hunt-Hawkins, Hamann, and Mayor Lauterborn all voting in favor.

9. Adjournment

Mayor Lauterborn **ADJOURNED** the City Council Regular meeting at 8:44 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cassie Givara
Deputy City Clerk