City of Keene
New Hampshire

FINANCE, ORGANIZATION AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, February 8, 2024 **5:30 PM** **Council Chamber, City Hall**

Members Present:
Thomas F. Powers, Chair
Michael J. Remy, Vice Chair
Bettina A. Chadbourne
Bryan J. Lake
Kris E. Roberts

Members Not Present:
All present

Jay V. Kahn, Mayor

Staff Present:
Elizabeth A. Dragon, City Manager
Thomas P. Mullins, City Attorney
Beth Fox, Human Resources Director
Steve Stewart, Police Chief
Aaron Costa, Asst. Public Works Director/ WWTP Manager
Duncan Watson, Solid Waste Manager/ Asst. Public Works Director
Don Lussier, City Engineer
Donald Farquhar, Fire Chief
David Hickling, Airport Director
Brett Rusnock, Civil Engineer
Christian Tarr, Utilities Maintenance Manager
Jim Mountford, Fleet Operations Manager
Rebecca Landry, Communications & Marketing Director
Ben Crowder, Water Sewer Operations Manager

Chair Powers called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM.

1) Keene Pride - Request for Community Funded Event Status - 2024 Pride Festival

Mr. Adam Toepfer President of Keene Pride addressed the Committee and stated they are now in their third year of the Pride Festival. Their festival is held in September and are requesting community event status.

Councilor Remy asked whether the footprint would be like last year. Mr. Toepfer agreed and added it would be Central Square and Roxbury Street but could expand the footprint in 2025 depending on the number of vendors.

Chair Powers stated this committee will accept this item as informational and the item will be addressed again during budget discussion.

Councilor Chadbourne commended this event and the time being invested in it by the organizers.

Councilor Chadbourne made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Lake.

On a 5-0 vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends placing the rest from Keene Pride for community event funding for their 2025 Pride event on more time to be further discussed during fiscal year 2025 budget deliberations.

2) 2024 Energy Expo Event Sponsorship - Energy and Climate Committee

Mr. Zach Luse, President of the Energy and Climate Committee addressed the Committee next. Mr. Luse stated the Monadnock Sustainability Hub has approached the committee to organize an Energy Expo like the one that was conducted in Peterborough last year. They were considering the airport as a possible location; the Energy and Climate Committee members are willing to donate their time, but they are looking for the City to donate services in connection with the event.

Mr. Luse stated it is easier for the Expo to obtain approval from the FAA to conduct the event at the airport if there is City support.

The Manager noted the motion indicates to permit fees but it should be corrected to say facility fees.

Councilor Lake made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Remy.

On a 5-0 vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends that the City Manager be authorized to work with the Energy and Climate Committee with respect to the potential of any facility fees and to authorize access to city facilities and support of the 2024 Energy Expo event to be scheduled in the Fall of 2024.

3) Accept Federal Funding For Airport Capital Project - Airport Director

Airport Director, David Hickling was the next to address the committee. Mr. Hickling stated this item is in reference to a grant for a project the airport has been wanting to complete for a long time. He indicated as the grant was being delayed the project had to be re-bid and the contractor has agreed to hold their prices.

Mr. Hickling noted he would like to add the words “to expend” to the motion. He added the FAA will pay 90% of the project, the City and State will be responsible for 5% each for reconstruction of Taxiway A.

Councilor Remy made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Roberts.

On a 5-0 vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to accept, execute and expend a grant for up to the amount of $2,767,767 from the Federal Aviation Administration Airport Improvement Program.

4) Marlboro Street Corridor Project - Design Change Order #3

City Engineer Don Lussier stated this item is a request to execute a change order with the design consultant for up to $20,000. This is to redesign a portion of the project that runs through the Public Works facility. The options that were considered were to wrap it around the Fleet Services building or look at routing it through the parking lot. The consultant moved forward with the option of keeping it away from Public Works traffic. However, when they looked more into this analysis, there was property impact that needed to be considered, wetlands impact but routing around Fleet Services has more of a cost impact. This is due to a ramp that runs at the base of the rail trail up to the railroad. Mr. Lussier stated however, this design will save the City more money at the end and won't have an impact on the timeline.

Attorney Mullins asked whether this design will still go by the right of way by the Butterfly Park. Mr. Lussier agreed and added it will be adjacent to the park but before it gets to the end there will be a right turn. The attorney asked whether it will be retained on the existing right of way or whether a portion a portion of it was going to be turned into a trail. Mr. Lussier stated it will be on the existing right of way until it leaves Bartholomew Court - the intention is to lay it out as a Class A trail as part of that construction process. He added the section next to the Butterfly Park lies outside of the existing right away and this will be the Class A trail portion.

Councilor Remy asked to see a rendering of this design for the next Council meeting.

Councilor Roberts made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Roberts.

On a 5-0 vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to negotiate and execute an engineering services Change Order with DuBois & King for additional services required for the design of the Marlboro Street Corridor Project for an amount not to exceed $20,000. Funding to come from the Marlboro Street Corridor Project (75J0018B).

5) Capital Improvement Plan - City Manager

a. Police

Police Chief Steve Stewart stated the first project they are finishing up in FY25, is the third year of the mobile replacement program.

The second project is the crime scene van. The Chief stated currently they are using a 2007 ambulance which was turned over to the police department after the fire department had it for nine years. The vehicle is becoming unreliable and lacks a lot of features. He added with crime scenes you don't get a second chance to gather necessary information. This new vehicle has the capacity to locate the necessary equipment in one location to process a crime scene, it has room for ample storage good lighting. It can also double as a command post.

b. Parking

Mr. Lussier addressed projects relating to Parking.

Page 120 – Surface Parking Lot Maintenance Program: In FY25 there is a preservation project being planned for the library annex, Elm Street, Wells Street/Roxbury Plaza and Gilbo East parking lot.

Page 121 – City Hall Parking Structure: FY26 – The budget has been updated based on the recently completed Wells Street project. The surface treatment needs to be replaced.

Councilor Remy asked where people will park in the interim when this work happens. Mr. Lussier stated it will be handled in the same way it was done a few years ago where the contractor worked only on portions of the lot. Where customers will park will be decided during the design phase.

Page 122 – Wells Street Parking Structure Maintenance Program: Similar program to what was discussed with City Hall – to address periodic small investments to keep the asset in good condition. In FY 28 there is a nominal dollar being planned.

Page 123 – West side Downtown Parking Structure: The City is currently advertising for a consultant to complete a feasibility study. In FY26 there are funds allocated to start a design of a structure. The FY28 number will be adjusted based on the design. Councilor Chadbourne asked whether any thought has been given to having a private entity own this structure. Mr. Lussier stated this is the purpose of the feasibility study to see how this project can be moved forward economically. The Councilor raised concern with the cost of one million for the feasibility study. Mr. Lussier stated the 1.1 million is for the actual design (construction level specifications and drawings). The study is at a cost of $219,000. Economic Development Director Med Kopczynski added the goal of the feasibility study is to determine needs, who the partners could be for the project. The users of the facility will ultimately decide the operations, design and the financing that will ultimately go into the structure.

Councilor Remy stated he would like to see this privately owned and operated with some control given to the City.

Page 124 – EV Charging Stations – Parking Facilities Project: Mr. Lussier noted this project is not within next couple of years but is a place holder for electric charging stations in the future. He noted to a study that is currently being undertaken with a consultant who is providing guidance and a report will be before the MSFI Committee in short order.

c. Public Works

Page 204 – Equipment Replacement Program: Jim Mountford Fleet Operations Manager and Duncan Watson, Asst. Public Works Director addressed the committee next. Mr. Mountford stated there are 157 vehicles in this program. It was necessary to add additional funds into the program as the cost of vehicles have drastically increased. He added they recycle as many vehicles as possible.

Page 205 & 206 – Fleet Services Building Upgrade Project and Fleet Services Building Fire Suppression Project: Mr. Mountford stated the Fleet Services Building has never had fire suppression system and this is a place holder. With reference to the building upgrade there is a consultant coming from Missouri to evaluate the building. More information will be forthcoming in the next year.

Page 207 – Fleet Services Roof Replacement Project: Mr. Mountford noted this roof is 40 years old. This project is projected to be completed by the FY24-25 season.

Page 131 – Recycling Equipment Replacement Project: Mr. Watson this is mostly a capital reserve program for large pieces of equipment the department uses such as the cross belt magnet, sorting conveyor, eddy current separator etc. – to replace these large pieces of equipment when they cannot be repaired.

Page 132 – Weight Scale Replacement Project: The scale is required to be serviced regularly per requirement of the NH Bureau of Weights and Measures. The scale is the heart of the solid waste program. The scale is in good shape at the present time but funding needs to be available when there is a need to service or replace it.

Page 133 – Pavement Replacement Project: Mr. Watson stated in FY25 the project is to replace all paved surfaces from the gate onward. The patchwork does not seem to be holding anymore – work will begin in July.

Page 134 – Upper Level Pavement Project: Paving the upper level surface where the drop off is located as well as access to the compost pile, brush pile, scrap metal, construction and demolition debits – pave and shape these to improve drainage.

Page 85 - Downtown Infrastructure Improvement and Reconstruction Project: Mr. Lussier explained that projects that have multiple utilities are funded through several different programs. The prior year line column are funds that have been approved and work that is being done now. The downtown project is explained on various pages of the CIP document. Page 87 the traffic signal replacement (couple of years) is for Central Square. He noted a good portion of the downtown work is going to be below ground. Mr. Lussier noted General Fund is 9.3 million, Sewer Fund is 3.5 million and Water Fund is 4 million for the total project. These amounts don't assume any outside funding but grants are being applied for.

Page 88 – Downtown Restroom Project: Mr. Lussier stated these are indestructible self-cleaning bathrooms constructed out of steel and concrete. A spray system will wash the interior after every 10th user but they are costly. The plumbing fixtures have no nuts and bolts, the ceiling is made out of steel, the mirror is polished stainless steel. Mr. Lussier stated he was not sure of the warranty.

Road Paving Program: Mr. Lussier stated the funding remains around 1.5 million dollars. A preservation program is being recommended each year.

Page 92 – Bridge Rehabilitation and Repac Program: Civil Engineer, Brett Rusnock stated the city has nine red listed bridges that need replacement. The first one shown on the program is the Winchester Street Route 10 Bridge scheduled to be complete with the lower Winchester Street project. Maple Avenue bridge is currently funded through NHDOT. Beaver Street and Church Street bridges have been appropriated but State funding has been inadequate and in 2023 the State changed their funding mechanism – it is not a first come first serve basis anymore. It is now being done by inspection priority, traffic volume etc. The George Street bridge is already programmed for construction and funding is already in place.

Page 94 – Bridge Preservation Program: Mr. Rusnock stated the City's funding for bridge replacement has exceeded what the NHDOT is able to provide, and staff is recommending that some of that funding be allocated to the preservation program which would allow the City to make repairs to bridges which will extend the life of a bridge. Staff has identified approximately 15% cost reduction over the cost of the bridge structure. There is no federal or state funding for bridge preservation, hence this would be 100% city funded. The first bridge identified for this program is the Main Street Bridge over Branch River.

Page 96 – Lower Winchester Street Reconstruction Project: Two new roundabouts at the intersection of Matthews Road and Krif Road – the recommended alternative is what the Council moved forward on. The engineering study was just submitted to the NHDOT which is the first step in the design process. After NHDOT approval the final design phase will start. Construction is planned for FY26.

Councilor Chadbourne referred to the picture of the structure under the bridge and asked if that must wait until FY31 to be completed. Mr. Rusnock stated what the Councilor is seeing is the peeling of the paint on girders and supports as well as some rusting. He added there is only some section loss but felt it was important to get some painting done soon so the rusting doesn't continue. Mr. Lussier noted the state has a good incentive program for their own bridges but there is now available for municipalities. He added it almost seems like the state is incentivizing municipal bridges to come to a bad condition before they will assist with funding. He felt even though the state is not helping with this it is better to do some of this preservation rather than wait for a two million dollar bridge to fail. The Councilor asked why that large amount could not be broken up and moved up in the schedule. Mr. Lussier stated he has come before the finance committee a while ago regarding unanticipated bridge funding. In the last few years, the state has done a onetime funding for bridges and highways. Last year the City placed those funds into the bridge capital reserve. The previous year the City wanted to spend most of those funds on repairs on the Sullivan Road culvert. FEMA decided they were not going to help with the funding and hence that project has been put on hold. There is reference to another one time funding which will give the City some extra funding in the bridge capital reserve and depending on what happens with the State funding, staff would like to move up the preservation work.

Councilor Remy referred to page 89 and stated Hastings Avenue is in bad shape is not scheduled until FY30. Mr. Lussier stated this work is being timed to be completed with the water main work. He added the Highway Department recently acquired a piece of equipment referred to as the Drag Box and they are planning on doing some work on Hastings Avenue soon. Councilor Chadbourne noted Court Street which is also a street in bad shape but is not scheduled until

FY27. Mr. Lussier stated a portion of Court Street starting from the hospital up to East Surry Road was done last year. East Surry Road to Maple Avenue is going to be timed with water main work. The Councilor went on to say the master plan talks a lot about walkability and the use of bicycles; on Court Street there is plenty of room for walking but when it was redesigned no option was given to bicycles. Mr. Lussier stated this work was done in the 2008 timeframe before he started his employment with the city and wasn't sure why this option was not considered but agreed this is a fair observation. Chair Powers noted the lower street of Court Street is narrow and on street parking was an issue. He also noted the lower part of Court Street does have some issues. Councilor Roberts stated the biggest argument when Court Street was reconstructed was the location of bump outs with trees.

Page 97 & 98 – West Street Corridor Improvements: Mr. Lussier noted this page has outlined the city share versus DOT share. He added DOT would not participate in utility work if it were being done as repair unless it can be demonstrated the repair is a causing for instance a sewer main to be relocated. DOT share covers 80% of stormwater/transportation component but not water and sewer. This is in the state ten-year plan for 2030, design work starting in 2027.

Page 99 – Sidewalk Asset Management Plan: Over the course of the next 7 years a total of 2.1 miles will be completed (asphalts sidewalks). 1,400 to 1,500 feet will be completed each year. Councilor Chadbourne noted Beaver Street is scheduled for FY29 – Councilor Williams, Ward Councilor for that ward has addressed this street. She felt this is a significant street, with the location of Franklin Elementary School in proximity and many families walk kids to school in that area and felt priority should be given to this street. Mr. Lussier stated when the Asset Management Plan was started in 2022, staff with the help of the MSFI Committee put a plan in place (worst to best). They looked at different criteria, proximity to schools, commercial districts, public amenities etc. what will generate pedestrian traffic and then looked at the condition of a sidewalk and it was planned based on that.

Page 102 – Traffic Signal Replacement Program: Two years of funding has been dedicated to downtown traffic signal replacement (prior CIP's). In FY 25 there are smaller amounts money to address flashing signals at Court Street/Vernon Street/Washington Street; few adjustments to make them compliant. FY26 will address Ashbrook Road.

Page 103 &104 – General Fund - Dam Maintenance Program: Funding for city owned dam repair that serve a recreational or flood control purpose, which is beyond city staff capacity to complete. The first project is the Three Mile Reservoir Control Dam along Route 10 – this is a flood control structure built by the US Army Corps of Engineers in 1986. It was turned over to the City of Keene for maintenance into perpetuity, and both the State Dam Bureau and the Army Corps of Engineers inspect the dam yearly. They provide the city with a list of things that either need to be maintained internally or are bigger projects that need to be undertaken.

The second one is the Goose Pond Dam spillway structure. This spillway structure was built in 1994, and it was not part of the 2019 reconstruction project. The city has identified some issues with the concrete of the spillway itself and also the downstream channel of that spillway is severely eroded, and it needs some maintenance work to be stable. Mr. Rusnock noted there will be maintenance needs in the future as well with dams.

Page 105 – Beaver Brook Flood Mitigation Project: Mr. Rusnock stated the city has been working off and on with the US Army Corps of Engineers over the past couple of years to work on an existing conditions hydrologic analysis of the Beaver Brook Watershed. This is a slow process and there are various funding mechanisms through the Army Corps of Engineers the city is exploring. Funding has been included in FY 28 and 29 with the anticipation that the agreement will be finalized with the Army Corps and that they will want to participate in construction improvements along the Beaver Brook watershed. A few ideas are improving flood storage within the watershed, smaller scale more distributed improvements higher up in the watershed, obstruction reduction.

Pages 106 & 107 – Stormwater Resiliency Program: These are projects that are either needed to improve the resiliency and reliability of city infrastructure; ones that have been identified as high risk structures for repair or replacement. The first three years are funding dedicated to the downtown infrastructure project. One project is the storm water line that runs underneath Central Square, it is a 24 inch diameter line. It was built in the late 1800s, early 1900s. It is in rough shape and needs to be replaced. Another area is near Eagle Court and Water where there is an area of persistent flooding. There is a lot of associated utility relocations for sewer and water infrastructure as well as surface feature restoration included as part of this work. Hence, the reason some of these projects are extremely expensive. Councilor Chadbourne asked what kind of lifespan the new pipes would have. Mr. Rusnock stated starting in the late 80s and early 90s, the city has been installing what is referred to as high density polyethylene stormwater pipe which is a plastic resin which has a smooth interior and a corrugated or ribbed exterior. He indicated none of those pipes have been replaced yet due to failure of the pipe itself. At times the joints become dislocated and might require spot repair. He indicated he believes the design lifespan is at least 80 years on those pipes.

One of first projects in FY25 is on Key Road (under the Keene Cinemas parking lot) a stormwater pipe that is buried. It connects to a ditch system downstream. It has failures along the pipe already – there are areas that are partially collapsed which the highway crews have responded to over the years to perform patching and pothole filling as best they can. Those maintenance needs are increasing in frequency. Mr. Rusnock stated this is one of the highest risk structures that needs to be addressed. Because of the watershed tributary to that pipe, staff is proposing it needs to be a dual 48-inch pipe system to carry the flow that it needs to carry.

Page 108 – Stormwater Channel Maintenance Program: Project starts in FY25 to address the City's open channels (man-made ditches). It is planned for eight miles per year.
Fire Department

Page 109 – Stormwater Spot Repair Program: Mr. Lussier stated this is an annual maintenance program to address small sections. Specific scope of these projects is identified annually in conjunction with the highway crew.

Page 110 – Stormwater System Analysis: Design monies used in advance of larger project to refine the scope for stormwater resiliency projects. Over the last few years monies have been under spent, there is no new money funded for FY25 and 26. Work will resume in FY27.

Page 112 – Stormwater Main Lining Program: A new program started last year, preliminary investigation and design work has been undertaken for couple of lengths of the storm water system. The idea of this program is to look at specifically the corrugated metal pipes that were installed in the 70's and 80's which are at the end of their service life. Councilor Roberts noted it seems like things that were put in the ground 100 years ago have been dependable but ones that were installed in the last 50 to 70 years have not turned out to be great ideas. Mr. Lussier stated it really comes down to material, vitrified clay storm drains – the City has 24-to-30-inch clay pipes that are still in very good condition and are nearly100 years old. The corrugated metal pipes were cheaper, easier to move were intended only for a 30–40-year service life.

d. Water and Sewer Fund

Aaron Costa, Asst. Public Works Director, WWTP Manager addressed the committee next. Mr. Costa stated the city owns a sewer system that consists of our approximately 94 miles of pipe, 2,400 manholes, five wastewater pumping stations, including Martell Court Pump Station and a treatment plant that was constructed in 1985 and is approaching 40 years. It was designed to treat six million gallons of wastewater every day with peak flows of up to 21 and the city's average daily flow is approximately 3,000,000 gallons a day.

Page 147 – Sewer Improvement Program: Don Lussier City Engineer and Ben Crowder, Water Sewer Operations Manager were the next two speakers. Mr. Lussier stated this is the program where the City pays for its major sewer improvements. In the near term (FY 25-27) the program will be funding downtown sewer improvements. There are about 4,500 feet of sewer main in the downtown that is going to be replaced.

Page 149 – Sewer Manhole Lining Program: Mr. Crowder stated this project targets over 200 of the city's brick manholes. Over time, the motor that holds these bricks manuals together deteriorates and causes the bricks to fall into the sewer main, which may cause blockages which is an environmental concern. These manholes are also areas where water can infiltrate the sewer system, which increases cost for pumping and increases costs for treating clean water. This program provides funding to rehabilitate these structures by lining the interior surface with an epoxy-based mortar.

Page 150 – Sewer Main Lining Program: This is an ongoing program which funds the lining of sewer mains that have adequate capacity but have some structural defects like leaking joints. In 2019 the city developed a sewer main assets management plan, which prioritizes repairs based on age, size, material, and proximity to critical facilities. Sewer main assets are evaluated first for rehabilitation under this line program. If they do fall under the criteria for rehabilitation they are replaced through the sewer improvements program. In 2015 the city also performed a series of flow tests to identify areas of infiltration and inflow. Working with these two plans, staff can select areas that are eligible for lining due to those two problems. In the next three to four years the city will focus on area east of Main Street

Page 151 – Lower Winchester Street Sewer Infrastructure Program: This request is just funding the lining of approximately 3,970 feet of asbestos cement sewer mains and funding the sewer

main that is currently suspended underneath the Winchester Street Bridge which will be replaced with an inverted siphon.

Page 152 – WWTP Sludge Drier Project: Christian Tarr, Utilities Maintenance Manager and Aaron Costa, Asst. Public Works Director/WWTP Manager addressed the committee next. Mr. Costa stated the city received a grant in 2023 to evaluate biosolids and a sludge dryer. For many years the city has focused on its effluent discharge permit and meeting compliance with that. The city has to now start thinking about biosolids management and how it is going to manage biosolids in the future.

There are three ways to get rid of biosolids; incineration – Manchester has a facility, and it will be costly to build one in Keene as well as there are operational and permit requirements. There is also the beneficial reuse or land application of biosolids where a company for a fee would take away the biosolids, they would compost it and get it ready for land application. However, because of the PFAS issues that are being raised right now that outlet may not be there in the future. There is also landfilling, which the city currently does with its biosolids. The city currently contracts with Waste Management to haul and dispose of our waste at the landfill in Rochester.

The city produces about 4,500 tons per year. The cost is approximately $125 per ton. Mr. Costa noted this is the most expensive line item in the operating budget around $600,000 per year. He indicated at the wastewater plant there is liquid sludge which is usually 2 to 3% solids, and the city tries to dewater to the best of its capability using the equipment it has and end up with 30% solids, which leaves at about 70% still water. The sludge dryer takes that 30% solid product and gets it to about 90 to 95% solid, thus reducing the overall tonnage to haul away and dispose of.

Page 153 – WWTP Service Water Treatment Upgrade: Mr. Tarr addressed the committee and stated there are two things at the wastewater plant – material is processed, and the sludge is disposed of. Then the clean water product is discharged into the river. The equipment used is a pumping system and a hydro accumulator tank which is original to the facility at 40 years old. Maintenance on the equipment and parts availability is becoming a little harder and staff is looking to update that equipment with newer utilities which have more reliability and would certainly show an energy savings compared to the antiquated equipment being used now.

Page 154 – WWTP HVAC Replacement Project: Mr. Tarr noted this environment is a little outside of the normal industrial environment and there are HVAC systems that handle air exchanges. The average useful life of one of these units is about 15 years. In FY 25, 29 and 31 the project replaces three units.

Page 155 – WWTP Tank Repair Program: Mr. Costa stated one of the things that the city needs to continue to maintain is the concrete infrastructure tank as noted in the CIP document; a clarifier. It is about 95 feet in diameter, 12 feet deep and holds around 650,000 gallons of water. The maintenance work includes recoating the tanks and recoating the metal inside the tank.

Page 156 – WWTP Building Renovation and Demolition Program: Mr. Tarr stated the wastewater treatment plan at one point had a composting process. The out of service building is no longer safe to store materials and has almost a “false floor” in it. This has deteriorated and the entire building has been vacated. The proposal for FY26 is to utilize this area for exterior storage

and in FY28 the proposal is to demolish this building to get rid of this hazard and in FY30 renovation of men and women's facilities.

Page 157 - WWTP Laboratory Instrumentation & Equipment Replacement Program:
This is split between water and sewer. Laboratory staff perform technical and analytical analysis at the plant and use sophisticated equipment to do so. This project replaces an Atomic Absorption Spectrophotometer, which is due for replacement in FY27. This project budgets for a replacement piece of equipment which analyzes for low level metals. The laboratory performs analysis for drinking water and wastewater, and it is a compliance permit.

Page 158 – WWTP Clarifier Equipment Replacement Project: Mr. Tarr explained the clarifier is a big tank in the ground and in the center of it, mechanics that help operate the clarifier. The unit at the plant is original to the plant and dates to 1985. In FY 26 the equipment is scheduled for replacement. The wastewater treatment plant has a permit that has aluminum limits requirement. This equipment is deteriorating and the intent in FY 27 is to replace two of them in the secondary clarifiers with a fiberglass composite material which would benefit the future permit regulations.

Page 159 – Fiber Optics Replacement Project: This replaces the original fiber from City Hall to the Wastewater Treatment Plant. The original fiber was installed in the early 2000's and is approaching the end of its useful life and to ensure reliable communications and have access to the city's network about 5 miles of fiber is being proposed to be replaced. In FY27 the cost will be split between the airport and WWTP. In FY29, the fiber optic network around the wastewater treatment plant, which allows our SCADA systems to communicate with equipment and outbuildings - approximately 3000 feet of new fiber optic cable will be replaced.

Page 160 – WWTP Roof Replacement Project: This is for a smaller section over the maintenance shop over the receiving bay that was not completed in 2022.

Page 161 – WWTP Septage Pumps Replacement Project: This project is pushed out to FY31 – air operated style pumps used to convey septage discharged at the treatment plant. The units are original to the plant (1983).

Page 162 – Martell Court Bypass Project: This station is designed for peak flows up to 21 million gallons and conveys about 3,000,000 gallons a day on average. This is a new project not budgeted for previously. In July 2023 the discharge knife gate failed, pouring water into the station. The geographical location of the site is not ideal, it is at the corner of two rivers and installing a bypass to avoid a similar situation is not an easy task and will be an expensive project. As part of this project the city is also installing plumbing connections for an additional force main to the wastewater plant. There is only one pipe that leads from the station to the plant, which is 40 years old and can never be taken offline for maintenance. He indicated at some point there is going to be the need for an additional force main from the station to the wastewater plant. This project will at least allow for those connections to start happening.

Page 163 - WWTP Chemical Feed System Upgrade Project: Mr. Costa stated that they add 25% sodium hydroxide to the to the stream to the wastewater plant effluent prior to discharge in order to comply with discharge permits PH limit – you cannot go below 6 1/2. This chemical addition

allows them to maintain compliance with the permit. They tried this as a less expensive option than sodium bicarbonate, which they still use in times of extreme high flows. This worked but would like to make this a more permanent solution. However, 25% sodium hydroxide has a lower freezing temperature than water; when it gets to be around zero degrees Fahrenheit, this product starts to gel up and makes pumping a little more difficult. Project in FY31 to construct a building that would have bulk tanks and as a side benefit the city would get a better price on bulk deliveries versus getting deliveries in the tote shown on the CIP page.

Page 164 – Blackbrook Wastewater Pump Station Upgrade Project: Mr. Tarr stated this pump station was put online in the 90's but since that time uses in that area have expanded putting more stress on this system. About 7,000 gallons of wastewater was being transferred from that site per day, but since the location of Peoples Linen and living areas, the rate has increased to around 80,000 gallons per day and many non-flushable items are coming into the station. Staff are looking to upgrade this system. He added the other three stations, Bradco, Court Street and Farmstead are also getting the end of their life.

Page 165 – WWTP Grit Removal-Clamshell Replacement Project: This is an original piece of equipment to the site which is used to remove inorganic sand and grit which gets dewatered and gets eventually moved to the landfill. This equipment is worn out (40 years old) FY 26 has $80,000 to replace it.

Councilor Remy asked whether there is an opportunity in that process to use the sludge dryer which has been budgeted further out to dewater that material and potentially save money. Mr. Costa stated grit doesn't make it that far in the process. Sludge dryer is just handling the organic material. This is inorganic sand.

Page 166 – WWTP Sludge Replacement Project: These are the two pumps that feed the screw presses at the wastewater plant for the sludge process. In FY30 - tied in with that dryer project – these items will replace what that study finds.

Page 167 – WWTP UV Lamp Replacement Program: Mr. Costa explained that the wastewater plant disinfects its wastewater before it is discharged to the river to meet compliance with its discharge permit for E coli bacteria using UV disinfection. The City of Keene used to use chlorine when it first came online. With chlorine you must give it contact time for it to work, but then you also have to de-chlorinate it before it could go out to the river. The city invested in 2013 a new UV system. The system consists of around 240 lamps that need to be replaced every year, and this is the cost to replace the lamps. They are replaced every five years. It also allows the city to contract with the manufacturer's tech support so that we can do an extensive maintenance on this equipment when the lamps are replaced.

e. Water

Mr. Costa stated the water system consists of surface water reservoirs, groundwater wells, approximately 100 miles of distribution pipe, 900 hydrants, around 1,000 valves, treatment plant, six water storage tanks, six booster stations and what staff is doing is maintaining the assets and keeping them in good working order.

Page 180 - 3 MG Water Storage Tank REPAIR PROJECT: This tank is located behind Robinhood Park and is a 1962 welded steel storage tank to supply water and fire water storage for the citizens of Keene. 2018 saw an extensive evaluation (repair/replace) and found that it still has a lot of value. It needs to be coated inside and out – it was last coated in the late 1990's. Three million was budgeted in 2023 but the market has changed, and additional funds were needed and was budgeted to complete the project.

Page 180 - Chapman Water Storage Tank Repair Project: This is a smaller tank, 200,000 gallons in size installed in the early 1990's – precast concrete tank. FY28 funds the interior and exterior refurbishment of the tank.

Page 183 - Water Distribution Improvements Program: Mr. Lussier stated this is to improve capacity. Ten million dollars is being funded over the course of seven years – during this time four miles of the city's 102 miles of water main will be replaced. These pipes have a service life of nearly 120 years.

Page 184 – Lower Winchester Street Reconstruction Project Water Infrastructure Support: Mr. Tarr stated this is a one-time project that funds the replacement of the 12 inch ductile iron water main from Route 101 south of the town line. This water main was installed in 1970, it is not at the end of its life. It should get between 80 and 120 years but several breaks have happened over the past couple of years. This pipe seems to have some defects in it and has severe corrosion on it. Staff would like to replace it just to avoid future breaks.

Page 185 – Water Utility Work: This project specifically addresses the water infrastructure associated with Maple Avenue Bridge over Blackbrook. This work is scheduled for FY30. This is 1949 cast iron universal pipe.

Page 186 – Water Valve Replacement Program: This ongoing program focuses on improving the efficiency and reliability of the city's water distribution system by systematically replacing gate valves. These gate valves isolate water mains during emergency repairs, perform routine maintenance on the distribution system like hydrant replacements. US EPA estimates that properly maintain distribution valves have an expected useful life of 35 to 40 years. About 72% of the city's valves (3000 valves) have been in service for more than 40 years. In addition, 5% of these valves have been in service for more than 100 years. Operating older valves does pose some challenges. When these valves fail occasionally, they do fail in the closed position, and that may temporarily provide lower available fire flow in the neighborhood until that valve is replaced. FY25 is budgeting $110,000 for gate valve replacement and in FY 26 $115,000.

Page 187 - Bulk Water Fill Station Project: Mr. Tarr noted the city currently sells bulk water from a hydrant at 350 Marlborough Street. Access to this hydrant is very limited. It is also severely limited by the amount of time in the year that hydrant can be kept going as it requires a backflow device. This project funds a self-service bulk water station that will allow customers to purchase water 24/7 365 days a year. The city currently generates about $6,000 a year, selling bulk water with greater accessibility, staff hope for greater funding for water fund because of the proposed change. Mr. Costa added they are also evaluating a different fee structure for this bulk

water filling station. The 20/21 price was $5.06 for 750 gallons. Because this system will have more accessibility, it will accept credit cards; the city is looking to use this station not just for a large hauler but also for campers looking for portable water.

Councilor Remy stated he would be curious about moving this item up to make more money sooner. Mr. Costa stated they did this intentionally because of the reconstruction being proposed for 350 Marlboro Street parking lot. As this area will start increasing traffic with RV's and haulers, staff want to make sure it works together.

Page 188 - Water Supply Dam Maintenance Program: Mr. Rusnock addressed the committee again and stated in 2018 he had the pleasure of working with other city staff on the rebuild of the Babbage Reservoir Dam and in 2021 to rebuild the Woodward Pond Dam He indicated this program is similar to the General Fund Dam Maintenance program which specifically focused on two dams that serve water supply purposes for the city. In 2018 when Babbage Dam was being rebuilt, staff identified some leaks in the intake pipe for that dam and those were things that staff was not aware of when they were doing the design. This has been identified as a project for FY30 and 31.

Mr. Rusnock went on to say another potential project is the access road improvements for the water main from Babbage Dam. There is a section that is in a wetland area that needs to be improved with culverts and a significant amount of erosion resistant material. The third project that has been identified is the Woodward Pond Dam access road improvements which is located at the bottom of a very steep hill. It is a Class VI Road in the Town of Roxbury. It is very difficult to access and maintain that road, particularly in the winter. There are drainage issues, groundwater, and relatively poor drainage on that road. One of the potential projects is doing a significant amount of access road improvements to reach Woodward Pond Dam.

Councilor Remy referred to this project and the bridge capital maintenance program - given the state's tendency to fund based on need; he stated he was hesitant to create these types of programs that fund ongoing maintenance which will make it 100% local funding versus state participation. He asked whether there was anything that could be done to incentivize programs for the state that are more maintenance based. The Manager agreed this access road is not something the state is going to fund but felt there are other opportunities the city could advocate for more funding. Mr. Lussier added this issue is something that is eventually going to need legislative action at the state level to address municipal needs. The Manager indicated NHMA is going through its process where municipalities can submit concepts to receive broader support in collaboration with other municipalities. Department Heads are looking at projects they can advocate for.

Councilor Roberts recalled the federal government clamping down on discretionary funding a while ago. A few years ago, discretionary funding was at 35% of the budget but it has now been reduced to 27%. He felt the city needs to be proactive and not use the excuse of someone else coming to its assistance.

Page 189 - Emergency Generators Replacement Program: Mr. Crowder stated the city has done a lot to make sure there is emergency power at most of its stations. This program continues to

upgrade those assets. In FY28, at the water treatment facility, it would fund the 250 KW replacement generator (30 years old). FY31 65 KW generator at the Blackbrook Water Booster Station (35 years old).

Page 190 - WTF Instrumentation Replacement & Upgrade Program: The water treatment facility - groundwater wells, storage tank pump stations are all equipped with online monitoring equipment which allows the city to monitor the process 24/7. This project replaces eight online turbidimeter meters in FY25 and a total organic carbon analyzer in FY28.

Page 191 - WTF Valve & Actuator Replacement & Upgrade Program: At the water plant there are three filter units which process water and each of those unit functions have a start stop cleaning functions. They are all done with butterfly valves that are pneumatically actuated and use compressed air to open and close these valves. Every one of these items are original and is quite a wasteful expenditure. 50% of the applied energy is used to operate this system is lost. In FY26, the staff is looking to replace the actual butterfly valves with electronic actuators that would use regular electricity to operate. In FY26 the first unit and assorted programming will be completed and refined, FY28 would be the second unit and FY30 would be the last unit at the water plant.

Page 192 - WTF Waste Gate Actuator Replacement Project: This project in FY28 would replace actuators that are having issues finding parts.

Page 193 - WTF HVAC And AC Unit Replacement Project: Two pieces of equipment that date back to 1993. In FY27 replacement of air conditioning system and FY29 would be the heating HVAC system which is also an original piece.

Page 194 - WTF Blower Replacement Project: In FY26 the replacement of a backwash pump used as part of the cleaning process at the water plant. This equipment is still serviceable, but again it has not been refurbished or worked on since it was initially put in two years ago. There was repair done on the opposite unit. Hence, there are two for redundancy purposes. Technicians have assured a 15–20-year life on the one that was refurbished. In FY28, located below the water plant is the Chapman Road Pump Station which has the design pumps like backwash pumps just a little smaller. Specialists have indicated refurbishments to that equipment should have an expected life cycle on that as well. The water supply master plan that was done a few years back that noted that the Blackbrook booster station pumps were undersized to meet future expansion – In FY30 the City would upgrade the pumps at that station.

Page 195 - WTF Blower Replacement Project: There two regenerative blowers that take air and flush water to remove organics and materials which is what washes into the wastewater tank after the cleaning function. These are original to the facility and both units have been serviced. FY26 would fund upgraded equipment with energy efficiency.

Page 196 – Well Field Upgrades Program: Court Street has three groundwater wells which date back to the 1960 – 1980 timeframe. This project refurbishes and upgrades those structures. This is a valuable water source for Keene and can produce a million and a half gallons of water per day for the city.

Chair Powers asked Mr. Costa to speak a little about Ben Crowder and Christian Tarr's history with the City.

Mr. Costa stated Mr. Tarr has been with the city for 16 years; started in the water and sewer department working on sewer collection and water distribution system. He then applied for the utilities maintenance job at the wastewater plant 10 years ago. He worked his way up from foreman to the utilities maintenance manager position. Mr. Costa stated Mr. Tarr is very talented and knowledgeable in mechanical and electrical equipment. Mr. Costa stated he was glad he is part of the team.

Ben Crowder has also been with the city for 15 or 16 years. He also started in the water and sewer division. Mr. Crowder took an interest in the water treatment facility and was moved to that position to fill in some voids the department had. He was then able to get his water licenses and was eventually promoted to the water treatment facility manager position. Mr. Crowder is the primary operator for the water system, so he holds the water treatment facility and the distribution license that is required by the state. He is considered the primary water operator in the eyes of New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services. With the most recent vacancy for the operations manager previously held by Chris Pelletier –Mr. Crowder took an interest in that position and has been promoted to water and sewer operations manager in charge of the water treatment facility and the collection and distribution system.

f. Fire Department

Fire Chief Farquhar stated for a department of their size they have too many fleet and whether they are used or not they cost the city money. Staff evaluated how many miles each truck travels, managed repair costs and looked at ways to enhance the quality of the apparatus by reducing overall costs and reducing the size of the fleet. He indicated an important factor is durable medical equipment which has been purchased with grants but never made it to the CIP which has caused the department some issues. With this year's CTP staff has added a rescue boat, hazmat trailer, technical rescue trailer. The Chief stated another aspect to keep in mind is when you replace a piece of apparatus on an emergency basis it shifts the rest of the schedule. Staff considered all these things to realign its fleet.

He referred to a document titled 2023 Keene Fire Apparatus Replacement Schedule based on Public Works measuring instrument adopted by Fire Service. You receive a score for each piece of equipment: Engine 1 (primary engine) scores at 24.5 which is in the zone to be considered for replacement. Engine 2 (older spare) scores at 20.7 and Ladder 2 (West Station) scores at 20.5 – getting close to consideration for replacement. If Engine 1 was trended out for mileage, 2026 would be the time to replace that truck. The Chief noted Engine 1 had a bad year this year with repairs at a cost of $30,000. The maintenance budget for the department is $70,000, overtime this truck will get much more costly to repair. Same would be the case with Ladder 2.

The next slide referred to current apparatus replacement plan: Engine 1 (primary engine) Engine 2 (older spare) Ladder 2 (West Station), Power Ladder is new (4,000 miles), Tanker 1 is new, Rescue 1 will be refurbished. The proposal is to purchase a new engine in 2026 at a cost of 1.3

million dollars. With respect to the Rescue Truck, the proposal instead of replacing the truck is to refurbish it at a cost of approximately $524,000, to replace it in kind would be over a million dollars. Refurbishing would give it another 15 years. Ladder 2 will then be moved to Station 1 as a spare. At that point the Haz Mat Trailer could be disposed of. This will reduce the fleet from seven to five.

If Ladder 2 is used as a primary it will need to be replaced by FY28, however, if it was retained as a spare, its mileage will be reduced by 75%. Tower Ladder only has 4,000 miles and if it is moved to West Keene, the mileage can be preserved for much longer.

Page 34 – Ambulance Replacement Program: An ambulance is replaced every three years. The Chief stated the program is in good shape. Three are used as front-line ambulances with a fourth used as a spare. FY25 has a funding request for $452,186; FY28 $468,186; $FY31 $474,255.

Councilor Chadbourne asked what happens to ambulances when they are ready to be traded. The Chief stated they are distributed to contract towns. Another option is to re-chassis the ambulances, this brings about a 50% savings and the department is looking into this option.

Chair Powers felt the City should give some thought to ordering the next ambulance before FY25.

Page 39-40 – Durable Equipment Program: These large purchases are shared with the contract towns. This item first appeared in the CIP about two years ago. Equipment such as cardiac monitors, ventilators, high end medical equipment used to run the paramedic program.

The SIG Tronic Master Box System – Red Boxes that are installed on the side of buildings, when an alarm is sent it is received at the dispatch center. At the present time that system is an older analog system. During the Department ISO rating the department has had points reduced due to having this system. The new equipment would be computer based and would go directly to the dispatch center. The cost of this system would be about $130,000. The Chief went on to say for master box maintenance in FY22 the department received $84,456 and in FY23 $90,000. Each owner of the master boxes is charged $408 for maintenance annually. The city has 225 boxes of this 39 boxes are radio boxes. The radio boxes self-test and are easier to manage.

Page 42 - Gear Washer/Extractor & Drying System Project: This is to replace items that are older. These items can be replaced through grants.

The Manager asked the City Engineer to send the finance committee the most recent presentation on the sidewalk asset management plan to explain how the system is set up and how sidewalks are chosen.

There being no further business, Chair Powers adjourned the meeting at 8:29 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Krishni Pahl, Minute Taker

Edits submitted by,
Terri M. Hood, Assistant City Clerk