

City of Biddeford
Finance Committee Meeting Minutes
September 6, 2022

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Councilor Norman Belanger.

Present: Mayor Alan Casavant; Councilor Norman Belanger; Councilor Marc Lessard; Councilor William Emhiser; City Manager James Bennett; City Clerk Carmen Bernier; and Finance Director Nichole Wood.

Adjustment to the Agenda
No adjustment to the agenda.

Approval of Minutes of July 19, 2022
Motion by Mayor Casavant, seconded Councilor Emhiser to accept the minutes as printed.

Vote: unanimous.
Motion carries.

Expenditure Warrants:
The Warrants were available for review.

Discussion/Approval
Approval: Purchase of EMS Stretcher Ambulance Lifting System/Stryker
Motion by Mayor Casavant, seconded by Councilor Emhiser to approve the purchase.

Fire Chief Scott Gagne presented this item. He explained the City has three ambulances, noting the last ambulance purchased had this system in it. This year Scott requested it and noted it is part of the CIP procurement.

Vote: unanimous.
Motion carries.

Recommendation: Carry Forward Funds from FY22 to FY23
Motion by Mayor Casavant, seconded by Councilor Emhiser to recommend the approval of these Carry Forwards.

Councilor Lessard noted he may vote in opposition because of the procedure.

Councilor Emhiser asked why some of the projects had not been done and funds used in FY22.

City Manager Jim Bennett explained some of the items and noted this is a normal practice to Carry Forward.

Councilor Lessard would rather the Carry Forwards lapse to the Fund Balance.

Vote: 3/1; Councilor Lessard opposed.
Motion carries.

Approval: Construction Engineering & Inspection Services for Pearl Street - Sewall

Motion by Mayor Casavant, seconded by Councilor Emhiser to recommend the funding of Construction & Inspection Services for the Pearl Street Project, awarded to Sewall.

Councilor Lessard noted we are looking to hire Sewall to help us with the project management of this which will start in earnest immediately and run through the Spring of 2023 not to exceed \$150,000.00. He would rather hire someone for less than \$150,000.00 and have them on the payroll for the next two years and still spend \$150,000.00 as a trainee or something and could still manage the project.

Councilor Belanger asked Brian Phinney if any other alternatives were looked at, if any.

Chief Operating Officer Brian Phinney explained when we originally considered this project and discussed the funding, one of the approaches was an internal Engineer, which we don't have. Another approach was contracting an external Project Manager who works for Public Works and would review daily receipts, other technical elements and have it overseen by the Engineering Staff. In our meetings, Jeff felt that individual would be overtaxed doing this project and the Pearl Street Project.

Councilor Lessard asked if having a vacant position in the Engineering Department has anything to do with going this route. Brian answered yes. Councilor Lessard asked if we have an idea when we can fill the current Engineering position.

City Manager Jim Bennett noted he met with the Team today and they will advertise the position. He anticipates 3 to 4 months before they fill the position.

Councilor Lessard (hypothetically speaking) asked if we could use a \$50,000.00 signing bonus for an Engineer to start working for us by October 1, and they would have enough credentials to be able to help with this project.

Jim noted he would be concerned about the signing bonus, it would have implications and we are not in the bonus game.

Discussion: using bonus to sign on an Engineer.

Vote: 3/1; Councilor Lessard opposed.
Motion carries.

Other Business

Councilor Lessard explained that he voted in opposition to the Carry Forward item because he feels it sets a precedence that Staff doesn't have to work to get projects accomplished because the funds will be forwarded to the next fiscal year.

Motion by Councilor Emhiser, seconded by Councilor Lessard to adjourn.

Vote: unanimous.

Motions carries.

Adjourned at 5:55 pm