

City of Biddeford
Finance Committee Meeting Minutes
August 18, 2020
(Due to COVID-19, the meeting was held virtually via ZOOM)

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by the Chair, Councilor John McCurry.

Present: Chair, Council President, John McCurry; Mayor Alan Casavant; Councilor Stephen St. Cyr; Councilor Mike Ready; City Manager, James Bennett; City Clerk, Carmen Morris; and Interim Finance Director, Gerry Matherne.

Adjustment to the Agenda

No adjustments to the agenda.

Approval of Minutes of August 4, 2020

Motion by Councilor Ready to approve the minutes as printed, seconded by Councilor St. Cyr.

Vote: unanimous.

Motion carries 4-0.

Expenditure Warrants: August 4, 2020, August 11, 2020, August 18, 2020

The warrants were emailed to the Finance Committee members for their review.

Motion by Councilor Ready to approve the August 4, 2020 warrant, seconded by Councilor St. Cyr.

Vote: unanimous

Motion carries 4-0.

Motion by Councilor Ready to approve the August 11, 2020 warrant, seconded by Councilor St. Cyr.

Vote: unanimous

Motion carries 4-0.

Motion by Councilor Ready to approve the August 18, 2020 warrant, seconded by Councilor St. Cyr.

Vote: unanimous

Motion carries 4-0.

Discussion/Approval

Recommendation/\$10,000,000 for Sewer/CSO Work Bond Referendum for November 3, 2020 Municipal Referendum Election

Motion by Councilor Ready to recommend sending the Bond Referendum to the voters at the November 3, 2020 Election, seconded by Councilor St. Cyr.

Discussion: Councilor St. Cyr noted he would not support this, he might have supported it if the amount was less.

Councilor Ready and Councilor McCurry do not disagree with Councilor St. Cyr, but also noted it will not go away. In the next few months it may not get better, they will both support the bond referendum.

Vote: 3-1; Councilor St. Cyr opposed.

Mayor Casavant, Councilors McCurry and Ready in favor.

Motion carries 3-1.

Recommendation/\$10,000,000 for Miscellaneous Infrastructure and Building Improvements/Repairs Bond Referendum for November 3, 2020 Municipal Referendum Election

Motion by Councilor Ready to recommend sending the Bond Referendum to the voters at the November 3, 2020 Election, seconded by Councilor St. Cyr.

Discussion: Councilor St. Cyr echoed the same thing he said earlier and will not support this.

Councilor Ready noted he will support it, but he does have concerns.

Mayor Casavant noted the reason we are here talking about this now it's not time to raise taxes or do this. Every time it's come up over the past years it was not a good time to fix buildings, to pave roads, etc. Then we are forced to do it because there is no other choice. In his view, we are paying for this now that our previous generation should have paid for. But they didn't and it got postponed. He thinks it should be the voter's choice.

The City Manager gave a brief overview of the bond issues.

Councilor St. Cyr thinks if we were more specific of the other properties it would be more likely supported.

Councilor McCurry also would not support this bond issue. He explained he would be open to sending it to Council with no recommendation.

Motion by Councilor Ready to forward this Bond Referendum issue to the Council with NO RECOMMENDATION, seconded by Councilor St. Cyr.

Vote: unanimous.

Motion carries 4-1.

Recommendation/Write-Off of Uncollected Personal Property Taxes for Fiscal Years FY10 through FY14

Motion by Councilor Ready to recommend the write-off of the uncollected personal property taxes for fiscal years FY10 to FY14, seconded by Councilor St. Cyr.

Discussion: Councilor St. Cyr thought a process should be in place where this is reviewed at the end of each fiscal year. He also thought the auditors should have made some kind of recommendation. He was surprised it was missed altogether.

Jim Bennett explained we should go back 2 to 3 years and take care of things like that, it should be a matter of course.

Vote: 3-1; Councilor McCurry opposed.

Mayor Casavant, Councilors Ready and St. Cyr in favor.
Motion carries 3-1.

Recommendation/Addition of Current Fiscal Year Inflow & Infiltration Fees to Dedicated Reserve Account (Wastewater Assigned Fund Balance)

Motion by Councilor Ready to recommend the addition of current fiscal year Inflow & Infiltration Fees to a Dedicated Reserve Account, seconded by Councilor St. Cyr.

Discussion: Councilor Ready wanted to know why this doesn't happen automatically. Jim Bennett explained it should have been set up that way, and unless the Council changes it, it does.

Vote: unanimous.
Motion carries 4-1.

Approval/Biddeford Municipal Airport Taxiway Paving Project

Motion by Councilor Ready to approve the Airport Runway Paving Project, with the total cost to pave coming in at \$12,603.70, seconded by Councilor St. Cyr.

Funding will be as follows:

1. Use the lease space revenue from the primary contractor Sargent Corp. of \$5,400.00.
2. From the Airport Operations Budget - \$7,203.70 (Account 31132).

Discussion: Councilor Ready asked about the revenue money being used. Public Works Director, Jeff Demers, noted it is a one-time revenue screen just for their equipment lease. FAA has no issue with this. We are putting it back to its original condition.

Vote: unanimous.
Motion carries 4-1.

Other Business

Update from Ice Arena Association Chair: Rich Reissfelder.

While waiting for Rich to get on board with the Committee meeting Councilor Ready had a question about the CSO Bond.

Jim Bennett gave an explanation of the status of those bonds.

Councilor Ready asked what the plan is and when do we start to pay for the new compressor system.

Rich explained they have not received any notice yet. They are ready to pay. They have saved on utilities but that was because of the shut-down.

Councilor McCurry asked if the Arena Association actually did buy a hockey team.

Rich explained there was a Junior Hockey team that operated out of the Arena. There is a Youth Program still skating out of the Arena, and you have the Wild Youth owned a junior team skating out of the Arena for 7 years. They did purchase the Junior Program and in March of this year, after one season, decided to cut their losses and folded it.

Councilor McCurry asked if the funds came out of the Ice Arena.

Rich explained they bought the team for \$5,000.00 and then had 5 years of ice credits. \$11,000.00 a year for 5 years. The money came out of a rainy day fund from the 80's.

The City Manager explained the Arena Board is a separate Board from the City. We are responsible for issues associated with the building.

The Mayor explained it is set up something like the City Theater. Our responsibilities are the building and the business decisions are with their Board and not the City.

Councilor Ready asked about the quarterly reports the City receives and would like the savings they receive highlighted.

Councilor St. Cyr would like to see what the mil rates are for Biddeford's peer communities.

Councilor McCurry asked if the City has year-end figures.

Jim explained they should be available mid-September.

The City Manager updated the Committee on the issue of being able to hire an additional Inspector in the Codes Office using the TIF account, and explained he is pretty confident this cannot be done. Another position could possibly be built into the next fiscal year budget.

Motion to adjourn made by Councilor Ready, seconded by Mayor Casavant.

Vote: unanimous.

Motion carries 4-0.

Adjourned at 5:54 p.m.