

COUNCIL MEETING

March 7, 2023

{The meeting was held in a hybrid model – in person and via Zoom}

Called to order by Mayor Casavant at: 6:07 p.m.

Roll Call: William Emhiser, Norman Belanger, Scott Whiting, Martin Grohman, Bobby Mills, Julian Schlaver, Doris Ortiz, Liam LaFountain and Marc Lessard were present.

The Council and all that were present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Adjustment to the Agenda:

2023.23) Discussion/Approval – Replacing the heat pumps at J. Richard Martin Community Center - ADDED

Public Addressing the Council: One person from the public addressed the Council.

Consideration of Minutes: **February 21, 2023**

Motion by Councilor Belanger, seconded by Councilor Lessard to accept the minutes as printed.

Vote: Unanimous

Motion Passes

Orders of the Day:

2023.16) Discussion/Approval – CDBG Funding Priorities through April 1, 2024

City Manager Jim Bennett presents the CDBG Funding Priorities referencing the two memos provided to the Council. These memos can be viewed on the City of Biddeford's website.

Motion made by Councilor Belanger, seconded by Councilor Lessard to recommend allocating the current CDBG Fund balance of \$751,000 as follows;

- \$500,000 to implement the 2023-2028 Affordable Housing Goals.
- \$151,000 for Infrastructure Improvements in LMI neighborhoods.
- \$100,000 to be used to address the ADA Transition Plan Requirements.

Vote: Unanimous

Motion Passes

2023.17) Discussion/Approval – CDBG 1-Year Extension Request for the 5-Year Consolidated Plan

2023.17

IN BOARD OF CITY COUNCIL, MARCH 7, 2023,

BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Biddeford does hereby direct the Mayor to request in writing of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) a one-year extension of the City's current Five-Year Consolidated Plan for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program, which is due to expire on June 30, 2023. Pending approval of this request, Biddeford's new Five-Year Consolidated Plan will be submitted by May 2024 for the program year that begins July 1, 2024 and includes program years 2024 to 2028.

Motion made by Councilor Emhiser, seconded by Councilor Belanger to approve the Fire Department Union Contract for 2023-2025.

Vote: Unanimous

Motion Passes

2023.21) Approval/Consultant to Assist with Unhoused Services Analysis

2023.21 IN BOARD OF CITY COUNCIL... MARCH 7, 2023 BE IT ORDERED, by the City Council of the City of Biddeford that the City Manager be authorized to solicit the services of a qualified consultant to (1) assist the City with a technical analysis of the unhoused issues within Biddeford, (2) assists with developing a comprehensive policy to include complete services for those impacted in order to break the unhoused cycle.

BE IT FURTHER ORDERED, that the budget for the consulting services be limited to \$20,000 unless otherwise increased.

Motion made by Councilor Belanger, seconded by Councilor Lessard to approve the authorization for a qualified consultant to assist with Unhoused Services Analysis.

Vote: 7:2; Councilors Emhiser, Grohman, Schlaver, Belanger, LaFountain, Ortiz and Lessard in favor. Councilors Mills and Whiting opposed.

Motion Passes

2023.22) Authorization/Riverwalk Permitting and Bid Package – Wright-Pierce

2023.22 IN BOARD OF CITY COUNCIL... MARCH 7, 2023 BE IT ORDERED, by the City Council of the City of Biddeford that the City Manager execute *Amendment No 2 to Agreement Between the City of Biddeford and Wright-Pierce for Engineering Services Associated with Biddeford Riverwalk* in the amount of \$79,600 for Riverwalk permitting, engineering and bidding services for construction.

Note: The Finance Committee will review the Order on March 7, 2023

Motion made by Councilor Belanger, seconded by Councilor Lessard to authorize the agreement between the City of Biddeford and Wright-Pierce for engineering services associated with Biddeford Riverwalk in the amount \$79,600.

Vote: Unanimous

Motion Passes

Discussion/Approval to Replace and Install Four Failing Heat Pumps and Add a Fifth Heat Pump at the J. Richard Martin Community Center for a Cost Not to Exceed \$43,400. These Units Will Be Used for Heating and Cooling

The purpose of this project is to remove and replace four units and install one new unit eliminating two aged window units. All units either have failed or are failing. Replacement units to be installed in Rooms 2 and 4, Ross Center and the Recreation Office area. The new install will be in the bingo hall eliminating the two dated window units

Note: Amount requested is 43,400.00; funding source is account number 22002-92112-21802 Community Center Improvements. As of 3-1-23, the account balance was 51,624.00.

Mayor Casavant explains to the Council that this was discussed at the Finance Committee Meeting but the vote was split. The Finance Committee asked to have this presented to the Council as a whole to let the Council decide whether or not to authorize this expenditure.

Motion made by Councilor Grohman, seconded by Councilor Mills to authorize the purchase of four heat pumps to be installed by Jim Godbout Plumbing & Heating as detailed in the comments that came before the Finance Committee. Furthermore, it be funded by the Community Center Improvements Budget.

Vote: 6:3; Councilors Emhiser, Whiting, Grohman, Mills, Schlaver and LaFountain in favor. Councilors Lessard, Ortiz and Belanger opposed.

Motion Passes

Motion made by Councilor Lessard, seconded by Councilor Belanger, to table this item until the March 21, 2023 Council Meeting so that the Council can get additional cost for replacement with window air conditioners verse heat pumps to cool the building.

Vote: 4:5; Councilors Lessard, Ortiz, Belanger and Schlaver in favor. Councilors Emhiser, Whiting, Grohman, Mills and LaFountain opposed.

Motion Defeated

Appointments:

Councilor Julian Schlaver and Councilor Martin Grohman – Joint Biddeford-Saco Council Committee

IN BOARD OF CITY COUNCIL...MARCH 7, 2023

ORDERED, that I, Alan M. Casavant, Mayor of the City of Biddeford, do hereby appoint:

**Councilor Julian Schlaver Ward 5
&
Councilor Martin Grohman Ward 3**

to the *Joint Biddeford-Saco Council Committee*

Motion made by Councilor Belanger, seconded by Councilor Whiting to confirm the appointment.

Vote: Unanimous.

Appointment Confirmed

John Schafer – Harbor Commission & Shellfish Conservation Committee

IN BOARD OF CITY COUNCIL...MARCH 7, 2023

ORDERED, that I, Alan M. Casavant, Mayor of the City of Biddeford, do hereby appoint:

**John Schafer
Ward 1**

to the *Harbor Commission & Shellfish Conservation Committee*

Motion made by Councilor Belanger, seconded by Councilor Whiting to confirm the appointment.

Vote: Unanimous.

Appointment Confirmed

Public Addressing: One person from the public addressed the Council

City Manager report:

City Manager Jim Bennett – Apologizes to Patrick a member of the public for not evaluating the speed on Granite Street by now. He says that he got lost in the recruitment process for the new Police Chief but he will address this concern soon and follow up with the Interim Police Chief. He also reports to the Council that, internally, staff have made the decision that they believe they can meet all the criteria to apply for a Congressional Direct Spending Allocation for a second pedestrian bridge. This is something that was talked about during the joint meeting with Saco. He says that Biddeford staff will be sending that request in to the Senator's Office.

Other Business:

Councilor Lessard – Explains to the Council that the only reason they had the conversation about the heat pumps at the Community Center was because this topic came up at the Finance Committee and it was a split 2:2 vote and it would not have come to the City Council. Councilor Lessard was the one at the Finance Committee meeting that said, let's send it on to Council without a recommendation for it to pass. He wants to let it be known that he could have let it die at Finance and the Council would not have seen it but out of respect for his fellow Councilors he thought it was worthy of having a discussion. He also informs the Council that he didn't appreciate a certain comment that was made by the Councilor from Ward 3 in this type of setting. He feels the Councilor's comment was beneath the Council.

Councilor Grohman – Apologizes to Councilor Lessard for his comment and says he regrets making the remark.

Councilor Whiting – Gives a plug to the HOB that is doing another raffle. All of the proceeds are going to the HOB to support continual revitalization of Biddeford's Great American Main Street. You can purchase entries 25 at \$25.00 or 150 entries for \$100.00. The grand prize is \$1000.00 cash prize, three \$500.00 runner-up prizes and there will be weekly prizes. The drawing will take place on March 17th St. Patrick's Day. The name of the raffle is "Lucky HOB" and they are encouraging people to participate in the raffle to see if they will be a Lucky HOB.

Councilor Mills – Reminds the Council that Councilor Belanger won the Lucky HOB Raffle last year. Councilor Mills also wanted to thank Councilor Lessard for bringing the Community Center heat pump discussion to the full Council. He reflected on when he was on the Policy Chair years ago he would do the same. If there were items that died at Policy, he would bring them to full Council. He thinks that it important that things get brought to the full Council for discussion and appreciates that Councilor Lessard did that.

Councilor Grohman – Would like everyone to put on their calendars that City once again this year is putting on a tribute to Vietnam Veterans on Vietnam Veteran's Commemoration Day. The tribute will be held Wednesday, March 29th at 2:00 p.m. at the Veteran's Memorial Park.

Council President Addressing the Council: Council President Norman Belanger did not address the Council.

Mayor Addressing the Council: Mayor Alan Casavant thanks Councilor Grohman for coordinating the Vietnam Memorial.

Adjourn:

Motion made by Councilor Belanger, seconded by Councilor Mills to adjourn

Vote: Unanimous

Motion Passes

Time: 8:05 p.m.