

CITY COUNCIL SPEICAL MEETING JUNE 6, 2023 MINUTES

Date: June 6, 2023

Time: 6:30 PM

Location: City Council Chamber, 375 Merrimack Street, 2nd Floor,
Lowell, MA

Special Meeting FY 2024 Budget

1. ROLL CALL

Roll Call 11 Present.

M. Chau presiding.

C. Mercier requested moment of silence in darkened chamber for James P. Christman.

2. MAYOR'S BUSINESS

2.1. Communication Remote/Zoom Participation.

In City Council, **Motion** to accept and place on file by C. Jenness, seconded by C. Gitschier. So voted.

3. AUDITOR BUSINESS

3.1. Communication - FY23 Year To Date Budget Reports.

In City Council, **Motion** to accept and place on file by C. Scott, seconded by C. Yem. So voted. City Auditor Oakes noted below information was provided to Council to assist with public hearing on the budget and was available on the City website as well. C. Gitschier recognized Auditor's office for providing all the updates throughout year on the website.

1) General Fund Revenue

2) General Fund Expenses - No School Accounts

3) General Fund Expenses - School Accounts

4) Parking Enterprise

5) Waste Water Enterprise

6) Water Enterprise.

4. COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITY MANAGER

4.1. Informational Reports.

In City Council, **Motion** to accept and place on file by C. Leahy, seconded by C. Mercier. So voted. Manager Golden, Jr. provided a brief FY24 budget presentation noting accomplishments of past year and the effort moving forward. Manager Golden, Jr. noted prior increase in poll workers; wage adjustments; emergency personnel enhancements; and increased fleet at DPW. Manager Golden, Jr. noted challenges ahead which included costs drivers but that focus for future would be in education, public safety, sustainability, development services and 311 system. Manager Golden, Jr. commented on increase it taxes but note that it was vital to move City forward. C. Leahy recognized the administration efforts and the move in the right direction. C. Robinson noted upcoming public hearing on the budget. C. Yem noted finance team responded to the needs and requests of the Council.

Informational Report - Contingency Account Analysis

Informational Report - FY2024 Budget Presentation for City Council

5. VOTES FROM THE CITY MANAGER

5.1. Vote - Accept Timely Submission Of The Budget.

In City Council, Read twice, **Motion** to Adopt by C. Yem, seconded by C. Rourke. Adopted per Roll Call vote 11 yeas. So voted.

5.2. Vote - Endorse The 5 Year Capital Plan.

In City Council, Given 1st Reading, **Motion** to refer to Finance SC by C. Robinson, seconded by C. Jenness. So voted. C. Yem requested different format for summary page. Conor Baldwin (CFO) noted they will make it as readable as possible. C. Robinson requested referral to subcommittee as plan needs some adjustments. Mr. Baldwin commented on the process. C. Gitschier noted plan needed better prioritization and additional information. Manager Golden, Jr. informed the Council that funds from the sale of City property would be going to repair of fire houses. C. Robinson noted there was not enough money for traffic mitigation which has been requested many times by body. C. Scott noted the need for funding on traffic calming measures. C. Nuon noted funding issues. C. Drinkwater noted that one project should not be pitted against another project.

5.3. Vote - FY2024 Appropriation Order.

In City Council, Given 1st Reading, **Motion** to refer to Public Hearing on June 20, 2023 @ 7:00 PM by C. Nuon, seconded by C. Mercier. So voted.

6. ORDERS FROM THE CITY MANAGER

6.1. Loan Order - 2023 Capital Plan Loan Order.

In City Council, Given 1st Reading, **Motion** to refer to Public Hearing on June 20, 2023 @ 7:00 PM by C. Drinkwater, seconded by C. Leahy. So voted.

6.2. Loan Order - Legal Settlement Loan Order.

In City Council, Given 1st Reading, **Motion** to refer to Public Hearing on June 20, 2023 @ 7:00 PM by C. Rourke, seconded by C. Robinson. So voted.

7. ORDINANCES FROM THE CITY MANAGER

7.1. Ordinance - Amend Chapter 20 Article III – DPW.

In City Council, Given 1st Reading, **Motion** to refer to Public Hearing on June 20, 2023 @ 7:00 PM by C. Mercier, seconded by C. Yem. So voted. C. Gitschier requested further information on Sustainability Department being housed in the DPW. Mr. Baldwin discussed the department and how it was developed. C. Robinson requested information as well. Yovani Baez-Rose (DPD) commented on the reasoning behind developing and housing the department. C. Robinson commented on the proposed organizational chart. Manager Golden, Jr. commented on the chart and the involvement of the DPD with the new department. C. Nuon noted support as long as DPD is involved. C. Mercier noted that administration should be supported with their decision making regarding department and further questioned the amount of comments before a public hearing has been posted. **Motion** by C. Gitschier, seconded by C. Robinson requesting City Manager have Law Department provide opinion regarding amount of discussion by members before a public hearing opened. So voted. **Motion** by C. Mercier, seconded by C. Yem to bundle Items #7.1 and #7.2 and refer to public hearing at 7PM on June 20, 2023. So voted

7.2. Ordinance - Amend Chapter 56 Article II.

In City Council, Given 1st Reading, **Motion** to refer to Public Hearing on June 20, 2023 @ 7:00 PM by C. Mercier, seconded by C. Yem. So voted.

7.3. Ordinance - Amend Parking Rates FY24.

In City Council, Given 1st Reading, **Motion** to refer to Public Hearing on June 20, 2023 @ 7:00 PM by C. Mercier, seconded by C. Robinson. So voted. C. Jenness noted the many

discussions and meetings regarding downtown rates and commented that it simply was an unfair adjustment that should not be supported. Motion by C. Jenness, seconded by C. Nuon to refer ordinance back to administration for further review. Motion was note acted upon as C. Jenness with the approval to C. Nuon to withdraw the motion. C. Rourke noted that ordinance should go to public hearing and if not supported it would not be enacted. C. Nuon commented on the ordinance language. C. Drinkwater commented on process issue noting that members can vote yes or no at a public hearing.

7.4. Ordinance - Amend Sewer Rate FY24.

In City Council, Given 1st Reading, **Motion** to refer to Public Hearing on June 20, 2023 @ 7:00 PM by C. Drinkwater, seconded by C. Nuon. So voted.

7.5. Ordinance - Amend Water Rate FY24.

In City Council, Given 1st Reading, **Motion** to refer to Public Hearing on June 20, 2023 @ 7:00 PM by C. Gitschier, seconded by C. Yem. So voted.

7.6. Ordinance - Create New Positions In Various Departments.

In City Council, Given 1st Reading, **Motion** to refer to Public Hearing on June 20, 2023 @ 7:00 PM by C. Leahy, seconded by C. Mercier. So voted.

8. REPORTS (SUB/COMMITTEE, IF ANY)

In City Council, none.

9. ANNOUNCEMENTS

In City Council, Mr. Baldwin noted budget was posted on website.

10. ADJOURNMENT

In City Council, **Motion** to Adjourn by C. Scott, seconded by C. Drinkwater. So voted.

Meeting adjourned at 7:50 PM.

Michael Q. Geary, City Clerk