

**Government Operations Committee
Tuesday, April 22, 2014 AT 6:55 pm
City Council Chambers**

MINUTES

Council Members: Civiello, Baldacci, Plourde, Durgin, Gallant, Graham

Staff Members: Farrar, Goodwin, Heitmann, Darrell Cyr, Wardwell

Others: Mr. & Mrs. Lyons, Wanda Creed, Wendy Erickson

1. Update on Voting Location Change at the Cross Insurance Center

City Clerk Goodwin and Councilor Durgin suggested that we use the Cross Center for the June election to see how this facility works during a smaller election and work out any bugs or decide to use a different facility. There is a time crunch on this since June elections are rapidly approaching.

Councilor Baldacci asked that we also discuss this subject at a later time when the committee can go down and check out the different venues so it can be determined what may work and what may not work.

Councilor Gallant moved staff recommendation, Councilor Baldacci seconded, so approved.

2. Council Referral: Ordinance 14-138, Amending Schedule I of Chapter 291, Article III Sec. 38 of the Code of the City of Bangor - No Parking - 645 Hammond Street

City Solicitor Heitmann introduced the Lyon's and the issues they have had at their residence at 645 Hammond Street. They requested a no parking zone 20 feet on each side of their driveway for safety reasons for the Lyon's to exit and enter their driveway.

Councilor Gallant stated that from a safety stand point for this amendment, he moved staff recommendation, Councilor Baldacci seconded, so approved.

3. Request for establishment of a Handicapped Parking Space, 263 State Street

City Solicitor Heitmann explained we had a request to add a handicapped space at this location. Asst. City Solicitor Nicklas had visited the site and deemed it appropriate that a second space be established as handicapped.

Councilor Baldacci moved staff recommendation, Councilor Gallant seconded, so approved.

Wanda Creed requested that when the second handicapped space is created, that the sidewalk curb be removed (like it once was) so that her patients can unload their wheelchairs without having to stop traffic, etc. Public Works Director Dana Wardwell stated that they should be able to accommodate that request.

4. Discussion/Review of open burning outdoor fire pits, fireplaces, and campfires

Assistant City Manager Bob Farrar explained that this subject comes up now and then and what the rules and regulations are.

Assistant Chief Darrell Cyr summarized the actions the Fire Department takes when they receive a call for a burn permit. Once they receive the call, they send someone out to look at the property and issue a permit if the property is satisfactory for having a fire. All permittees are told to keep their fires small because if the department receives any nuisance calls about the fire, they will come out to check things out and if anything is not complying with the rules/regulations, the possibility of losing their permit may happen. Some situations are hard to make decisions on because they arrive and the fire has been put out, etc. Sometimes it is neighbors who just don't get along.

Councilors discussed all the different issues that each have been contacted about. Also discussed other cities/towns ordinances and how they differ from Bangor and how well these differences/similarities work for that municipality. In regards to smoke bothering neighbors, Councilor Gallant suggested maybe having the policy state there needs to be a chimney so smoke from their fire doesn't bother neighbors. Councilor Civiello suggested that more education be done regarding fire pits and the regulations that go along with having them.

Wendy Erickson of Forrest Avenue spoke of her personal experiences with neighbors that hold fires almost every night and she has to close her windows every night from 5:00-11:00pm. They are burning things such as old painted wood that lets off fumes that are noxious and not healthy. Complaints have been made to the Fire Department about this particular property.

Judy MacDonald from Palm Street spoke with her concerns and asked that there be a consistent way to report issues to the Fire Department because a few times she was made to feel like the criminal for calling and complaining and wasting tax payers dollars. There needs to be a consistent process.

Councilor Baldacci agreed that if this is happening every night than it is an abuse of the permit they have been issued. He encouraged the Fire Department to make additional visits to this specific property on Garland Street not just for concern but for public safety in general. We need reasonable regulations to enforce in hopes that it will cut down the issues that these fires are causing.

Councilor Baldacci moved to ask the appropriate staff to draft some policy changes that would help cut down the issues that are being caused by open fire pits, Councilor Plourde seconded, so approved. Once drafted, the changes will return to Committee for further review/discussion.

Adjourned at 8:10 PM.