

**Government Operations Committee  
Monday, April 7, 2014 at 5:15PM  
City Council Chambers**

**MINUTES**

**Council Members:** Civiello, Durgin, Plourde, Graham

**Staff Members:** Conlow, Farrar, Hamilton, Nicklas, Comstock, Linscott, Goodwin

**Others:** Don Cooper, BACTS, Media, Tom Crikelair

**Consent Agenda**

**1. Approval of Four FY15 Continuation Grants – Health and Community Services Department.**

• **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services' Expanded Grant**

Jamie Comstock explained this grant covers substance abuse prevention work and diversion program for youth who are 1<sup>st</sup> time drug and alcohol offenders. Also gambling prevention work and making sure veterans have services needed. This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of a 3 year grant of approximately \$21,000.

• **Healthy Maine Partnership Grant**

The amount of \$600,000 and we are in year 3 of a 5 year grant. This funds the foundation of the work we do at Health & Community Services including tobacco prevention, substance abuse prevention and promotion of active living and healthy eating.

• **Lead Poisoning Prevention Grant**

This is a yearly grant that we have been receiving since 2009. Elements include a district wide focus, targeted area for housing in Bangor that is older than 1950s and have lead paint exposure.

• **Overdose Prevention Grant**

We have received this grant every year since 2008 and it is \$50,000 to implement overdose prevention strategies for people who are at risk for overdose from drug use in Penobscot, Washington and Hancock counties.

Councilor Durgin moved adoption of the consent agenda, Councilor Plourde seconded, so adopted.

**Regular Agenda**

**2. Outreach and Media Campaign Update – Health and Community Services Department.**

Patty Hamilton and Jamie Comstock gave a brief highlight of what is to come with the media campaign which will be used to promote their department and give them more visibility. This will increase our visual presence for the prevention piece that the public can have a

reliable/trusted source for information. It is a web driven campaign. Starts April 11<sup>th</sup> and will be ongoing and rolled out over time.

### **3. Citizen request for No Parking sign at 645 Hammond Street.**

Assistant City Solicitor Paul Nicklas explained the trouble The Lyons have had with visibility issues due to cars parking around their property. They are asking the City for 1 parking spot length (18-20ft) as a no parking zone for additional visibility. A no parking sign would help alleviate these issues. This would require a change to the City's Parking Schedules which would be an ordinance change.

Councilor Durgin stated he doesn't have an objection to this but fears a large response from the public requesting this same privilege. Paul explained that it is a possibility but generally in the past, we don't normally get this kind of request. If we do, we try to go find alternative solutions that wouldn't require a change in an ordinance. This change will be limited and only deal with this spot. We can use this as a test case and if we do end up receiving a large number of these requests, clearly this wouldn't be the way to go about it.

Councilor Plourde asked to hear from the Lyon's regarding their request. These are not the occasional parkers; it is the 7am-6pm parkers at NAPA Auto Parts. This is a huge hazard for them to pull out of their driveway. They have been beeped at and almost hit a number of times.

Councilors discussed different ideas and options without having to change an ordinance. Examples include striping on either or both sides of their driveway.

Plourde moved to go to first reading on 2 conditions 1: unique solution so that it doesn't open the flood gates for a huge increase in these requests and 2: that it doesn't push the problem to the neighbor's property. Councilor Durgin stated that since this is a potential dangerous situation and if we can get the language worked out. Paul will draft some language for first reading and bring it back to the committee.

Councilor Graham seconded Councilor Plourde's motion. So approved to move forward for first reading.

### **4. Approval of recommendation for Election Clerk Appointments.**

City Clerk Goodwin explained this is an appointment that the Council is required to make every two years. Parties are supposed to submit nominations but we are not required to take their nominations. Nominations have been received from the Democratic Party but none were received from the Republican Party. The list provided included people that already work for the City during the elections. 40 people all day long to run an election in the manner we are accustomed to. We usually work half days so we have approximately 80 different workers during any given election.

State wide research shows that Clerks' usually have to pull people in to help with elections and volunteering. We still need another 25 Republicans and have put word out on social media and other venues.

Councilor Durgin moved staff recommendation, Councilor Plourde seconded, so approved.

#### **5. Proposed Fare Increase for Community Connector Transit Service effective July 1, 2014.**

Assistant City Manager Bob Farrar stated that staff recommendation is to propose a fare increase effective July 1, 2014. There has been no increase since 2010 even though expenses have gone up. With the significant changes in the MaineCare program has negatively impacted revenue. We have gone from selling 800 monthly passes to 100 monthly passes which equals over \$200,000 a year in loss of revenue due to the decline in monthly pass purchases. For these reasons as well as others we are proposing a fare increase. It takes time to implement this increase due to printing new tickets, etc. We had a public hearing regarding the increase in which we had 22 written comments with 4 or 5 coming to the meeting where sentiments were spread from opposing, neutral and agreeing with need for increase. We have checked with our partners including the University of Maine as well as towns Hampden, Brewer, Veazie, Orono and Old Town. Our partners understand and agree with the need for an increase. An added \$40,000 in revenue is expected with this fare increase.

We are concerned about losing ridership with this fare increase but our numbers have been strong over the last few years so we are hoping that ridership doesn't decrease too much.

Councilor Plourde asked if previously purchased passes prior to the fare increase will be honored. He asked about the future possibility of having the passes not connected to a monetary value but a ride value such as the move the USPS made from the \$.40 stamp to the forever stamp. Don Cooper of BACTS stated that it wouldn't be hard to do to go from a monetary value to a ride value as long as the tickets are secure from counterfeiters.

If the committee wants to put this on the back burner until after the division budget is seen before making a motion, then no motion is needed at this time. We anticipated that this may move forward to the Council on the 14<sup>th</sup> but could push it back until the meeting on the 28<sup>th</sup>. Councilor Graham asked if we have looked into lowering or keeping fares the same if it would increase ridership and in turn increase revenue. It has been looked into and ridership would increase but revenue would decrease.

Assistant City Manager Farrar explained that we are bringing it to you this early because there is a lot that needs to be done to gear up for the effective date that is July 1<sup>st</sup> at this point.

Councilor Durgin proposed that staff come back with a presentation at the next meeting before any vote is made. Councilor Plourde seconded, so approved.

## **6. Community Connector Transit Hub Study – Report and Presentation, Tom Crikelair Associates, Project Consultant.**

City Assistant Farrar briefly introduced Tom Crikelair and the process he has gone through to complete the Transit Hub Study.

Crikelair recommended that the best solution is to stay at Pickering Square as the main hub and to move the buses around the corner to Water Street as the new turn out. There is a trade off though. Instead of 7 buses, there is only room for 5. There will be a transfer delay with the Old Town/Bangor routes and the Hampden/Brewer routes which means a 15 minute delay in the transfer. Another trade off that a representative of Key Plaza made is that buses shouldn't be on Water Street because it could cause worse conditions for tenants in Key Plaza. This recommended option would alleviate pedestrian concern with walking between the undeveloped area at Pickering and the line of buses. Moving the buses to Water Street would allow easier mobility for pedestrians. There is not a perfect solution for everyone. He went on to explain other options and why they are not recommending those. His firm searched for another option for the hub in downtown Bangor and they were unsuccessful.

There is another option of a possible transfer hub by the Airport that could be utilized by Concord Bus Lines. But that comes with a hefty price tag.

Assistant City Manager Farrar summed up the presentation stating that this was to give an overview of the recommendations and the committee will be discussing in the future what they would like to recommend to full Council.

**Adjourned at 7:10 PM.**