

## **BUSINESS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

Tuesday, February 17, 2015 5:15 PM  
City Council Chambers

### **MINUTES**

Committee Members Present: Councilor Graham, Councilor Nealley, Councilor Blanchette, Councilor Civiello, and Councilor Faircloth

Staff Present: Tanya Emery, Steve Bolduc, Caitlin Brooke, Cathy Conlow and Jeff Wallace

In the absence of Chair Baldacci, Councilor Graham was asked to preside over the meeting. Councilor Graham called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

1. Accept and Appropriate DECD Brownfields Grant for Demolition of Building 487 at BIA.

Councilor Blanchette moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Councilor Faircloth seconded the motion which passed as it was not doubted. (Councilors Blanchette and Civiello voted.)

### **REGULAR AGENDA**

#### **3. Sale of Vacant Lot – 11 & 15 Field Street**

(Note: Item No. 3 was taken out-of-order.)

Jeff Wallace, Housing Rehabilitation Coordinator, explained that the property at 11 and 15 Field Street was acquired by the City for back taxes owed. There was a single-family home which was demolished and cleared previously on this lot.

The parcel has been offered for sale to the abutting property owners. Wesley and Coleen Detour have made an offer to purchase the property for \$20,000 in order to build a smaller, energy efficient, single-family home for them to live in.

Staff recommended accepting the Detours' offer and selling them the property with the condition that a single-family home be constructed within a certain time frame. Staff asked for the Committee's guidance on an acceptable time frame for construction.

Committee Members discussed appropriate construction times and agreed that three years was an acceptable time for completion.

Councilor Blanchette moved approval of Staff recommendation with a three-year time frame. Councilor Nealley seconded the motion. The motion passed as it was not doubted.

## **2. Broadband Discussion**

Councilor Graham indicated that Chair Baldacci had asked for this discussion but was unable to attend the meeting. Chair Baldacci did, however, pass along his perspective and conversations with others about the need for a better fiber system within the community. There should be better fiber-based broadband within the City to create jobs and investment. He would like to see a task force established to include the Bangor Region Chamber of Commerce and City Staff to explore the current status, needs and a public/private partnership.

Jeff Letourneau, Executive Director, of Networkmaine with the University of Maine System, told the committee that he was not there to give a sales pitch. He did indicate that there is no fixed solution as there are many solutions depending on what a community wants to do. He discussed a handout that he had prepared that was distributed to the committee prior to the meeting.

Councilor Graham opened the meeting up for comments from the audience. Several people in attendance spoke. Mr. Steve Sleeper, a Silver Road resident, said that he felt that this is a government solution in search of a problem.

Councilor Graham explained that a task force is not to go ahead and institute the building of the network, but establish who the partners are and what the pitfalls are.

Mr. Mike Edgecomb with Time Warner Cable indicated that they would be happy to be on a task force or discuss this with Economic Development.

Sarah Davis, with Fairpoint Communications, indicated that they are also a provider in Bangor and she is familiar with symmetrical fiber based services and understands the assets and would be happy to discuss this.

State Senator Geoffrey Gratwick indicated that there is a lot going on. He said that Governor LePage is very much in favor of expanding broadband service. He discussed healthcare and telemedicine applications. He indicated that there is a major disconnect between the providers. He felt that a task force is a great idea and he would like to see the state represented.

John Porter, President of the Bangor Region Chamber of Commerce said that there is a need and felt that it should be a State chamber issue and should be treated the same as roads are. He said that one need not assume this will involve private providers and/or money from the public. There could be right-of-way and easement issues, etc. that could be done on the City's side. He indicated that Bangor Region Chamber of Commerce would be willing to participate.

City Manager Cathy Conlow indicated that it would be staff's recommendation that they come up with a plan and bring it back to Committee.

Councilor Civiello moved the City Manager's recommendation to have staff come up with a plan. Councilor Faircloth seconded the motion. Councilor Blanchette felt that this is Bangor's future. Councilor Plourde indicated that Bangor already meets or exceeds broadband standards and fiber is the Cadillac. No one doubted the motion and it passed.

**4. Executive Session** – Economic Development – Property Disposition – 1 M.R.S.A. § 405(6)(C)

Councilor Faircloth moved to enter Executive Session at 6:30 p.m. per – 1 M.R.S.A. § 405(6)(C). Councilor Nealley seconded the motion which passed as it was not doubted.

It was moved, seconded and unanimously approved to exit the Executive Session at 6:37 p.m.

**5. Committee Action on Above Item**

Councilor Faircloth moved Staff recommendation. Councilor Nealley seconded the motion. It was a vote as it was not doubted.

The meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.