

Government Operations Committee

MINUTES

June 1, 2015

Councilors Attending: Civiello, Baldacci, Blanchette, Graham, Durgin, Faircloth

Staff Attending: Conlow, Farrar, Heitmann, Goodwin, Irwin, Willette, Leonard

Others Attending: Media, 2 citizens

Committee Chair Civiello called the meeting to Order at 6:20pm

1. Resolve, Authorizing the City Manager to Accept and Appropriate a Grant in the amount of \$27, 500 from the Maine Centers for Disease Control Lead Poisoning Prevention Fund.

Public Health and Community Services Director Hamilton outlined the Lead Poisoning Prevention grant and funding in the amount of \$27,500. It was moved by Baldacci, seconded by Graham and voted to recommend approval of the Resolve to the City Council.

2. Review of Liquor License Notification Process

City Solicitor Heitmann explained the current state law and City Liquor License Processing Policy. City Clerk Goodwin explained the role of her office in the process. The issue before the Committee dealt with the situation of whether or how to notify residents occupying upper floors of a building when a business on the first floor requests a liquor license for the first time. Members spoke to the need to provide some type of notice to residents who might not be aware in these cases. Staff explained some of the challenges involved. Suggestions for notification included having the city and/or landlord or business owner send letters, posting a notice in a visible location on/around the new business, having the city provide notice through the city's website/social media and other similar approaches. After further discussion, it was agreed that staff would return to a future committee meeting with options and recommendations for providing notice in these types of situations.

3. Discussion Concerning Political Signs

City Solicitor Heitmann provided an overview of current state law and how various court decisions have interpreted the ability to limit political signs in relation to free speech and the First Amendment. He also advised the committee where signs are and are not currently

permitted. Committee members had a broad discussion about the positive and negative aspects of political signs including definitions, locations, restrictions, size, time-frames for placement, and removal. The discussion also included whether restrictions on candidates at the polling place entry way on voting days was possible. City Clerk Goodwin explained current state law and various opinions she has received when these questions have arisen. Councilor comments and opinions ranged from significantly restricting signs in the public right of way except on private property, to only restricting / minimizing signs for public safety purposes. After considerable discussion and review, it was moved by Baldacci seconded by Faircloth and voted without doubt to ask the City Solicitor to prepare a list of potential options and accompanying legal opinions for Committee consideration at a future committee meeting.

4. Discussion Regarding Vaping

Director of Public Health and Community Services Hamilton and Public Health Educator Irwin explained current public health issues with tobacco use and vaping, as further outlined in their memorandum to the committee. Also discussed was the City's current Tobacco Use in the Workplace Policy, current state law, and the approaches some Maine communities have taken regarding vaping. Committee members discussed their concerns with the use of tobacco products, second hand smoke and vaping in public areas. Hamilton and Irwin outlined various approaches /options that the Committee could consider. After further discussion, it was moved by Baldacci, seconded by Durgin and approved 4-1 (Civiello opposed) to direct staff to prepare a draft Ordinance for consideration that would: (1) prohibit vaping / e-cigarettes in those locations where smoking is currently prohibited;(2) prohibit smoking / tobacco products and vaping in public parks within 20 feet from established playground and picnic areas, and (3) prohibit vaping in vehicles when minors are present.

With no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting adjourned at 8:20pm.

