

Government Operations Committee

September 21, 2015

Minutes

Councilors Attending: Civiello, Nealley, Sprague, Baldacci, Plourde, Graham, Durgin

Staff Attending: Conlow, Farrar, Heitmann, Nicklas, Willette, Higgins, Riitano, Brooke, Sandborn

Others Attending: Media, BDN, Megan Shorette

The meeting was called to order by Chair Civiello at 6:15pm

1. Referral: Council Ordinance 15-307 – Amending Chapter 116, Fire Prevention Code of the City of Bangor, by Adopting NFPA1, Uniform Fire Code, 2006 Edition

Assistant Solicitor Nicklas and Fire Chief Higgins explained the proposal to adopt NFPA 1, Uniform Fire Code, 2006 edition to replace the 1987 BOCA Fire Prevention Code. It was moved by Sprague and seconded by Graham and voted to recommend approval of the Ordinance amendment to the City Council.

2. Request to Apply for Certain Fire Grants

Chief Higgins explained the various grants that the Fire Department will be seeking. He is requesting approval to apply for the grants as they become available. One opportunity, the MEMA Planning Grant, already had to be submitted due to a short turnaround time, so he will be asking for Council to ratify that grant submission after the fact. It was moved by Sprague and seconded by Graham and voted to recommend approval to apply for the various grants, and to ratify the submission of the MEMA Planning grant.

3. The Queen City Piano Project

Parks and Recreation Director Willette explained the Queen City Piano Project, which will consist of pianos being placed in several city parks during the first few weeks in October. They will be there to be played by members of the public. This is in conjunction with the upcoming “ARTober” celebration and related arts / cultural events during the month of October. The Cultural Commission was able to secure a grant to help with the “ARTober” celebration and this particular endeavor. The Legal Department has determined that Willette has authority to grant permission for the temporary placement of items in Parks, so this item was presented as an update and to advise the Council of this upcoming event. Questions were asked and answered concerning responsibility, security, weather implications, oversight and related issues. The Committee was satisfied with the responses

and was pleased with this line of creative thinking to highlight arts and culture around the city.

4. City Council Attendance/ Absence policy Discussion

City Manager Conlow reviewed her memorandum outlining possible approaches to deal with Council attendance/ absence. Included were several examples from other communities across the country. She outlined the differences between a Charter amendment, an Ordinance amendment, and adoption of a policy. Each has various implications regarding timing for adoption and levels/ severity of informal and formal enforcement. All Councilors spoke about their positions on the various alternatives, and how they would like to proceed with this issue. City Solicitor Heitmann outlined options that were available to Council. At the end of the discussion, a consensus developed to have the legal department develop an attendance and absence policy/ordinance for committee consideration during the winter. The intent of this approach was that if the policy/ ordinance approach didn't produce the desired outcome, then it could lead to further discussion during the spring. If needed, the policy/ordinance could then become be a template and lead to language for a potential Charter amendment that Council could consider for the fall 2016 ballot. This approach was moved by Baldacci, seconded by Graham and so voted. This item will return to Committee once the draft policy is prepared later this year or early in 2016.

5. Selection of Voting Delegates for the Maine Municipal Association Annual Business Meeting

Assistant Manager Farrar explained the procedure to appoint voting delegates to the annual Maine Municipal Association Business meeting on October 7th. It was moved by Baldacci, seconded by Sprague to appoint Council Chair Durgin as the voting delegate, and Assistant Manager Farrar as the alternate, and so voted. Authority was also provided to City Manager Conlow to complete and submit the required form.

With no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 7:15pm.