

City Council Workshop
November 12, 2014
6:30 P.M.
South Portland High School Lecture Hall

Councilors Present

Gerard Jalbert, Mayor
Linda Cohen
Thomas Blake
Patricia Smith (absent)
Michael Pock
Maxine Beecher
Melissa Linscott

Staff Present

Jim Gailey, City Manager

Councilors-Elect Present

Claude Morgan
Brad Fox

MINUTES

Mayor Jalbert opened the meeting and welcomed all in attendance. He reminded folks that members of the public are invited to comment on each item as it comes before the Council for a period of no more than two (2) minutes. All questions or concerns would be made through the Chair and if they wished to address the City Council they would be asked to please raise their hand and upon being recognized would state their name and address for the records.

- 1. Update on Community Services Facility**
- 2. Climate Action Plan Implementation**
- 3. Caucus for Mayor**
- 4. Review of Upcoming Workshops**

1. Update on Community Services Facility: Jim Gailey, City Manager explained that a PowerPoint presentation would be made by representatives from Sebago Technics and staff updating the City Council on the Community Services Facility. It was noted that they have been working the past six months on a design layout with staff and consultants to refine the program layout at the new facility. It was added that this would be done in phases (1 Transfer) and (2 Facility)

Rick Towle, Director of Parks/Recreation/Waterfront discussed the Team and the work for RFP as they work on this project. He added that there were many of them present which included Art Handman, Transportation Director, Brad Weeks, Engineer Water Resource Department, Doug Howard, Public Works Director, Scott LaPlante, SMRT, and Owens Mculla Sebago Technics. He further outlined what the presentation would include:

1. Previous Site
2. Project Scope
3. Programming
4. Financing

Owen Mculla discussed the status of the O'Neill Street facility:

- VRAP process to date
- Potential users for the site
- Timeline for the site
- Climate Action Plan Approach/Transfer & Municipal Facility

Project Update & Work Underway:

- Design Team selected
- Facility Programming, concept design and evaluations
- Preliminary cost estimating

Future Project Work/Transfer Station April 2015

Building Program: Scott LaPlante – SMRT: Fleet maintenance and operation- Central fueling.

Building Space Plan: Covered storage as well.

Budget for Project: 15.2 Million

Rick Towle concluded on the above presentation.

Public Comment Opened:

Russell Lunt Brigham Road was happy to see this being worked on and coming around, he appreciated the work being done here.

Rob Soloam was happy to have the aspect of solar gains for heating, etc. and felt that this was award winning for climate control.

Jim Gailey, City Manager discussed the closed in area for storage and how this would not be enough space to cover all of the equipment that the City owns. He added that they were looking for guidance on this presentation and further discussed Transit Federal and State guidelines that are holding some funds slated for this, and further discussed the idea of Transit moving to consolidate with SMART as if they do the City would have to pay back part if not all of the funds possibly. There will be 30 days to decide or they can leave the funds alone for now.

Art Handman, Transportation Director discussed consolidation issues from the previous attempt and was not sure how much it would be with metro. He discussed looking at this further and added that they have great ridership now especially with Southern Maine Community College.

Further discussion on funds being there for this and being able to identify the grant, looking at drawing down the money and not wanting to see it go elsewhere but only here.'

Mayor Jalbert asked if the Metro was in competition with the South Portland Buses for the SMCC students. (maybe a little)

Councilor Beecher was not in favor of combining with the Metro on anything now or in the future. She was on the Council previously when they attempted this and did not like what she saw back then.

Rick Towle discussed dead or flexible space here for other possible uses; he added that he would like to see this money used for some soft cost now and not hold off on that but want to be sure about this.

Councilor Cohen asked about the SMART Initiative and wondered when this would be done. (by year end)? She felt that this was a hard decision on whether we use it now or let it sit. She added that planning is ok but not a lot of payback with it only for public transit. She asked where the money would come from to be paid back on this.

Councilor Linscott asked how we could use the funds and not have to pay them back? She further asked about solar energy issues.

Councilor Blake discussed PACTS and DOT and wanted to understand the situation and felt that these were holding pins for how long?

Jim Gailey felt that they can put this in writing and get it out of holding pin and put a more stability in the account.

Councilor Pock asked about using just the soft portion of it.

Art Handman discussed filing for the entire grant and having a timeline to be able to see what the payments are for.

Rick Towle discussed what parts of the building it may affect not right out front but overall which parts.

Councilor Linscott was happy to hear this discussion on this grant and was in favor of moving the funds over to look at for use in a safe place. She further asked about Climate/Solar use at all and understood that that was being discussed at meetings and asked how much was being set aside for this project? (\$7,000-\$8,000)

Greg L'Heureux added that there is \$500,000 set aside and discussed other small parcel sales that have been done as well as future sales that can be allocated as well for the project.

Owen Mculla asked about clean-up and if it would be needed for a house to be built, he explained that they would need to look at analyticals for contamination, etc. It would need to be cleaned, capped, etc. He further discussed having a proposal for these tests to be done which takes 2 to 4 months as environmental are behind a little here and had stopped but will start again.

Councilor Blake thanked all for the presentation done here and would like to keep the communications going. He urged a public process to be done, brining in residents to ask how they feel about this project. He further discussed the following areas:

- Future needs
- Not ruling out housing for buses
- Current site – funds toward that some how
- Naming rights
- Leeds certification – on our own to develop – discuss entire process and follow-up on every aspect of building
- Employee entrance – concern on this as well.

Owen Mculla added that the road and areas has grade issues and is physically hard, and discussed the farm house access if purchased.

Councilor Beecher asked about access roads and topography test and whether those have been received or not and if this will come back with more information. She further discussed a solar building (masonry, flat roof, etc.) she was ok with this as well.

Scott LaPlante, SMRT discussed this having a flat roof as you can then have sky lights and angle the solar panels the way that we want them to, there is a need to have them flat to pitch how you want them to be so if they are not flat it is much harder.

Councilor Pock discussed re-wiring with 3-mk or 1-mk for solar use and how this would work,

Jim Gailey discussed asking Governor LePage to work with them and support solar energy use. He felt the need to move forward with progress here, create a solar proposal, work in phases, etc.

Councilor Cohen appreciates this process taking steps to keep cost down, liked the phasing steps and was ok with seed funds as well as being able to possibly store buses and assuring them to be in a safe place for now.

Councilor Blake discussed Phase II and the need for further information on this. He asked about a heat source and discussed geo-thermal availability (yes but too expensive). Discussed radiant heat and was ok with this, he asked about parallel boilers. He asked about hearing anything on bio-gas for energy plan.

Greg L'Heureux discussed a bond for this in 2016 spring/fall.

Jim Gailey added that \$571,000 would secure funding on this for a stable blanket and use for soft cost.

2. Climate Action Plan Implementation: Jim Gailey, City Manager explained that in early October, the City Council adopted the City's first Climate Action Plan. The Plan outlined a number of recommendations for staff to carry-out. Some recommendations are policy in nature, as other recommendations will need funding for implementation. I would like to present the City Council with a proposal to immediately fund a few of the recommendations and provide working capital for future implementation.

One request would be for the City Council to authorize the hiring of the Sustainability Coordinator (not firm on the title) at half year. For the implementation of the Climate Action Plan it is imperative to bring this City Council supported position on-board early and not wait until the beginning of the FY16 budget (July 1, 2015). Current City staff does not have the capacity or the background to effectively move the implementation of the Plan forward at this time.

A second project would be to explore the purchase of electric vehicles for the City fleet. Last month I presented three current fleet vehicles that would be candidates for conversion. I would like to further the discussion with the City Council. At Wednesday's meeting, I will discuss the attached funding proposal for the City Council to consider. I am proposing to use a dividend check received from ecomaine as the funding source for these initiatives. In October, ecomaine distributed back to the owner communities one million dollars in dividends. Ecomaine had a strong year in recycling and the sale of electricity, resulting in higher revenues than originally expected for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2014. South Portland's share of the dividend is \$127,000. This item was postponed on October 27, 2014.

Discussion ensued on the following areas:

- Recycle Bins for offices
- Electric Cars/Chargers (Planning Office)
- Two new cars that are gas or electric (Nissan Leaf)
- Sustainability Coordinator for January 2015 (Full-time position)
- Knowledge to move ahead on projects

Public Comment Open:

Russ Lunt Brigham Road thanked the group for being proactive looking forward with these projects.

Bob Foster Energy/Recycling Committee Chairperson agreed that there is a need to move forward with this now and felt that this will help out a lot.

Public Comment Closed:

Councilor Beecher discussed the funding for this being a one-time deal or budgeted in the future and felt that caution is needed.

Councilor Blake agreed that this is a great idea and a plan to have this position, an investment for the future. He felt the need for strong involvement from the School Department with this as well, and to lead by example like to drive an electric vehicle. He felt that there would be great support here for this and people will help and become excited about it.

Councilor Cohen felt that this was a great step to take and was in support of this as well. She discussed ways to have the public look at the electric vehicle as well as having the City Employees use them.

Councilor Linscott asked about the EB charging station and if there would be one at the Planning Department as well and if we did eventually sell it would we look at other locations as well or can we move to where it may be needed? She was happy with the source of revenue and felt the need to look at future sources of funding as well.

Councilor Pock was also in support of this and agreed this was good to have a professional in the field working on this.

Mayor Jalbert added that it is not just about cost, if this is successful it could be a savings, he was also in support and did add that it could be a long process.

Jim Gailey explained that this would be on the next City Council Meeting in two parts.

3. Caucus for Mayor: Jim Gailey, City Manager explained that the City Council would caucus for the 2014/2015 Mayor.

Susan Mooney explained the process of nominations, election and the inauguration event which was held on Monday December 1 at 4:00 p.m.

Councilor Blake nominated Councilor Cohen for the position of Mayor, Councilor Beecher seconded, all in favor.

Councilor Linscott motioned to cease nominations, Councilor-elect Fox seconded, all in favor.

4. Review of Upcoming Workshops: Jim Gailey, City Manager explained that this item was brought forward to discuss upcoming City Council Workshops and added that this discussion was done on a monthly basis.

Discussion ensued on election issues and people that leave blanks in the ballot as well as district votes and City-wide voting and concern that the public realizes that in South Portland, we vote for all Councilors not just by our district.

The following items were looked at for placement on the Workshop schedule:

- THC Zoning District
- Knightville Parking
- Golf Ideas
- Marijuana Vote
- Main Street & Westbrook Street site
- School Board/Council Workshops
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The City Council Workshop Adjourned at 9:00 p.m.