

COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT

January 3, 2023 at 6:00 PM

Chairman Stewart called the meeting to order.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Aldermen Stewart, Trisciani, E. Sapienza, Heath

Absent: Alderman Cavanaugh

Messrs.: R. Cashin, K. Clarke, M. Gomez, J. Horvath, J. Belanger

1. Summary of abatement requests submitted by Fred McNeill, Chief Engineer.

*On motion of **Alderman Trisciani**, duly seconded by **Alderman Heath**, it was voted to approve.*

2. Communication from Ryan Cashin, Fire Chief, requesting authorization to apply for a Homeland Security Grant not to exceed \$250,000 for the Emergency Operations Center.

*On motion of **Alderman E. Sapienza**, duly seconded by **Alderman Heath**, it was voted to approve.*

3. Communication from the Fire Chief requesting authorization to apply for a Homeland Security Grant not to exceed \$75,000.

*On motion of **Alderman Heath**, duly seconded by **Alderman Trisciani**, it was voted to approve.*

4. Communication from the Fire Chief requesting authorization to apply for a Staffing for Adequate Fire & Emergency Response (SAFER) three-year grant to hire firefighters.
(Note: There is a cost share of 25% in the first year, 25% in the second year, and 65% in the third year.)

Chairman Stewart asked Chief can you come up and speak to this.

Ryan Cashin, Fire Chief, stated we are looking to apply for a SAFER grant. We did apply for this grant last year and we were denied so we are looking to reapply this year. We are currently waiting on guidance from the federal government on whether they have made any changes. We won't know that for a little bit. I believe they are waiting on Congress. The plan is to apply for another eight firefighters.

Chairman Stewart stated as the procedures for these types of things go, and correct me if I wrong here Chief, but by granting this and then approval by the full Board it gives

you permission to apply for the grant but if we are awarded it we would still have to vote as a Board to accept the grant. Is that correct?

Chief Cashin answered yes that is 100% correct. This is just permission to apply.

Alderman Heath stated thank you Chief. Do you anticipate any concerns about the match that is involved in this long-term?

Chief Cashin responded that would be a conversation that we would have to have with the aldermen. Some of it may be able to come out of our budget, probably not all of it but we would be able to make a long-term plan if we get the grant.

Alderman Heath asked so the first step is getting the grant.

Chief Cashin replied yes.

Alderman E. Sapienza asked how many firefighters are we talking about.

Chief Cashin answered eight.

Alderman E. Sapienza asked so if this were to go through this would be eight additional.

Chief Cashin responded yes.

*On motion of **Alderman Heath**, duly seconded by **Alderman E. Sapienza**, it was voted to approve.*

5. Communication from Kristen Clarke, Traffic Engineer, requesting authorization to apply for a NH Department of Transportation CMAQ grant in the amount of \$3 million to promote air quality improvements through reduced vehicle emissions. (Note: There is a 20% City match required if awarded this grant.)

***Alderman Heath** moved to approve. **Alderman Trisciani** duly seconded the motion.*

Alderman Heath asked can we have Kristen come up and talk about this. I have to say when I read this I was so excited about Mammoth Road where there is so much traffic. What is your long-term hope for this?

Kristen Clarke, Traffic Engineer, stated the scope of the project will be defined a little more if we are awarded the grant and got to the engineering study phase but some of the things we think we could accomplish with this are either adding adaptive signal traffic controls to tie into the central management system that we are currently starting construction on at Granite and South Willow, adding turn lanes or some widening. The grant does not allow any additional thru lane capacity but we could look at whether there are turn lanes warranted at intersections where we could potentially do some minor widening. There are some missing sidewalk sections between Tarrytown and

Hanover that could be included in part of the construction of this and possibly looking if there is any opportunity for reconfiguration of the weird offset intersections which might be costlier but those are the types of things we are hoping can be looked at through this grant.

Alderman Heath stated I want to thank you. Riding on that road every day and that whole area, it could make a major difference so thank you very much.

Chairman Stewart called for a vote. *There being none opposed, the motion carried.*

6. Communication from Mark Gomez, Chief of Parks, Recreation & Cemetery, requesting authorization to apply for an Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Grant for extensive renovation of the Sheehan-Basquil park.
(Note: There is a 50% or \$4 million City match required if awarded this grant.)

Chairman Stewart asked Mark Gomez and Janet Horvath to come up to discuss this item.

Mark Gomez, Chief of Parks, Recreation & Cemetery, stated this particular grant application is for an Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Grant, which is part of the federal Land & Water Conservation Fund Program. The available monies through these grants are quite significant. The Department of Public Works, Parks & Recreation, as well as the Highway Division have been working for some time with a consultant on a major renovation plan for Sheehan-Basquil Park. There have been some improvements made in recent years, for example, the new splash pad that was put in a couple of years ago. Since then, Hunt Pool has had severe mechanical issues and has had to be closed. We are looking to recommend in this current CIP process funding for an extensive renovation of that park. This grant would allow us to do more. So in addition to a new swimming pool and bathhouse, it would also allow us to put in a larger soccer field that could accommodate youth games anywhere from young kids all the way up to high school level, two fully renovated baseball fields, and a new concession area in addition to some green space with shade structures. The total estimated budget for this is \$8 million. There is a 50% cost share associated with this particular grant so the commitment from the city, should we receive the grant, would need to be \$4 million.

Chairman Stewart stated I know you said that if we were to be successful in getting this grant it would allow the city to do more for this park which, as you said, is being looked at and has been improved upon over the past few years. If we don't get this grant, is this still a project that we are going to be pursuing in some form?

Mr. Gomez replied yes. As I mentioned, we would still propose, through the CIP process this year, to move forward with renovation work at the Sheehan-Basquil Park, including the aforementioned swimming pool and bathhouse but it would be a scaled back project compared to what we could do under the grant. If we were to get the grant, my recommendation would simply be to take the CIP money, should we be given that, and apply it as the match towards the grant.

Chairman Stewart stated I love the schematics and the drawing and the plan as I have seen it and I am supportive of this project. Park space in the city is at a premium and certainly this inner city neighborhood that we are talking about is one of the most marginalized parks in the neighborhood so to me it is a matter of equity and I would like to see this move forward especially since this neighborhood has been without a pool for how many seasons now? Two.

Janet Horvath, Recreation & Enterprise Manager, stated yes two.

Chairman Stewart stated I am very excited to see this project coming along and grant or no grant I am excited to see these improvements being made and the pool being reopened.

Alderman Trisciani stated also in speaking with Mark on this, this is something where we can also leverage private partnerships to raise money so we are not on the hook for the entire amount. I know we have had conversations with people that are already active in the field and in that park and are looking forward to jumping in and helping out as well. I think we could definitely raise money for this in addition to what the city can come up with on the CIP side.

Alderman Heath stated I echo Alderman Trisciani's words. Growing up in that area, that pool is so needed and that whole area needs a facelift so I applaud you.

Alderman E. Sapienza asked is the goal to reopen the pool.

Mr. Gomez answered yes. It would be to replace the existing pool.

Alderman E. Sapienza asked there is a splash pad there now correct.

Mr. Gomez replied correct.

Alderman E. Sapienza asked but the goal is to reopen the pool.

Mr. Gomez responded correct.

Ms. Horvath stated it would be redesigned and a zero entry which would make it more accessible.

Alderman E. Sapienza asked what is zero entry.

Ms. Horvath answered that means you can walk right into it. It starts at zero and gets deeper just like the entrance to Livingston pool.

Chairman Stewart called for a vote. There being none opposed, the motion carried.

7. Communication from Jeff Belanger, Planning & Community Development Director, requesting authorization to apply for an InvestNH Municipal Per-Unit Grant of up to \$1 million to incentivize the construction of affordable housing.

Alderman E. Sapienza asked can you explain this to me Mr. Belanger. You would be applying for an InvestNH Municipal Per Unit Grant of up to \$1 million to incentivize the construction of affordable housing. How would that work?

Jeff Belanger, Planning & Community Development Director, stated to be clear, there is no match required by the city. This is money that was originally ARPA dollars from the feds that goes to the state and the state administers them through a few different programs including the Municipal Per-Unit Grant. It is \$10,000 that goes to any municipality that approves any affordable housing development for three units or greater in any particular property. It has to meet a certain area median income threshold and there are other requirements but once the municipality approves that, the municipality can be awarded the money and that money can be administered as a loan to the developer to help make the development happen.

Alderman E. Sapienza asked when you say affordable housing, it goes by income.

Mr. Belanger answered yes.

Alderman E. Sapienza asked and it would remain affordable housing forever.

Mr. Belanger replied there would need to be a certain deed restriction. I want to say the requirement in the grant is 20 or 30 years. There is a certain time period where it has to be limited to that threshold of AMI.

Chairman Stewart stated I certainly think that anything we can do these days to incentivize affordable housing here in the city is something we ought to be doing with haste.

*On motion of **Alderman Heath**, duly seconded by **Alderman E. Sapienza**, it was voted to approve.*

8. Amending Resolution and Budget Authorization providing for the acceptance and expenditure of funds in the amount of \$5,000 for CIP 211923 Modernization of Food Protection Program.

*On motion of **Alderman Trisciani**, duly seconded by **Alderman Heath**, it was voted to approve.*

9. Amending Resolution and Budget Authorization providing for the acceptance and expenditure of funds in the amount of \$59,395 for CIP 211823 PPP & Healthcare Enhancement Act-Homeless Healthcare Program.

*On motion of **Alderman Heath**, duly seconded by **Alderman Trisciani**, it was voted to approve.*

- 10.** Amending Resolution and Budget Authorization providing for the acceptance and expenditure of funds in the amount of \$4,995 for CIP 411723 Police Academy Cadre.

*On motion of **Alderman E. Sapienza**, duly seconded by **Alderman Trisciani**, it was voted to approve.*

*There being no further business, on motion of **Alderman Heath**, duly seconded by **Alderman Trisciani**, it was voted to adjourn.*

A True Record. Attest.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matthew Normand". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Clerk of Committee