

CITY OF GARDNER, MASSACHUSETTS
CITY COUNCIL FINANCE COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING OF JANUARY 10, 2018

Finance Committee Members present were Council President Scott Graves and Councillor Ronald Cormier. Councillor James Walsh was absent.

City Officials Attending: Mayor Mark Hawke; City Auditor John Richard; City Solicitor John Flick; Executive Aide Michael Nicholson; and, City Clerk Alan Agnelli.

Others Participating: Roy Nascimento, President, Johnny Appleseed Trail Association; Christopher McDermott, Public Affairs Manager, Johnny Appleseed Trail Association; and, Atty. Prya Gandbhir.

The meeting was called to order by President Scott Graves at 12:00 p.m. in the City Council Chamber, City Hall.

President Graves asked if anyone present planned to record the meeting, in accordance with the requirements of the Open Meeting Law, as follows:

Any person may make a video or audio recording of the open session of this meeting so long as it does not interfere with the conduct of the meeting. All documents and exhibits used or referenced at this meeting shall be submitted in duplicate to the City Clerk, as they become part of the minutes of the meeting. Is there anyone present who will be recording this meeting?

No one responded.

1-1 Reading and Approval of Minutes of Prior Meeting(s).

On a motion by Councillor Ronald Cormier and seconded by President Scott Graves, it was voted to approve the Minutes of the Meeting of December 13, 2017, as printed.

2-1 #9872, An Order Appropriating \$247,200.00 from Free Cash to City Hall Improvement Capital.

Mayor Hawke cited the Scope of Work highlighted in the Change Order in the materials presented.

President Graves noted that there that no costs were provided that correspond with the 13 items listed in the Change Order.

Mayor Hawke explained that breaking down each item to a particular cost is difficult, but that the Scope of Work included with the original \$600,000.00 Loan Order could be broken down.

President Graves questioned the amount of funds that have been requested, citing the \$219,870.00 estimated cost versus \$247,200.00 requested in the Money Order.

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Mayor Hawke explained that the additional funds would serve as a contingency for changes, adding that any unspent funds would revert to Free Cash at the close of the Fiscal Year.

On a motion by Councillor Ronald Cormier and seconded by President Scott Graves, it was voted to recommend to the City Council that the following Order ought to pass:

AN ORDER APPROPRIATING FROM FREE CASH TO CITY HALL
IMPROVEMENT CAPITAL.

ORDER: That there be and is hereby appropriated the sum of Two Hundred Forty-
Seven Thousand Two Hundred Dollars and No Cents (\$247,200.00) from Free Cash to
City Hall Improvement Capital.

2-2 An Order Appropriating \$5,500.00 from Free Cash to the Room Tax Mayor's Department, Professional Fees.

Roy Nascimento, President of the Johnny Appleseed Trail Association, and Christopher McDermott, Public Affairs Manager of the Johnny Appleseed Trail Association, appeared before the Committee.

Mr. Nascimento provided the Committee with a brief history of the Johnny Appleseed Trail Association ("JATA"), explaining that JATA was created through the combined efforts of the State and area municipalities and businesses for the purpose of attracting tourists to the North Central Massachusetts region. He said that seven years ago, JATA was designated as the region's tourism council, which encompasses 27 communities and that the tourism creates economic development and attracts millions of dollars to the region. He cited trade shows, familiarization tours, and other events that attract visitors and provided the Committee with an array of statistics that impact the area economy.

Councillor Ronald Cormier asked the Mayor if he is in favor of the Order.

Mayor Hawke said that he is not opposed to the appropriation, which is the reason that he filed the Order.

Councillor Cormier noted that the GRA paid for the advertising in the JATA Guide in prior years.

President Graves, noting the reported economic impact that JATA's tourism efforts has had on the region, questioned whether JATA can take credit for the reported \$10 million brought directly to the Gardner area and suggested that JATA takes credit for Wachusett Mountain Ski Area's attraction as a tourist and recreational destination.

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Mr. Nascimento stated that JATA is partnered with others in the region to attract tourists, as tourism is a very competitive industry.

President Graves stated that he spoke with Councillor Edward Gravel, who also serves as the Chairman of the Gardner Bandstand Committee, who informed him that advertising with JATA attracts people to the Bandstand concerts and the Movies in the Park.

On a motion by Councillor Ronald Cormier and seconded by President Scott Graves, it was voted to recommend to the City Council that the following Order ought to pass:

AN ORDER APPROPRIATING FROM FREE CASH TO THE ROOM TAX MAYOR'S DEPT. – PROFESSIONAL FEES.

ORDER: That there be and is hereby appropriated the sum of Five Thousand Five Hundred Dollars and No Cents (\$5,500.00) from Free Cash to the Room Tax Mayor's Dept. - Professional Fees.

3-1 #9886, A Measure Confirming the Mayor's Appointment of Prya Gandbhir to the Position of Assistant City Solicitor for term expiring January 7, 2019.

City Solicitor John Flick and Attorney Prya Gandbhir appeared before the Committee.

Attorney Flick introduced Attorney Gandbhir, the Mayor's appointee to the position of Assistant City Solicitor, to the Committee. He informed the Committee that Attorney Gandbhir is now employed with Flick Law Group and, citing her Résumé, outlined her legal and municipal experience.

On a motion by Councillor Ronald Cormier and seconded by President Scott Graves, it was voted to recommend to the City Council that it confirm the Mayor's Appointment of Prya Gandbhir to the position of Assistant City Solicitor for term expiring January 7, 2019.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Councillor Ronald Cormier and seconded by President Scott Graves, it was voted to adjourn at 12:29 p.m.