

CITY OF GARDNER, MASSACHUSETTS
CITY COUNCIL FINANCE COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING OF FEBRUARY 1, 2017

Finance Committee Members Present: President Ronald Cormier and Councillors James Walsh and Marc Morgan.

Other Participants: Mayor Mark Hawke; Community Development & Planning Assistant Director Joshua Cormier; City Engineer Christopher Coughlin; City Auditor John Richard; and City Clerk Alan Agnelli.

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

President Cormier 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 James Walsh and seconded by Councillor Marc Morgan, it was voted to approve the Minutes of the Meeting of January 11, 2017, as printed.

3-1 A Measure Confirming the Mayor's Appointment of Christopher Coughlin to the Position of City Engineer for term expiring January 12, 2020.

Referencing an e-mail that he received from resident Wesley Flis, Councillor Walsh said that Mr. Flis expressed concern that the position was not publicly posted or advertised, but that it should have been. Mr. Walsh noted, however, that the City Council does not play a role in advertising for this position. Mr. Flis's second concern, he said, is that according to the City Code, the City Engineer is required to possess certain certifications.

Mayor Hawke stated that City Code requires that the City Engineer be "a graduate certified civil engineer" and that Mr. Coughlin is certified as an Engineer in Training ("EIT"). He said that when the City created the position of Assistant City Engineer, the position would train under the City Engineer, and that the City does not design "anything of an appropriate magnitude."

Mr. Coughlin informed the Committee that he has worked as Assistant City Engineer for nearly four years and worked for the City of Boston for three prior years and noted that he holds an apprenticeship license.

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The Mayor reiterated that an EIT designation is a certificate.

Councillor Walsh said that he inquired about Code requirements with the City Solicitor and was advised that Mr. Coughlin's certification complies with the requirements under the City Code. Mr. Walsh recommended that the Council be provided with the City Solicitor's opinion, in writing, prior to Monday's Council meeting; otherwise, the Finance Committee should seek to refer the appointment back to the Finance Committee for further study.

Mayor Hawke indicated that the City Solicitor would provide the Council with a written opinion prior to the Council's meeting.

President Ronald Cormier informed the Committee that he requested Mr. Coughlin's résumé and that it be included with the Council's meeting packets.

On a motion by Councillor James Walsh and seconded by Councillor Marc Morgan, it was voted to recommend that the Council confirm the Mayor's appointment of Christopher Coughlin to the position of City Engineer for term expiring January 12, 2020, conditioned on a written opinion from the City Solicitor that Mr. Coughlin meets the certification requirements mandated by City Code.

3-2 A Measure Confirming the Mayor's Appointment of Eric Knudsen to the Position of Member, Disability Commission, for term expiring January 12, 2020 (Reappointment).

On a motion by Councillor James Walsh and seconded by Councillor Marc Morgan, it was voted to recommend that the City Council confirm the Mayor's appointment of Eric Knudsen to the position of Member, Disability Commission, for term expiring January 12, 2020.

4-1 An Ordinance to Amend the Code of the City of Gardner, Chapter 160 Thereof, Entitled "Officers and Employees," Article II, Assistant City Clerk.

Councillor Walsh stated that the proposed Ordinance would complete the process that began in August 2015 when the City Council adopted and the Mayor approved a petition to the legislature for a special act permitting the City to establish two Assistant Clerk positions.

City Clerk Alan Agnelli informed the Committee that funds are available in the current budget to provide for a compensation adjustment.

On a motion by Councillor James Walsh and seconded by Councillor Marc Morgan, it was voted to recommend to the City Council to adopt the following Ordinance:

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AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE CODE OF THE CITY OF GARDNER, CHAPTER 160 THEREOF, ENTITLED "OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES," ARTICLE II, ASSISTANT CITY CLERK.

Be it ordained by the City Council of the City of Gardner as follows:

Section 1. Section 160-2 of the Code of the City of Gardner is hereby amended to read as follows:

The Office of Assistant City Clerk is established. The City Clerk may appoint two Assistant City Clerks for terms of three years, subject to confirmation by the City Council, who shall be sworn to the faithful performance of duty and, in the absence of the City Clerk, may perform those duties and have the powers and be subject to the requirements and penalties applicable to that office. Nothing contained herein shall be construed to prevent the reappointment of an Assistant City Clerk upon the expiration of the term of office.

Section 2. Section 160-3 Compensation, is amended to read as follows:

The salary of Assistant City Clerk shall be included in the ordinances designating salaries and wages for the City employees.

Section 3. Effective date.

This ordinance shall become effective on passage and publication as required by law.

4-2 An Ordinance to Amend the Code of the City of Gardner, Chapter 171 Thereof, Entitled "Personnel," Compensation Schedule 2, to Change the Compensation of the City Engineer.

Mayor Hawke informed the Committee that he is recommending that the compensation for the new City Engineer be adjusted to \$80,262.72, which is the lowest end of the G-11 pay scale, as provided for in the (2015 HRS) Salary Study. He said that he does not intend to fill the vacant Assistant City Engineer position since he plans to reorganize and consolidate the DPW and Engineering departments within 6 to 8 months, adding that the position of Assistant Water Foreman or of similar likeness/title may be created.

On a motion by Councillor Marc Morgan and seconded by Councillor James Walsh, it was voted to recommend to the City Council to adopt the following Ordinance:

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE CODE OF THE CITY OF GARDNER, CHAPTER 171 THEREOF, ENTITLED "PERSONNEL," TO CHANGE THE COMPENSATION OF THE CITY ENGINEER.

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Be it ordained by the City Council of the City of Gardner as follows:

Section 1. Section 171-68 of Chapter 171, Personnel, Compensation Schedule 2, of the Code of the City of Gardner, is hereby amended to change the compensation of the City Engineer to read as follows:

A. Department Heads

	<u>01/17/17</u>	
	<u>Annual</u>	<u>Weekly</u>
<i>City Engineer</i>	\$80,262.72	\$1,543.51

Section 2. Effective date.

This ordinance shall become effective on passage and publication as required by law.

4-3 Review of Yearly Salaries for Various Positions (§171-66 of the City Code).

Mayor Hawke outlined the recent history of adjustments to the Mayor's compensation and cited comparable communities in his analysis. He provided the Committee with various schedules of mayoral salaries from other Massachusetts cities that highlighted factors such a population and per capita income. He noted that the recent HRS Salary Study recommended that the Mayor's salary keep pace with non-union cost of living adjustments; otherwise, the compensation would again fall behind and require a significant bump in future years. Citing his letter, the Mayor recommended that the Mayor's salary be set at a minimum of \$94,980 (FY17-FY20 increases) and a maximum of \$97,512 (the lowest of any of the averages calculated).

Councillor Walsh expressed concern that the Council undertook the process of addressing compensation for the Mayor and City Council only two years ago and that the Council acted separately on increasing the Mayor's salary which amounted to 12%. He continued, saying that the Mayor's proposed minimum adjustment in the first phase (2018) amounts to 7¾%, while the maximum proposed amounts to 19% over the period. He noted that compensation paid to the Mayors of Leominster and Fitchburg, whose cities are about twice Gardner's population, are paid less than what is currently paid to Gardner's Mayor.

Mayor Hawke stressed that any adjustment adopted this year would not take effect until 2018, at which time the next Mayor would be compensated at a higher rate. He reiterated that the Salary Study recommended that the Mayor's salary keep pace with municipal non-union cost of living increases and noted that 2016 and 2017 will pass without a cost-of-living adjustment, which he pegged at an average of 2% annually.

Councillor Morgan questioned whether Leominster Mayor Mazzarella "turned down a raise."

Mayor Hawke responded, saying that Mayor Mazarella turned down an increase in salary when the City adopted an ordinance that automatically increased the salary according to the annual consumer price index.

Councillor Walsh suggested that some publicity might arise from the Finance Committee's discussion, so he recommended that the Committee include the item on the Council Calendar and then move to refer the matter back for further study.

On a motion by Councillor James Walsh and seconded by Councillor Marc Morgan, it was voted to recommend that the City Council refer the Mayor's Salary Review to the Finance Committee for further study and report.

5-1 A Resolution Endorsing the FY2017 Community Development Block Grant Mini-Entitlement Plan.

Community Development Assistant Director Joshua Cormier provided the Committee with a proposed Community Development Block Grant Plan. He noted that administrative costs are capped at 15% of the grant, which formerly was 18%. He said that CDBG applications are due in March and typically range from \$600,000 to \$825,000 and that communities are encouraged to apply for the maximum amount.

Referring to the Plan, Mr. Cormier said that demolishing the former Gardner Cinema building at 57-67 Parker Street would require most of the grant funds set aside for the budget for "demolition in target areas."

Councillor Walsh questioned whether demolition of the building is part of the overall community strategy.

Mr. Cormier stated that the demolition of buildings in targeted areas is included in the most recently-adopted Community Development Strategy (2016-2019).

Councillor Morgan questioned the status of the proposed Skate Park.

Noting that the Skate Park project is FY2015 Block Grant funded, Mr. Cormier said that the contract for construction was awarded to Spohn Ranch of California which is in the process of fabricating the steel components. He added that construction of the Skate Park at Jackson Playground is expected to begin in the spring.

Councillor Walsh questioned the status of the proposed Dog Park.

Mr. Cormier said that the City was recently awarded \$22,193.56 from the Stanton Foundation to fund the design of a Dog Park at Pulaski Park, adding that the Foundation also provides grants of up to 90% of the total construction cost, up to

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\$225,000 and that the City is required to provide 10% in matching hard construction costs.

On a motion by Councillor James Walsh and seconded by Councillor Marc Morgan, it was voted to recommend to the City Council to adopt the following Resolution:

FY 2017 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT
 Mini-Entitlement Plan

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GARDNER AS FOLLOWS:

WHEREAS, the City council has reviewed the proposals prepared by the Department of Community Development and Planning for inclusion within the FY 2017 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Mini-Entitlement Plan; and

WHEREAS, the CDBG proposals seek funding for support of public social services, demolition, housing rehab, sign & facade, neighborhood facility renovation, planning, and associated administrative costs; and

WHEREAS, the activities proposed within the FY 2017 CDBG Mini-Entitlement Plan meet the priorities identified within the City's 2016 Community Development Strategy, and the 2004 Community Development Plan; and

WHEREAS, the City does not possess the bonding capacity or have the availability of funds to appropriate from its general budget to undertake such projects and reliance upon grant funds is required, and

WHEREAS, the City Council supports each of the activities as being consistent with the City's goal of promoting quality programs for its citizens;

NOW THEREFORE, the City Council hereby extends its support of each proposed activity and endorses the City's FY 2017 CDBG Mini-Entitlement Plan to be submitted to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Department of Housing and Community Development.

<u>Group</u>	<u>Project</u>	<u>CDBG \$'s</u>	<u>Non-CDBG \$'s</u>	<u>Total</u>
Community Development & Planning	Demolition. Demolish select parcels in the Target Areas	\$258,750.00	\$0.00	\$258,750.00
Community Development & Planning	PF Parks/Recreation. Design and Construction of a park to be located at the former Orpheum Theater site.	\$150,000.00	\$0.00	\$150,000.00
Community Development & Planning	PF Parking. Design and Construction of parking to be located at the former Orpheum Site	\$185,000.00	\$0.00	\$185,000.00
Community Development & Planning	Design. Rear Main Street infrastructure design.	\$95,000.00	\$0.00	\$95,000.00
Boys & Girls Club	Project Learn STEAM. Provide afterschool program for 30 LMI Gardner students at the Gardner Clubhouse.	\$5,000.00	\$55,000.00	\$60,000.00

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NewVue (CDC)	Small Business Technical Assistance Program. Small business assistance services for 15 LMI Gardner residents.	\$7,500.00	\$10,000.00	\$17,500.00
	Administrative & Delivery costs.	\$123,750.00	\$18,765.00	\$142,515.00
	Sub-total	\$825,000.00	\$83,765.00	\$908,765.00

6-1 A Measure Authorizing the City to Purchase 57-67 Parker Street (Maki Building) from the Gardner Redevelopment Authority.

Councillor Walsh questioned the time frame for demolishing the Maki Building.

Mayor Hawke said that the plan is to demolish the building during the summer months and that CDBG funds would be used to pay for the project costs. He added that there have been discussions with developers for reuse of the parcel.

On a motion by Councillor James Walsh and seconded by Councillor Marc Morgan, it was voted to recommend to the City Council to adopt the following:

AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF GARDNER TO PURCHASE 57-67 PARKER STREET
FROM THE GARDNER REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

VOTE: To authorize the Mayor to purchase 57-67 Parker Street further identified on the City of Gardner Assessor's Map as MAP ID: M22-5-7 for \$99,444.13, from the Gardner Redevelopment Authority and upon such terms as the Mayor shall consider proper in accordance with this Vote.

8-1 Mayor's Executive Aide Progress Review

Mayor Hawke presented the Committee with a report summarizing Executive Aide Michael Nicholson's duties and a list of completed tasks and projects. He said that Mr. Nicholson has been working periodically during school breaks and will graduate in May, at which time, he will begin working full-time.

The Committee placed the Report on file.

9-1 William's-Rockwell Educational Gift Fund Update from the Mayor.

The Mayor provided the Committee with an update of the distributions from the Williams-Rockwell Educational Gift Fund. He noted:

The funds generated from the sale of the "Willie Gillis in Convoy" painting and accumulated interest, were invested with Raymond James & Assoc. on June 7, 2016. The activity and performance is as follows:

- Funds Received into Raymond James Managed Account - June 7.2016, \$1,968,516.83.

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- Current Asset allocation: 64% Equity, 34% Fixed Income. 2% non-classified.
- Total fees paid year to date \$6,108.85
 - o Income- \$14,129.00
 - o Market Value- \$61,413.00
 - o Total Value Change \$75,542.00
- Projected cash flow next 12 months- \$43,371.28
- Approximate value after 2016 grant disbursement; \$1,994,699.65.

For its first round of disbursements, the Committee received twenty-four applications. The Arts received 54% (\$26,774.73) in awards and 46% (\$22,615.15) was awarded to the General category, for a total distribution of \$49,359.88. This disbursement represents approximately 78% of the interest with the remaining portion of interest kept in the fund for growth.

Williams Rockwell Grant Awards

- Teacher Donna Murphy, Elm Street School, two grants. One is \$775 to purchase a light table to allow students to trace their artwork and one is \$4,627 to purchase "Explorations in Art," a series of visual e-books.
- Teacher Dawn Murphy, Elm Street School, 2nd Grade, one grant of \$990 for an online membership to "Reading A to Z".
- Teacher Kathryn MacKay, Elm Street School, two grants, one for \$6,342 to purchase musical instruments and one for \$2,041 to purchase music books for Grades 2-4.
- Guidance Counselors Denise Ulrich and Stephany Curtis, a \$3,500 grant to host the "Smile Project" program for Elm Street and Waterford Street Schools.
- Janet Henderson and Tim McCormick, Gardner Academy for Learning and Technology, one grant of \$1,200 for the Art on the Rocks after-school program.
- Mr. McCormick, Principal of Gardner Academy for Learning and Technology, one grant for \$8,750 for mindfulness program through Ivy Child.
- Teacher Derek Beaugard, Gardner Academy for Learning and Technology, one grant of \$2,000 for an intramural basketball program.
- Guidance Counselor Karen McGrillis, Gardner High School, one grant of \$1,012 to pay for the Harrington O'Shea Career Decision Making program.
- Teachers Henry Richard and Joy Yan, Gardner High School, one grant of \$6,823 to develop an engineering and physics course.
- Teacher Lynn Berthiaume, Gardner High School special education program, one grant of \$1,000 for a tour of the State House in Boston.
- Teacher Frances LeMieux, Gardner High School, three grants, one of \$6,000 to purchase and install kilns, one of \$800 for a tour of the Museum of Fine Arts and one of \$3,500 to purchase large drying cabinets.

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On a motion by Councillor James Walsh and seconded by Councillor Marc Morgan, it was voted to place Mayor's Update on the Calendar and to recommend that it be placed on file.

Councillor Morgan praised the Trustees for their work in awarding grants for many educational programs.

Councillor Walsh suggested that the Trustees look to expand the scope of opportunities by encouraging communitywide applications for grant funds beyond those that have been submitted only from the local school system.

NEW BUSINESS

A Notice from the Gardner Contributory Retirement Board Relative to a Public Meeting to Consider Granting a Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) to retirees and survivors, effective July 1, 2017.

On a motion by Councillor James Walsh and seconded by Councillor Marc Morgan, it was voted to recommend to the City Council to that the Notice be placed on file.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Councillor James Walsh and seconded by Councillor Marc Morgan, it was voted to adjourn at 12:30 p.m.