



CITY OF NEW BEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS

MEETING: COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
DATE: MARCH 16, 2023
TIME: 7:04 P.M.
PLACE: CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER, ROOM 214

PRESENT: COUNCILLORS WILLIAM BRAD MARKEY,
CHAIRMAN; DEREK BAPTISTE; NAOMI CARNEY;
MARIA GIESTA; BRIAN GOMES; SCOTT LIMA; LINDA
M. MORAD, SHAWN OLIVER; RYAN PEREIRA

ABSENT: COUNCILLORS IAN ABREU; SHANE BURGO

* * *

Councillor Markey called the Finance Committee meeting to order and took attendance. The Clerk read Communications into the record from Councillors Abreu and Burgo explaining their absences. The Communications were received and placed on file by Councillor Giesta and seconded by Councillor Baptiste. This motion passed on a voice vote.

* * *

Notice, City Clerk of reference of a COMMUNICATION, Mayor Mitchell, to City Council, submitting AN ORDER updating the Fire Department's Fee Schedule. (Ref'd 02/23/2023) and AN ORDER. (Ref'd 02/23/2023) (1, 1a)

The Chair recognized Council President Morad, to amend the Fire Department's Fee schedule due to a typographical error, Section II MUNICIPALLY CONNECTED FIRE ALARM SYSTEM, A. Master Box Annual Fee should read \$250.00 not \$200.00.

On a motion by Council President Morad, and seconded by Councillor Carney, the Committee VOTED: to amend II MUNICIPALLY CONNECTED FIRE ALARM SYSTEM, A. Master Box Annual Fee from \$200.00 to \$250.00. This motion passed on a voice vote.

The Chair recognized New Bedford Fire Chief Scott Kruger. The Chief explained the last fee increase took place in 2016. He went on to explain the fees being suggested are in the middle, not at the top of the scale. He is recommending that the City adopt the increases now so that they would not have to be higher in the future. The fees charged are from inspections.

During the discussion some of the Committee Members expressed that some of the increases seemed to be on the high side, especially between 2nd and 3rd floor homes. The Chief explained that should the Committee wish to adjust the recommended fees he would not object to it. He did explain that he feels the suggestions he made are fair and reasonable and that he stands behind them.

The Chief was asked what happens if the homeowner is unable to pay the fee. The Chief answered that in his time within the Fire Department it has not been an issue that the cost of fees is passed on to the seller. Further, in the past twenty-two years there have only been three fee increases.

On a motion by Councillor Pereira and seconded by Councillor Oliver, the Committee VOTED: To amend the fee schedule, I. TYPE OF PERMIT OR SERVICE, B. Smoke detector – 2 family unit from \$100.00 to \$75.00. This motion FAILED on a Roll Call Vote – Yeas 2, Nays 7. (Councillors Oliver and Pereira IN FAVOR.)

On a motion by Councillor Pereira and seconded by Councillor Oliver, the Committee VOTED: to Table the Order. This motion FAILED on a Roll Call Vote – Yeas 2, Nays 7. (Councillors Oliver and Pereira IN FAVOR.)

On a motion by Council President Morad and seconded by Councillor Gomes, the Committee VOTED: To recommend to the City Council ADOPTION of the ORDER, AS AMENDED, updating the Fire Department’s Fee Schedule. This motion passed on a Roll Call Vote – Yeas 7, Nays 2. (Councillors Oliver and Pereira OPPOSED.)

On a RELATED MOTION by Councillor Pereira and seconded by Councillor Oliver, the Committee VOTED: That the Committee on Finance investigate the creation of a Revolving Fund for the New Bedford Fire Department for all their revenue. This motion passed on a Roll Call Vote – Yeas 7, Nays 2. (Council President Morad and Councillor Oliver OPPOSED.)

* * *

COMMUNICATION, Emily A. Arpke, Deputy CFO/City Auditor to Councillor William Brad Markey, Chairman, Committee on Finance, requesting a vote of the Finance Committee to permanently finance in the amount of \$29,550,000 and issue/renew temporary notes in the amount of \$16,375,551 for several projects. (2)

On a motion by Councillor Pereira, seconded by Councillor Carney, the Committee VOTED: that the New Bedford, Massachusetts; General Obligation; Non-School State Programs; Note; be Received and Placed on File. This motion was passed by voice vote.

The Chair recognized Ray Barros, Acting Treasurer for the City. Mr. Barros gave an overview of the request of the Finance Committee to permanently finance in the amount of \$29,550,000 and issue/renew temporary notes in the amount of \$16,375,551 for several projects.

The Committee asked a series of questions as it related to the sale of the \$27,705,000 General Obligation State Qualified Municipal Purpose 2023 Bonds of the City dated April 12, 2023, to James Montgomery Scott LLC at the price of \$29,686,824.98 and accrued interest. The bonds will be payable on April 1 of the Years 2024 through 2033.

On a motion by Council President Morad, seconded by Councillor Carney, the Committee VOTED: that the Committee on Finance approve the adoption of the Loan Order request. This motion was passed by a Roll Call Vote – Yeas 9, Nays 0.

* * *

Notice, City Clerk of reference of a WRITTEN MOTION, Councillor Pereira, requesting that the City Auditor, Chief Financial Officer, and Personnel Director appear before the Committee on Finance to discuss ongoing employee title changes in order to alter said employee's corresponding pay. (Ref'd 02/23/2023) (3)

The Chair recognized Emily Arpke, Deputy CFO/City Auditor to speak on the ongoing employee title changes in order to alter said employee’s corresponding pay.

There was an issue with the camera’s hard drive in the Council Chambers, which resulted in the filming of the meeting being stopped.

On a motion by Councillor Pereira and seconded by Councillor Carney, the Committee VOTED: To table the matter at this time. The motion was passed by a voice vote.

* * *

Councillor Pereira made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Councillor Giesta. This motion passed on a voice vote.

This meeting adjourned at 7:54 p.m.

ATTEST:

Denis Lawrence Jr.
Clerk of the Committees