City of Nashua

CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP MINUTES

City Council Chambers, City Hall

The Nashua City Council met in a council workshop on July 13, 2022, in Council Chambers at City Hall. The meeting was called to order at 6:00PM with Mayor Anthofer presiding. Council members present were Samantha Johnson, Hal Kelleher, Tim Malven, and Ernie Willsher. Rhonda Dean was absent. City Clerk John Ott was also present along with 7 guests. The council discussed several topics. The main topic of discussion was ambulance service. Chickasaw County is looking at the possibility of establishing a county ran ambulance service and has drafted a 28E Agreement for the cities to consider. The current contract service provider contract ends at the end of the year and the County and cities are researching what options are best for the citizens both from a cost and public service perspective. The council had some reservations about the proposed 28E Agreement and Chickasaw County Ambulance Council representative Samantha Johnson said that she would take any input the council had about the proposed agreement back to the Chickasaw County Ambulance Council and present it. The council also received citizen input about the option of providing its own service. One citizen mentioned that Elma has recently established their own ambulance service. The same citizen provided input on requirements needed and resources to look into if the city wanted to pursue looking into providing its own service. Mayor Anthofer is going to try to get some information out to the public to see how many people would be interested in becoming an EMT to help with the ambulance service if the council chooses to go that route. The city is also looking at checking with surrounding communities to see if anyone is wiling to work with Nashua. Waverly has a medical center located in Nashua and Charles City is closer than New Hampton, which are a couple of options that have been mentioned. No decisions have been made.

The council discussed the possibility of amending the Code of Ordinance Fire Service Fees 35:15. Fire Chief Tom Johnson stated that he would like to remove the service fees because it is a public service and when the Fire Department is called out it is usually for something bad that happened and he expressed concern about charging people a fee on top of whatever incident caused the Fire Department to be called out. Mayor Anthofer explained that the fees would be for those incidents that occurred out of district and would be used to offset the cost of equipment, training, vehicles, etc. Johnson stated that most of the equipment they use is long lasting and not disposable, so replacement doesn’t occur very often. Rick Sinnwell another Fire Department volunteer stated that he feels part of the reason that they are able to raise money through the Fire Association is because the Fire Department doesn’t charge a fee for service. He stated that most cities around Nashua do not charge a fee for the public service. He stated that he would hate for a person who provides the same public service in a surrounding community have an incident happen and the Fire Department bill them for the same public service that they provide for no charge. No decision was made, and it will be discussed further at the next council meeting.

The council also discussed the Fire Department’s current stipened of $200/year for each volunteer fire fighter. Mayor Anthofer put together a proposal of a monthly wage for the Fire Chief and Assistant Fire Chief as well as a per call and training pay schedule for the volunteer fire fighters to replace the current pay structure. Fire Chief Johnson stated he would like to keep it as it is and leave the money out of the equation because he wants the volunteers to do it for the right reasons and if you start throwing money in the mix it can complicate things. He mentioned that he doesn’t think with the current crew it would be an issue, but down the line it could potentially cause problems that people “just show up” to get paid. No decision was made.

The council reviewed 3 city logos that Vicky Fonley put together for the Big 4 Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber and City Council are considering whether or not the city needs a new logo. Mayor Anthofer suggested having some type of contest and having the public design the logo and choose the winner via a survey. The council thought having a contest was a good idea.

The council discussed employee wages. They talked about having a fixed % for a raise and including a bonus structure as an opportunity for employees to be able to increase their income. Mayor Anthofer stated that he thought this was a good idea because it wouldn’t be an annual cost to the city, but rather a single payout. He gave the example of a long-term employee that had been with the city for several years. Every year that employee’s pay would increase where as a bonus would be more performance based. The council would have to set bonus amounts, requirements to qualify, and when it would be paid out. No decisions were made.

The council discussed the open job position at City Hall and what to do to move forward. They would like to repost the position and change the wording to include candidates that have more experience in grant writing, code enforcement, etc with pay being commiserate with experience.

The council discussed the repairs needed at the welcome center. The deck is in bad need of repair and currently poses a safety risk. It has deteriorated due to lack of maintenance throughout the years. The building is also in need of being repainted and Karmen Mehmen a Welcome Center Board member stated that if they don’t paint the building soon it will be in the same condition as the deck.

There was no other business.

Johnson motioned to adjourn. Willsher seconded. M/C. RC: 4 ayes, Dean absent

The meeting was adjourned at 9:17PM.

**\*pending approval by council**

**John Ott**

**City Clerk**