

## COMMITTEE ON ADMINISTRATION/INFORMATION SYSTEMS

February 5, 2008

Immediately following Joint Meeting of  
Comm. on Lands & Buildings and Administration

Chairman O'Neil called the meeting to order.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Aldermen O'Neil, Garrity, Osborne, Pinard, Domaingue

Messrs: J. Angell, C. DePrima

Chairman O'Neil addressed item 3 of the agenda:

3. Presentation by Jennie Angell, Director of Information Services, providing an update on Information Systems projects from 2007 and new initiatives for 2008.

Alderman O'Neil stated Alderman Domaingue, whenever we have the time we ask the Information Systems Director to come and make a presentation to update us on what's going on throughout the City.

Ms. Jennie Angell, Director of Information Services, stated this was put together for the meeting in December, but that meeting ran over also. There are some updates that I can give you. I also have provided a handout that is a summary of the department responsibilities for 2008 that is for the Aldermen, especially the new Aldermen who may not be aware of a lot of the things we do. I'm not necessarily looking to go through it all tonight, but I can answer your questions. This gives you some background into what we do. Information Systems is fully staffed with the budget we have. We have a total of 15 employees. This is down from 19 in 2005, but I have no funded vacancies at this point. Police and Fire computerized dispatch and records management system cut over on September 26<sup>th</sup> at \$1.6 million for emergency services. We are still cleaning up some of the issues that surround it. We are increasing the speed of the mobiles going to the police cars. That should be taken care of within six weeks. We're waiting for frame relay. We also have new mobiles in the police cars. The West Side sub station was set up. We have fiber connectivity to CMC and Elliot Hospitals, Hackett Hill Fire Station. This project is within budget. Public GIS went live on December 31<sup>st</sup>. As of last week, it is available to the public. You can get there by going to [www.manchesternh.gov/gis](http://www.manchesternh.gov/gis). This is just the first phase. We will be working on enhancements. We have requests out to the public to find out what additional services they would like. We executed a contract with Verizon for

telephone services that will reduce our phone charges by \$5 per line. The City has about 700 lines. That contract is still sitting, however. During the year I worked with the department and doubled the revenues and reimbursement to Information Systems. Total, they went from \$78,000 to \$143,000. The Mayor allowed me to take some of those reimbursements to try to work on some efficiency enhancement projects. We used that money to do a pilot automation project for the Building Department. We put in a mobile laptop with printer, provided them with cell phones and service, and based on the results of that pilot, we have put in a CIP request to outfit the other inspectors at Highway and the City Clerk. We are looking to improve the automation in those groups and helping one team become aware of what the other is doing. That is moving forward. I do have a CIP request for funding for next year. We set up free public Wi-Fi at both Libraries. We set up paid public Wi-Fi access at JFK. That was a pilot that will be done in another month or so. I'm not sure of the results. That was done with a business partner. We both wanted to find out if it was a model that would work. I don't know how that is working out at this point. We put new power and air conditioning in the City's main computer room, which is the first upgrade in 25 years. The Facilities Division technicians have handhelds that interface with their systems. The Victory Parking Garage got a new parking system. We are collaborating with the City of Nashua to develop new specs in the motor vehicle system that we are required to put in place because of changes in the state. We are meeting with the state tomorrow. We implemented a new work order system for Information Systems to make us more efficient. Our new initiative for the upcoming year is to design a new City website. Motor vehicle systems will be coming online. We are running fiber connectivity throughout the Verizon Arena and the reservoir. That's done with Homeland Security money. We are expanding GIS services. We have online parking ticket payment. It is pretty much ready to go once Brandy and Finance work out the Master Card/Visa issues. That's a quick summary.

Alderman O'Neil asked on item six, where you are conducting the pilot program for the Building Department, is there any data that can be shared with us? Previously, they were handling the same piece of paper three, four or five times. I know the intent of the pilot program was to have input put into the computer from the field.

Ms. Angell replied we had an intern program through UNH, where three master's level interns came in and documented, in detail, the process on the net and what people do. We sent that document to HTE to see what we could do. We made arrangements with HTE and they did analysis and training. We worked on revamping and looking at how Building is handling code enforcement. They are working that out. There are some things that they needed to do to get their data where it needed to be. I think that is moving forward. I just got the proposal in last week from HTE to go to the next phase. While HTE was here we set up the trash compliance inspectors. They are processing the same way. I spoke with Matt Normand and we are looking at setting up a work order system so it can all flow from one to another. They have a field laptop so they can access their data from the field. That is the ultimate plan so they don't have to keep rewriting it.

Alderman O'Neil asked was that on the building regulation side or the housing code enforcement side?

Ms. Angell replied that was on the code enforcement side. We were doing one part at a time. I have a proposal from HTE for them to come in and do the same process through the Building Department. I'm looking to see if I can squeeze the funds out of what I have now to do this.

Chairman O'Neil addressed item 4 of the agenda:

4. Communication from Charles DePrima, Interim Director of Parks, Recreation and Cemetery, requesting the fair license fee for the fireworks display on Thursday, July 3, 2008 be waived.

On motion of Alderman Osborne, duly seconded by Alderman Garrity, it was voted that the request to waive the fair license fee be approved.

Chairman O'Neil addressed item 5 of the agenda:

5. Communication from Peter Ramsey, President and CEO of the Palace Theatre, requesting permission to hang a banner across Hanover Street to advertise upcoming performances through April, 2008.

On motion of Alderman Domaingue, duly seconded by Alderman Pinard, it was voted that the request for a banner be approved.

Chairman O'Neil addressed item 6 of the agenda:

6. Communication from Mayor Guinta, proposing a new department of Facilities, Grounds and Recreation through the consolidation of the Parks, Recreation and Cemetery Department with the Facilities Division of the Highway Department

On motion of Alderman Osborne, duly seconded by Alderman Domaingue, it was voted to discuss this item.

Alderman Osborne stated we need to call up Chuck DePrima. Can you give me the exact status on this?

Mr. Chuck DePrima, Interim Director of Parks, Recreation and Cemetery, replied I don't have a status on this. It is the Mayor's proposal.

Mayor Guinta stated thank you for the opportunity to talk about this proposal that I have put forward. I have been looking at the Parks Department as well as their Enterprise Fund system. Last March I voiced my concerns to this Board and to the public about the long term financial viability of that department as it relates to the Enterprise system. I was concerned about how it is functioning, how it is run, and the cost associated with that responsibility and the ever increasing debt that has to be paid back to the City. If you recall, I also talked about the concerns expressed when I met with bond counsel and the rating agencies. We went to issue sell bonds on behalf of the City and at that time it was noted that it was an item of concern for them given the set up and the system. They said there should be a mechanism and plan in place to repay the City general fund for the growing deficit. We have had a challenge in terms of how to address that. As I have reviewed that, I looked at all different possibilities in terms of different management and reallocating dollars, looking at potential parts of the Enterprise and putting them back in to the general fund and vice versa and consolidations. What I believe makes the most sense, not only for the fiscal viability of the Enterprise funds, but also because of the synergies that we see in the Facilities Division and the Parks, Recreation and Cemetery Department is to merge these two organizations. This made the most sense in both the short and long term. I think we can bring a different level of management to the department itself. Secondly, I believe that you will find synergy in terms of schedules, roles and responsibilities. Facilities is responsible for the maintenance of facilities. Parks is responsible for maintenance and upkeep of land-owned assets. After reviewing this with the Finance Officer, Facilities Division and the Highway Department Interim Director, I felt that it was in the City's best interest to bring it forth to this Board for its review. There are a couple of notations that I want to be very forthright about. My intention, if this were to move forward, is to bring in Mr. Clougherty as the director or division head. No positions would be eliminated, which I think is very important to ensure that people understand. This is not about eliminating positions. It is about trying to ensure a better fiscal discipline by identifying the synergies that I believe exist and allowing the new director or division head to make recommendations as we move forward after that analysis is done. I think the Enterprise Fund requires some innovation and leadership and I think Tim Clougherty has shown an ability to lead and be innovative. Ultimately, I think you will see a higher level of interdepartmental cooperation when it comes to providing service. I think that in the short term there will be some small savings, but in the long term the savings will be significant. They will not just be in financial, human resource and time measures, but also in scheduling efficiencies as well. I see roughly \$100,000 savings in the short term. After the new department head has had the ability to analyze the department for further improvements I think there will be more savings. This will improve recreational facilities and augment some of the opportunities that we can provide for the people in the City of Manchester.

Alderman Domaingue stated I spoke with Steve Johnson at length this morning and he indicated that he met with you in October of 2007, at which point he suggested bumping Mr. DePrima up to department head and bumping the current Enterprise director up to

deputy, eliminating the Enterprise position. This would not involve consolidating any department, which would allow the people who have been working on these projects to continue. This would result in a savings of \$90,000 in salary for that position alone. I'm wondering why that wasn't considered. I have a concern about bringing someone in here who hasn't been working with the department and the employees. I also have a concern that anything besides the net savings on whatever you are paying for position A or position B is ultimately going to result in a savings until we look at...I was looking at the operating budget for the Enterprise Fund and looking at the deficit that we are currently running and I don't see how one individual is suddenly going to make the debt service disappear.

Mayor Guinta replied I did meet with Steve Johnson and he gave me his verbal recommendations as to what to do with the department and I did consider them. He and I spoke at length about them. He gave me his reasoning behind his recommendations. I ultimately decided that a different direction was the most appropriate direction. We have an opportunity because we have a vacancy in the director position to look at alternatives. I think very highly of the Parks staff. I think they are very dedicated to the City. However, I believe that the Enterprise system is reaching a point where it is at a level of fiscal crisis that we cannot ignore. I think a different focus and a different type of leadership is necessary to bring innovative ideas to the forefront. This is also a new opportunity to look at the Enterprise Funds we have and determine how we can improve those facilities and maximize the revenue. I think we have a great level of service in the City and I would like to augment it. I think there are opportunities to do that, but I think that after reviewing what has occurred up to this point, different leadership that is fresh and would provide a different perspective is necessary. I think the task that is before the City requires additional personnel to move the department in the right direction and ultimately work with the existing personnel within the department so we are no longer running deficits, but paying the City back and running a surplus. I have also talked to the Parks Department about that. They share the concern that we have to move in a different direction as it relates to the financial issues. I think they would share the concern that I have. They have an interest to try to change the policy direction. I am making the recommendation to augment the team and bring Tim's leadership to the forefront.

Alderman Domaingue stated in speaking with Mr. DePrima before this meeting, he indicated that he is looking into creative solutions such as hiring a separate management company to take over McIntyre Ski Area. There are only four facilities in the Enterprise Fund. We're not talking about all of Parks and Recreation in the City of Manchester. We're talking solely about the Enterprise. Again, I ask you, because I haven't heard a response articulated, how is changing one individual over the other going to eliminate the debt service that we have on these four facilities? If it is not, or you can't answer that question, then my question becomes where are you saving money? That is the only place you can save it.

Mayor Guinta replied there is more to the proposal than a dollar amount savings in the short term. I don't think it is fair to pit one individual against another. To suggest that the existing interim director is the reason we have this debt service is not fair. This occurred over a long period of time. The Board of Mayor and Aldermen has been involved in setting policy that has put us in this position. We talked about that over the past couple of years as a Board. I firmly believe that a new and innovative approach with a fresh perspective is what the department needs. If the Aldermen don't share that position I would certainly be more than willing to talk to any Alderman about it and work with them on the proposal and lay out any concerns or questions. I believe that while the Parks Department does a very good job in maintaining the existing assets and infrastructure there seems to be an easy understanding of the synergy between facilities that we own and other assets that we own. To put them in the same organization and look at them as a single organization makes sense. It is more than financial short term savings that I am looking at. It is also the overall management of the department and identifying synergies when possible. There may be administrative savings in the future that would be presented to this Board if the two organizations could be combined. I'm not prepared to state that that would occur because I think it would only be fair to give the new division head or director the opportunity to make those proposals or recommendations after he has had time to review the new organization. If we continue to move in the same fashion, I believe that we lose an opportunity to be more efficient, innovative and look at long term divisionary changes that I hope this Board is open to considering.

Alderman Domaingue asked was the debt service that exists today on those facilities in part created as the result of necessary upgrades?

Mayor Guinta replied the deficit that exists today is for several reasons. Some of it is infrastructure improvements that were required in different facilities that we own. They were also created in part because there has been a policy agreed to, I don't know if I could say it was set forth by the Board of Mayor and Aldermen, but was certainly acquiesced to subsidizing the Enterprise Fund as an acceptable practice. What I conveyed to this Board last March during a meeting with the rating agencies, was that that practice could no longer continue if we wanted to strengthen our bond ratings. I brought it to the Board's attention, identifying that that policy needs to be reviewed and addressed.

Aldermen Domaingue interjected if we stop subsidizing Parks or the Enterprise Fund, who is going to take care of these facilities?

Mayor Guinta replied the Enterprise fund, I believe, should be run as an Enterprise fund. The definition of an Enterprise fund is to be self-sustaining. They are not. If we are going to stay true to the Enterprise fund system and I believe there are great reasons to do so, then we need to shift our policy as a Board. It doesn't necessarily mean that you simply increase fees, which would limit the number of people who could utilize these Enterprise

Funds. It does require a different type of management approach and I think a fresh perspective is what is required.

Alderman Domaingue stated it is basic economics. Either you have income or you don't. You either have the income to meet your expenditures or you need someone to subsidize it. Maybe the answer is taking it out of the Enterprise Fund.

Mayor Guinta stated that would guarantee a subsidy by the City forever.

Alderman O'Neil stated we're out of time. Public participation starts at 7:00 PM. I would like to refer this to a special meeting of the Committee on Administration at a date that works for the Committee members and the Mayor.

On motion of Alderman Pinard, duly seconded by Alderman Domaingue, it was voted to move this item to a special meeting of the Committee on Administration, date to be determined.

Alderman O'Neil stated I think the Mayor has asked us to take a look at the structure. His predecessor also wanted to take a look at the structure. I think we have an obligation to do that. I am interested in looking at it. I don't know what the outcome will be. Whether it stays as it is or we implement the Mayor's proposal or go with another form, the business side of the Enterprise Fund needs to be addressed by the Board. I think we have let it go for too long and we need to address it. Gil Stadium was in it until a couple years ago. I think we need to get a handle on that as well. Your Honor, you have asked the Parks and Recreation Department to submit their budget as is. I'm not sure that we need to have this done in the next three months.

Mayor Guinta stated any consolidation or reorganization has to occur outside of the budget process.

Alderman O'Neil stated my observation would be based on recent work we did on reorganizations, but not to the level of this, with Parking, Traffic and Coordinated Purchasing. That it took several months to work through it.

Alderman Smith stated I wish the Committee would start at an early date because I have quite a few documents that I would like to present and I think the more time we have the better off we are going to be.

Alderman O'Neil stated that's why I want a special meeting just for this topic.

Alderman Shea stated I have a suggestion to call to everyone's attention. I'll reveal it at the next meeting. I appreciate your discussion.

**TABLED ITEMS**

7. Communication from Mayor Guinta requesting consideration of the establishment of a Department of Administrative Services.  
(Tabled 01/09/2007.)

On motion of Alderman Garrity, duly seconded by Alderman Osborne, it was voted to remove this item from the table.

On motion of Alderman Garrity, duly seconded by Alderman Osborne, it was voted to receive and file this item.

8. Copy of a communication from Alderman Lopez to Committee on Community Improvement requesting the BMA have the Finance Officer, City Solicitor and Bond Counsel (if needed) review the possibility of using Rooms and Meals Tax money in the future for Storm Water Utility/Sidewalks/Streets.  
(Tabled 09/25/2007 pending further information from the Finance Department.)

This item remained on the table.

There being no further business, on motion of Alderman Domaingue, duly seconded by Alderman Garrity, it was voted to adjourn.

A True Record. Attest.

Clerk of Committee