

**SPECIAL MEETING OF THE
COMMITTEE ON ADMINISTRATION/INFORMATION SYSTEMS**

March 9, 2010

5:00 PM

Chairman Lopez called the meeting to order.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Aldermen Lopez, DeVries, O'Neil, Osborne, Corriveau

Messrs: J. Burkush, L. LaFreniere, P. Goucher, M. Sink, M. Normand,
J. Gile

Chairman Lopez addressed item 3 of the agenda:

3. Discussion relative to revenue proposals from the following departments:
 - A. Fire
 - B. Planning & Community Development
 - C. City Clerk

Chairman Lopez stated tell us what you want to do and what the bottom line is please.

Mr. James Burkush, Fire Chief, stated this proposal was a result of the Mayor's direction to review all our revenue and to update the current Ordinances. We have two proposals. The first proposal, if you have it in front of you, is the radio master box. Currently, a person can have up to nine buildings monitored by one box. What we are proposing is that you have one master radio box and each additional building will be charged \$100. This is due to electronics becoming newer and a radio box can now monitor up to ten buildings where previously, each box could only monitor one building. We are proposing \$100 for each additional building which would produce about \$12,000. The next paragraph talks about changing the language of inspections. These inspections are for new fire alarm installations. Currently, the language is \$50 per person per hour and sometimes that has been a little confusing and we want to change the language to make it \$100 per hour with the minimum fee being \$100. Those are the first suggestions. Does anybody have any questions on that suggestion?

Chairman Lopez replied no. Go ahead and continue.

Mr. Burkush stated the other one would be false alarms. The false alarm charges haven't been updated since 1995. These are not directed at residential homes. We have very few false alarms in residential homes. People take care of their fire alarm systems. As you can see, people would be allowed to have up to five in their residences. These are for commercial and apartment buildings where we found that these buildings have not been maintaining their fire alarm systems. When you refer to these types of false alarm systems, we're not talking about where someone has burnt food or has pulled an alarm due to a small fire. We are talking about system malfunctions. This Ordinance hasn't been updated in 15 years and we believe that it is time for this to be looked at. This will make people repair their systems, which is to keep the fire trucks from responding to false alarms.

Chairman Lopez asked what is the total amount?

Mr. Burkush replied we are projecting that we could raise another \$12,000 to \$14,000 in revenue with just this Ordinance change.

Alderman Osborne stated when you have these alarms outside like at the Wilson School and you have an alarm outside of a place like this that has no one there to see what is going on, kids pull it and so on. How much does that cost you a year for all these false alarms? Lots of times you go over to Lincoln and Auburn Streets at the Easter Seals. It seems like you go over there an awful lot. I live right there and I can hear the fire engines and all that.

Mr. Burkush replied it is interesting. The International Association of Fire Chiefs is estimating that it costs \$400 an hour to operate a fire truck with firefighters. That is the basis of the cost at the national standard. It is \$500 for a ladder truck. When you take into consideration the purchase of the vehicle, the wear and tear, fuel, insurance, and labor that is what we estimate it costs per hour to operate a fire truck.

Alderman Osborne asked so every false alarm like that is about \$400?

Mr. Burkush replied well, it is broken down into hours and that's why we feel that this is reasonable.

Alderman Osborne stated well it will surely take you an hour. You have to get out there, get back and clean the truck up afterwards.

Mr. Burkush stated if you take in all the costs it is pretty expensive to run a truck.

Alderman Osborne asked how many of those false alarms do you get per year for something like that? I was always curious.

Mr. Burkush replied I don't know if I have that report with me. It is probably 5,000 false alarms per year.

Alderman Osborne stated I'm just talking about this particular situation. I'm not talking about homes and business and so on.

Mr. Burkush stated I could get that number to you. I don't believe I have that with me.

Alderman O'Neil stated not that it is relevant, but I want to follow up on Alderman Osborne. Chief, you said \$500 per truck so when you have a box alarm there can be five pieces rolling on that. We could have \$2,000 every time someone pulls and alarm.

Alderman Osborne stated if you get one at Wilson School how many do you send out?

Mr. Burkush replied Wilson Street is a high risk box alarm. We get six fire trucks that would go to Wilson School. Kids, high-rises, hospitals and nursing homes are high risk.

Alderman Osborne stated I guess it is the same with Easter Seals. Six trucks is a lot of money.

Alderman O'Neil stated on the revenues, just for clarification, on the two changes, he actually recommended three, but one is more of a housekeeping item, we are looking at \$24,000 to \$25,000 in new revenues.

Mr. Burkush stated that's correct.

Alderman O'Neil stated to follow up, you mentioned commercial buildings and false alarms. What do we do with the non-profits?

Mr. Burkush replied they still get charged.

Alderman O'Neil asked do they pay?

Mr. Burkush replied yes. The only ones who get any exemptions would be someone who comes before your Committee and asks for one. We haven't brought one to you for years. Easter Seals, Elliot Hospital and everyone pays for their false alarms.

Alderman O'Neil asked in general, do most of the commercial businesses and institutional facilities do a pretty good job of maintaining their systems?

Mr. Burkush replied they have been getting better over the past few years only because we have been charging them for false alarms. The technology is at the place where smoke detectors are less sensitive and a better quality than they were ten years ago, but we are still seeing a lot of nuisance alarms.

Alderman Corriveau asked could you explain why the limits on false alarms are tied to the number of alarm initiating devices? Why is 1 to 125 devices are allowed five and 250 are allowed ten? I'm wondering the policy behind it more than anything else.

Mr. Burkush replied in that policy, as you can see I've eliminated the higher numbers of those alarms because initially we were going to a place like the Elliot that had thousands of initiating devices so it was felt that it was reasonable for them to have an expectation of a certain amount of nuisance alarms. That is how that is developed. If you look at over 250, you could go to the Elliot Hospital 15 times per year and that would be acceptable because they have so many thousands of alarms. That is how that is developed. That is basically the explanation for that.

Alderman O'Neil stated just a clarification. The numbers we are talking about tonight are over and above the numbers that we looked at for revenues when you first came before the Board.

Mr. Burkush stated yes. As we talked about revenue last week, we are projecting about a \$70,000 increase in revenue from this year to the previous year just due to our policy in connecting buildings. In your ward, Alderman, Bodwell Road for example, the fire alarm systems have not been connected to the fire station. They were local alarm only. Someone would have to call 911. Any 24 unit apartment building in calendar year 2009 we have been getting those connected. We demonstrated how effective that was on a fire recently in English Village. We received the automatic alarm two minutes before we received the 911 call. All these buildings on Bodwell Road are now going to connect. That is how our revenues have been coming up. They have been putting master boxes on those buildings. This year we are going with anything 12 units or over is going to be connected to the Fire Department. Again, this is an increase in safety. Further down the road, we would hope to sprinkler these properties, but this is the current initiative we are working at. There have been a lot fewer plan reviews and new alarm systems due to new construction but we have been able to raise our revenues by connecting our current buildings, which has been an increase in safety for the residents. Like I said, this year we projected \$75,000 to \$90,000 and this will give us another \$25,000.

Alderman O'Neil asked so it is the \$75,000 plus the \$25,000?

Mr. Burkush replied yes, we should see about \$100,000 over this year.

Alderman O'Neil stated the \$25,000 is new—over and above what we have seen previously.

Chairman Lopez stated on the same line, we are going to use \$25,000 instead of \$24,000.

Mr. Burkush stated I think we are projecting \$12,000 on each so it is about \$24,000.

Chairman Lopez stated so it is \$24,000 in new revenue. When is the effective date?

Mr. Burkush replied we would go after the master boxes after we received the Board's ratification. We would go back and charge them so we would try to begin this program as soon as you direct us.

Chairman Lopez stated give us an administrative effective date.

Mr. Burkush stated the false alarms are calendar year so that would be effective in this calendar year and we are billing for the previous calendar year now so it would be the following calendar year that you would see some of that revenue.

Chairman Lopez asked before June 30th?

Mr. Burkush replied correct. We bill this time next year.

Chairman Lopez stated out of the revenue that you say you have, is that minus what you...you were short your appropriation by \$126,000. Does that \$24,000 come off of that \$126,000?

Mr. Burkush replied if you direct it to go into our revenues, yes.

Chairman Lopez stated you will be short \$102,000.

Mr. Burkush replied that's correct. Thank you for pointing that out.

Chairman Lopez stated you are still working on that with the Mayor. I know you have another meeting coming up.

On motion of Alderman O'Neil, duly seconded by Alderman Corriveau, it was voted to accept the revenue proposals from the Fire Department.

Chairman Lopez stated whatever Ordinances have to be worked out do that and make sure they are ready by the 16th.

Chairman Lopez stated now we will hear from Planning and Community Development.

Mr. Leon LaFreniere, Planning and Community Development Director, stated we have some proposed revenue enhancements. The primary area that we have made proposals in is in the area of subdivision site plan review. These fees have not been raised since 1989 so they are out of date. We can generate some additional revenues in the order of \$25,200 with the increases that we propose. Some of these increases result in incremental increases to our existing fee structure. We are suggesting that the fee associated with subdivisions go up approximately 25% and site plans go up 25%. The merger fees are currently \$25. We are proposing \$75 because \$25 does not in any way cover our costs to process these applications; \$75 is light as well. The conditional use permits, which are a creature of the last Zoning Ordinance update, do not have any fees associated with them currently and generate substantial staff resource time requirements and we propose a \$150 fee for those applications. The Zoning Board fees were last raised in 2006 and what we are looking at there is to bring some equity into the process. Right now, use variances are \$350. We are not proposing any change there. Other applications to the Board such as equitable waivers, administrative appeals, and special exceptions are \$150 currently. We are proposing an increase of \$50 to \$200 generating an additional \$5,000. The last item that we had identified is actually not necessarily a revenue enhancement that would go to the General fund, but we would like to investigate the possibility of instituting a surcharge of \$3 per drawing that comes in for review. We are required by state statute to retain copies of all of these drawing in perpetuity and right now we are beyond our capacity to retain these documents in hard copy form. State laws require that we retain them either as hard copy or in microfilm format. Our cost to make copies of these plans into microfilm format is approximately \$3 per sheet once you include handling. What we would like to propose, as investigated with the Solicitor's Office, is setting up a reserve account for the purposes of archiving. When a building permit application comes in and there are ten sheets with a commercial project, there would be an additional \$30 charge that would go to this special archive account, from which we would be able to draw on to have our microfilming done. That is something that we would like to investigate as well. The other alternative is to fund the microfilming efforts through our regular budget process as we do now and have that revenue go to the General fund. We thought it might be a more direct application if we set up an archiving fund for that. All of these fees are in

addition to the revenues that we had brought forward as part of our original budget projections.

Chairman Lopez asked you have to maintain a hard copy or microfilm and not a CD?

Mr. LaFreniere replied that's correct. We are not permitted by state law to maintain these building permit documents in electronic format like a CD. It has to be hard copy or microfilm. We have supported efforts at the state level for a couple years to try to get that law revised. Thus far, the legislature has not been willing to do that.

Chairman Lopez asked how much do you store at the archives?

Mr. LaFreniere replied we have an archive space in the basement of the City Hall annex that is a high density storage archive that is full of permits including all of the 8 ½ by 11 and some folded plans. We have a cabinet in the Building Regulations side of the department that has our microfilm cards in it for those plans that we have actually microfilmed so far. We also have an archive space that we share in the basement of City Hall that is smaller that is all but full. We also have some space in the Rines Center that is also at capacity. All together, trying to tell you how much is hard. I could get you that information in square or linear footage of file space, but to be meaningful, I would have to come up with an answer that demonstrates the fact that you'd fill up the better part of the space in front of me if you put all the documents in one place.

Chairman Lopez asked could the person who is submitting the document provide the microfilm to you?

Mr. LaFreniere replied that is a possibility. The problem with that is that we don't do plans until after the project is built because plans change along the way. That would have to come at the end of the project and there is a time delay when they are brought to a company that does this kind of work. There are frankly fewer companies that are out there that do microfilming and the equipment to retrieve that information is very expensive. Part of that is because the technology is so old.

Alderman DeVries stated it has been a while since I touched that. Update me, if you would, on the Registry of Deeds. Are they still requiring vellum copies and then they digitize off of the vellum?

Ms. Pamela Goucher, Community Development Director, replied yes, we do bring mylar copies to the Registry of Deeds. That is what they require.

Alderman DeVries stated I'm not familiar with the legislative attempts in the past couple of years, but certainly I am happy to have that conversation to see if there is something to do. It does seem horrifically out of sync with technology to not allow something to be modernized as long as there is sufficient backup to a digitized copy. There is a need to be able to recall and produce in hard copy building permits. Are you talking plans as well as building permit applications?

Mr. LaFreniere replied the statute defines all of the documents that are submitted to gain a permit or become part of the permit so yes, it is the plans, applications and all of the additional information submitted as well.

Alderman DeVries asked have you looked at the cost to digitize that information? The fund that you are asking to be able to develop could be used in the future for something that modernized the practice.

Mr. LaFreniere replied yes. I would agree with you that that is part of our thinking that if we had a dedicated fund for this purpose it would be for archiving, but not designating the specific format that it would be utilized for. If in fact we were able to store these materials in the different format then it could be used in that manner. I think there was another part to your question.

Alderman DeVries stated the cost to digitize.

Mr. LaFreniere stated we haven't investigated that fully although there are a number of companies out there who do that sort of work. The reason we haven't investigated that is because currently there haven't been any funds to do that work and it wouldn't satisfy out statutory requirements so there didn't seem to be much need.

Alderman DeVries stated I would like to follow up on the earlier part of your presentation about the increase for permits. If I recall, the increase in permit fees that you are requesting would be consistent with the median of surrounding communities.

Ms. Goucher asked are you talking about the Planning Board?

Alderman DeVries replied yes.

Ms. Goucher stated yes. The last time we did an analysis was in 2008 when we looked at the different communities, Concord, Nashua, and Londonderry, and even with these increases based on the 2008 numbers, we are definitely in line and probably lower. If you went back and revisited those communities they may very well be higher in some cases, but we have always been conscientious of the balance between increases fees in a time when it is difficult for people to absorb.

Alderman DeVries stated just to encapsulate what you just said to me, even with the increases you still believe that the end fee would be about the same as the surrounding communities, and certainly not more expensive than.

Mr. LaFreniere stated or less. We would be in the middle of the group. It is very difficult to identify specifically how our fees relate to other communities because every community charges a little differently. We can't say that they charge X for this application and Y for this application. We have to take a sample project and see what the process would cost to go through in this community versus Manchester. That is how we did the analysis.

Alderman O'Neil stated on the top section with the Planning Board revenues...in the first four conditional use site plans. Will they also pay an application fee on top of that?

Mr. LaFreniere replied yes. I missed that in my presentation. Yes, there would be an application fee on top of that. That is to bring parity to the way we handle building permit applications. The application fee essentially covers our initial processing costs. If someone withdraws an application or makes a decision to not proceed we would withhold the application fee before we refund the balance of the fees that weren't extended.

Alderman O'Neil asked do you have ballpark numbers of how many conditional use permits were issued in this fiscal year?

Mr. LaFreniere replied we are estimating that it was plus or minus 30.

Alderman O'Neil asked this is for this year or fiscal year 2011?

Mr. LaFreniere replied for this year and we are projecting it level through 2011.

Alderman O'Neil asked could you give me a rundown of those numbers?

Mr. LaFreniere replied sure. There were approximately 20 mergers. The application fee would be around 128 on average over the last five years.

Alderman O'Neil asked how about the subdivision and the site plans?

Mr. LaFreniere replied for subdivisions and site plans we took our existing revenue and increased it by 25%.

Ms. Goucher stated we did an average over the last five years and the average for subdivisions was 38. The average of the site plans was 30 and the average of the plan developments was 13.

Alderman O'Neil asked where would those fall? In the second part of site plans?

Ms. Goucher replied correct.

Alderman O'Neil asked how about down below on Zoning Board? The upper category is traditional or common use variances.

Mr. LaFreniere replied Max tells me there were approximately 150, of which 50 are in the use variance category where we are not proposing a change and 100 in all other variances where we are proposing the increase.

Alderman O'Neil asked and we do have on the Zoning Board side a similar application fee already in place?

Mr. LaFreniere replied yes, we do.

Alderman Corriveau asked regarding traditional use permits and the application fee...we are going to zero current charges to a new fee. Were there any other examples of possible services or permit fees that we are currently not charging for that we are providing for free that other surrounding communities charge a fee for or are there comparably sized cities like Worcester or Lowell that charge?

Ms. Goucher replied some of the other communities have additional charges for conceptual discussions before the Board. They may charge for impact fees. I think Londonderry requires that you put some money up front for engineering analysis and they work down from a fund and return to the applicant. On larger projects in Salem I know that they charge \$50 per hour billable staff time for large complex projects. I think some communities charge for site inspections and perhaps even for re-inspections if you call back. It is not unusual for us to get calls saying that they are ready for our inspection and we go out there and they haven't completed all of their inspections so we need to go back more than once. We have never charged that a separate fee. We have generally considered that as part of the fee that they submit to the Planning Board. Amongst the three of us, we have certainly talked about whether or not we should impose a re-inspection fee for someone who indicated that they were ready and when we go out they are not. Towns do it differently and they do look to have other fees added to the basic fees.

Mr. LaFreniere stated I would echo what Pamela said and add to the discussion with regards to the re-inspection fees. Currently we do have re-inspection fees for building permits, plumbing, electrical, and so on. It is a \$30 fee for re-inspection. The only time that is applied is if someone calls multiple times for an inspection that they should have only needed one or two inspections for. There are certainly complex projects that have higher permit fees and multiple inspections are part and parcel of that process, but if someone calls and they are clearly not ready for

an inspection and called us out there and basically wasted the inspector's time because they weren't ready then that fee can be levied in that case. The \$30 fee is inadequate because, much like the Fire Department, while we are not running as much expensive equipment for as many people, we do have considerable staff time involved with sending an inspector out, getting the results processed back at the office where it involves support staff, vehicle expenses and so forth. We had proposed in our internal discussions that the re-inspection fee be increased as well to \$75 in those instances and also be applied to those re-inspections fees for site plans and initial use permits and so on because currently there is no re-inspection fee applied there. The reason I didn't bring it forward as part of this proposal is because I would like to consider that as a revenue neutral proposal because it is to provide a disincentive to doing that. To put out a big re-inspection fee with the idea that we are going to capture a lot of it by slamming people with this fee, is not our intent. By the same token, recapturing the expenses when they are unwarranted is something that I feel is appropriate.

Alderman Corriveau asked would you say that right now you are more along the analysis phase of examining whether the \$30 or the \$75 fees are revenue neutral? Is it your opinion right now that they are?

Mr. LaFreniere replied right. We are studying that. The \$30 fee does not come close to covering the cost of sending an inspector out with a vehicle and whatnot to do that inspection. I don't have a sound basis to provide you for bringing that fee up. We talked about it being close to \$75 after you factor in all the costs, but I would like to do some more analysis and actually incorporate what the actual costs are for employee salary and benefits.

Alderman Corriveau stated I'm curious how much time would you like. I would certainly be excited to hear about more revenue coming in.

Mr. LaFreniere stated we can bring that forward at your next meeting; that's not a problem, but my understanding was that we were looking for the purposes of this discussion what could be generated for appropriate and equitable revenue enhancements whereas that particular fee, I wouldn't necessarily want to say that we will make an extra \$2,500 a year on because the idea is that we don't want to charge it in the first place.

Alderman Corriveau stated we also don't want to lose on it.

Alderman Osborne moved to accept the recommendations from the Planning and Community Development Department. The motion was duly seconded by Alderman O'Neil.

Alderman O'Neil asked approximately how many re-inspections occur in a year?

Mr. LaFreniere replied it is not a large number. It is under 20, but I can get you how many we do.

Alderman O'Neil stated I have to be honest. I can't really see spending any time on it. I know you have attempted...I know that on occasion, I don't know if you charge for this, there is some miscommunication within the department. They may talk to one person who tells them to do one thing and someone else comes out to inspect. We have had some of those conflicts now and again.

Mr. LaFreniere stated we would never charge under those circumstances.

Alderman O'Neil stated secondly, I know from back in my days being out there, if something needed to be followed up on you might have the plumbing inspector look on behalf of the electrical inspector so you have been pretty good about trying to make it efficient. I don't think we should spend a lot of time because I don't think there are many of these. I think for the most part, the people who are pulling them are trying to do it right the first time.

Alderman DeVries asked which of the increases that you have proposed, or are there any of them, that you feel would be more applicable to the individual property owner rather than a potential developer? I have my thoughts, but I wanted to hear your answer.

Mr. LaFreniere replied on the Planning side, the most common single family house issue that someone might run into would be potentially a merger of a lot where they are erasing a lot line between two lots.

Alderman DeVries stated that might be the reason the fee is so low on that.

Mr. LaFreniere stated also, these fees are designed to reflect the amount of staff time that it requires. On the other end, the Zoning Board increase for all other variances would potentially have an impact.

Alderman DeVries stated I would agree with you and that was the one that I was looking at. I'm not sure I'm entirely comfortable with increasing. That is a very difficult variance when you are a foot shy of your set back provision and I have to now come to the City and we are increasing the fee to add salt to the wound.

Mr. Max Sink, Deputy Director Building Regulations, stated we are very conscious of that, Alderman. The fact is though that the real cost of processing a variance case is basically the same whether it is a use variance or all other variances. We do the same amount of work essentially, but we kept it less because it is more of an impact on the homeowner than it is on someone who is going in

for a site plan as well as a variance for a commercial user. That is why we kept it low, but we kept it lower.

Alderman DeVries stated so it would be your contention that the amount of staff time for the variance for a set back would be more than what is required to process a conditional use permit.

Mr. Sink stated I haven't done a comparison between those two types of applications.

Alderman DeVries stated one being planning and one being zoning, that is probably not a fair comparison.

Mr. Sink stated there are staff involved in both. We could do that comparison if you'd like.

Alderman DeVries stated I guess my point would be to ask you if you could find a way that doesn't hit on the individual property owner. Is there not another place?

Mr. LaFreniere replied well certainly we could look at other fees. Again, as Max has already stated, we were trying to reflect some of the actual costs it takes to process these. A lot of times what happens is with these, especially the smaller variances, they demand a significant amount of research. That is what drives up our hour costs to react to these applications. We certainly can take a look at that. My sense is if the Committee feels that it is appropriate, we would come back with Ordinances to effect these changes and we can come back with a couple of choices on that that. The Committee can make a decision about whether they want to move forward.

Chairman Lopez stated we have to move along because we have another meeting at 6:00 but we are going to have two more cracks at this anyway at the full Board and at Bills on Second Reading before we finalize this.

Alderman Corriveau asked do we know when this will go into effect, Mr. Chairman? Is it the calendar year?

Chairman Lopez replied I would assume it would go into effect upon approval of the full Board.

Mr. LaFreniere stated that is correct.

Chairman Lopez stated it goes to Bills on Second Reading and we probably won't touch it a second time until the first meeting in April, unless the Chairman has a special meeting to take this issue up for the revenue.

Alderman O'Neil stated let's be careful. There has not been a charge from the Board to make the department an Enterprise Department. I think there is an assumption that everyone, in paying their property taxes assumes some of the...the intent is not to recover all of the staff time out of the fee. We are all paying for it. Secondly, I know Alderman Corriveau had asked about some of the comparable cities and there was a little bit of a discussion about some of the towns in New Hampshire. Could you get that information on comparable cities? I think he said Worcester and Lowell just as examples as places comparable in population.

Mr. LaFreniere stated we have done a comparable analysis on New Hampshire so I think we can expand that relatively easily.

Alderman O'Neil stated I'm not really interested in Salem, but what are cities our size doing?

Mr. LaFreniere stated I can tell you for example, that in Nashua, use variance is \$900.

Chairman Lopez called for a vote on the motion to accept the Planning Department's recommendations. There being none opposed, the motion carried.

Chairman Lopez stated the City Clerk is next.

City Clerk Matt Normand stated we discussed briefly at the Board level, and as a recap I had had several conversations with both the Mayor and the Chairman of the Board, over some revenue possibilities that we were asked to look at as well as a recommendation from the Security Manager for one of the items. We did look at what we do in the office and what we can do additionally, which would be the marriage ceremonies. That is something that several of the other communities do. We currently have five JPs in the office, and this is being proposed for the people who want to come in and do a reading of vows. It is a quick process, probably less than a minute. I don't really know what to expect for this. In talking to Nashua and Concord, they realize about \$5,000 annually. As I mentioned at the Board level when we discussed this, I certainly didn't see that this would be much of a need in Manchester, but the staff is telling me that we get a call at least once a day from someone who is looking to be married in the office. We did a comparison of some of the JP services in the area in Manchester and what the other communities are doing and came up with a charge of \$55. It is certainly at the low end. The average JP service is about \$75 today. That is something that we recommend. Our service would not only allow people to get their marriage license, but their certified marriage certificate as well for one stop shopping to save people trips back and forth to City Hall. We did a comparison of the notary fees downtown. We are at \$3 today. The other communities, Concord and Portsmouth, all charge \$5. UPS

downtown, Granite State Credit Union and Members First Credit Union and the pawnshops all charge \$5 so we don't think this would be out of line. Again, we estimate that that would realize about \$1,000. In the Licensing Division, as I said, there was a recommendation from the Security Manager for some significant changes in the alarm fees that the City currently has. This is for intrusion alarms, burglary alarms. We didn't agree with all of them, but I can tell you specifically what we thought would be appropriate is equalizing the permit fee. Right now it is \$30 for a new application and \$20 for renewal. The same amount of work is involved in both so we propose leveling them both to \$30. We want to restructure the false alarm fee structure that exists today. Instead of allowing for three free false alarms, we would only be allowing for two and then shifting it and the third alarm would be \$25, the fourth alarm would be \$50, \$75 for the fifth, \$100 for the sixth, \$150, \$200, \$350, \$400 and \$500 respectfully. That is about \$9,500 that that would raise comfortably. There was an additional proposal to charge government buildings. It was not something that we agree with, but that is a policy decision of the Board. There has been a lot of discussion about the school alarms. As I mentioned at the Board meeting, I believe that is something that can be managed by the City without charging the School District and reducing the cost of the Police Department and their response to those false alarms. We have another recommendation. Currently there is an exemption in the false alarm for natural causes, so a storm like we just had probably raised heck over the false alarms and we want to maintain that natural occurrence exemption rather than eliminate it. Currently, those people don't get charged in a wind storm, a lightening strike or a power surge and we want to maintain that. Finally, the video poker machines are currently licenses at \$1,500. There has been a lot of discussion about that as well. It has not been changed since 1999. We looked at inflation alone on those and I'm not sure that \$2,000 is completely out of line there. That's just a recommendation and I would entertain any questions.

Chairman Lopez stated that is about \$73,000 in revenue.

Alderman Osborne stated I would like to take these four bullets in separate motions please. They should be spoken to in different motions I think.

Chairman Lopez stated I'll consider that.

Alderman O'Neil asked I know we are running out of time, but can you give a breakdown of the false alarm recommendation? I know you have modified the original recommendation. On the false alarm, you have to rely on information from the Police Department, correct?

City Clerk Normand replied the Police Department and the Information Systems Department provide us a chart of what the proposed structure would look like as opposed to the existing structure and that is how I derived that \$9,500.

Alderman O'Neil asked is it a pretty good system or do you have to dig through? City Clerk Normand replied you have to dig through the information and it is a little cumbersome. The system is not intended for that.

Alderman O'Neil asked even with that being cumbersome, \$9,500 is reasonable?

City Clerk Normand replied we think so.

Alderman O'Neil stated I agree on keeping the exemptions. I happened to be at the Police Department when a significant number of houses in the City came back on and they had 200 alarms at one point. You get hit when the power goes off and then when the power comes back on. I'm okay in general with the concept, though I would like to see the detail on the false alarm stuff.

Alderman DeVries stated I would agree on wanting the detail. I would agree in concept with everything. In reference to the exclusion for public schools or for public buildings I would support that as well.

Chairman Lopez stated I would like to make a motion on all of it, Alderman, but I will accommodate you if you insist to do that. You can always oppose the one for the record.

Alderman DeVries moved to accept the increases and include an exclusion for public buildings. There was not a second.

Alderman O'Neil stated it is not a recommendation.

Alderman DeVries stated there was a request for policy to be developed on that.

Alderman O'Neil stated that wasn't a recommendation from the City Clerk so we don't have to do anything on it.

On motion of Alderman Osborne, duly seconded by Alderman O'Neil, it was voted to remove the video poker machines from the City Clerk proposals and accept the balance.

Alderman O'Neil moved to accept the proposal for video poker machines from the City Clerk's Office. The motion was duly seconded by Chairman Lopez.

Chairman Lopez called for a vote on the motion. The motion passed with Alderman Osborne voting in opposition.

Chairman Lopez stated we have one more fast item. I hate to do this, but the Mayor asked me. I apologize to the Committee. Jane, can you come up? This should be very simple. The HR Director was asked by the Mayor to come before the Committee and I said okay.

Ms. Jane Gile, Human Resources Director, stated the Mayor asked me to report on bi-weekly payroll. Just by way of reference, the concept was floated around during the period when we were talking about generating revenues. As part of that discussion, we were asked to explore whether or not changing from weekly to biweekly realized any cost savings for the City and if it worked towards eliminating any redundancies in terms of personnel and the jobs they had to do. In terms of embarking on this, we first asked some questions. What are the actual cost savings and could we quantify that throughout the City? Do other municipalities currently have biweekly payroll and how do they do it? Are there restrictions in our ability to change from weekly to a biweekly, not only from any Ordinances, but also collective bargaining agreements, personnel policies or even from the State? What we found from our research, I'll try to abbreviate the best that I can. Our compensation manager did poll the various departments in the City, some of the larger departments that have heavy payroll functions in their departments, and they were able to ascertain if there could be some cost savings there in terms of office supplies and staff time instead of doing weekly payroll so some of those redundancies would be eliminated. There would potentially be a \$10,000 cost savings in terms of those departments. The Finance Department also projected some cost savings because they do a lot of the wire transfers and some of the transactions as well as some increases in interest on the money would sit for another week in savings. They are projecting \$14,500 in savings. When we looked at the HR Department to see if there would be cost savings realized there by going to a biweekly payroll, and we were able to see that we could potentially save in terms of staff time and dollars about \$24,500. When we looked to see if there are restrictions for the City proceeding on that basis, we did look at the City Ordinances, reviewed the City handbook, and reviewed the collective bargaining agreements on the City side. We didn't look at the School side, and we also looked at State law. The City Ordinance does not talk about a payday, particularly. The employee handbook does say that Thursday is a weekly payday so the handbook would need to be revised in order to accommodate that. Collective bargaining agreements don't talk about the payday. They do talk about the hours in the day and in the week.

Chairman Lopez stated why don't I stop you right there. I know some of the major questions that are going to come up. Why don't you prepare a document?

Ms. Gile replied sure. I did not have the opportunity because I just learned about this this afternoon.

Chairman Lopez stated that's okay. We have another Committee meeting in a couple weeks. Prepare a document and in the same time, coordinate in the union officials and get their feedback on this so that we have a full picture of what we are talking about and the savings potential and the legality of some of these things. I think input from the City Solicitor and union presidents is necessary so that we are not upsetting the apple cart individuals. We need the whole picture so we can get some documentation that we can analyze and go that way.

Alderman O'Neil stated Mr. Chairman, if we don't sit down with the bargaining units there is no sense in wasting our time with anything else. I have already heard from them. They believe that it needs to be negotiated and I think they are going to see it through. That is not just one of them; that is most of our large ones.

Ms. Gile stated we have received two grievances that have been filed, although we are not even at that point. It is still a concept. It was filed by one large union and one smaller union. We also have received two demands to negotiate from two smaller units.

Alderman O'Neil stated the three larger ones that I have spoken with all believe this is a negotiated item. Before we spend anytime doing anything else, that's where the discussion has to be.

Chairman Lopez stated let's do that. Prepare a document so that we have the full picture.

There being no further business, on motion of Alderman O'Neil, duly seconded by Alderman DeVries, it was voted to adjourn.

A True Record. Attest.

Clerk of Committee