

COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

May 1, 1996

5:30 PM

Chairman Robert called the meeting to order.

Present: Ald. Robert, Wihby, Reiniger, Clancy, Domainque

3. Communication from Ald. Hirschmann reference: West Memorial Field.

Chairman Robert requested this be referred to budget discussions and requested a motion to receive and file.

On motion of Ald. Wihby, duly seconded by Ald. Clancy, it was voted to receive and file the communication with intent to discuss the matter with the budget discussion later in the meeting.

It was noted that Ald. Hirschmann had a prior engagement and could not stay for later discussion. Chairman Robert advised that it was intended that an overview be made of the budget and that there was an intent to discuss specific projects at a later date and this would be one. Ald. Hirschmann advised he would address the committee at a later time.

4. Copy of a communication from Jay Taylor to Mayor Wieczorek relative to his review of the Elderly Services lease in the Daily Mirror Building located at 66 Hanover Street.

Ald. Wihby moved for discussion. Ald. Clancy duly seconded the motion.

Mr. Girard advised that at an earlier meeting the lease had been referred to the Mayor's budget process. The Mayor did meet with representatives of the building owner and one of the things that was discovered was that a part of the lease was if there was any change in the mortgage that the city had on the property, either

the debt was forgiven or paid off, the rents would return to so called market rate. A couple years ago the mortgage of 1.2 million was forgiven and written and under the lease that we had we should have return to market rate, but no one picked it up. The Mayor suggested that the property owners should give the space to the city in the building rent free until the 1.2 million write off. Mr. Girard noted the solicitor was part of the meeting and they asked Mr. Taylor to draw on his expertise with leases to investigate what the rent should have been at the time and the communication has been attached.

Discussion ensued relative to the understandings, what would happen if the city would not longer be renting as far as settling the matter, lease extension dates, fair market value of rents, etc. where Mr. Taylor outlined various components of the lease requirements. A motion was made by Ald. Wihby and seconded by Ald. Clancy to have the solicitor send a letter to the landlord which was then rescinded in favor of requesting an extension of notification relative to extending the lease for 30 days.

On motion of Ald. Domainque, duly seconded by Ald. Reiniger, it was voted to have the solicitor notify the landlord of the city's current deliberations with regard to budget and request an extension of notification of lease extension for 30 days.

5. Communication from Kathleen Sternenber, NH Philharmonic Orchestra, expressing interest in discussing the possibility of entering into a long-term sub-lease with the City at 83 Hanover Street as an alternate location for the East Side Senior Center.

A representative of the Philharmonic, Roxanne Taru, addressed the committee and outlined its proposal to share space under sublease conditions with the city's elderly services program on the fourth floor of their Hanover Street space at a rate of \$1625 per month. In response to questions from Ald. Wihby, Ms. Taru outlined conditions relating to electric for which they presently were not charged, and noted it was oil head.

Discussion ensued regard to the feasibility of utilizing the Philharmonic space where concerns of the elderly services director with regard to breaking down of tables, open space/versus office space, and safety issues with regard to elevator/stairs, and serving meals were noted by Ald. Reiniger. Ald. Reiniger felt it should be pursued and looked at because obviously, Elderly Services did not want to move from it current location but fund savings should be considered if the space could be made adequate to service the needs.

Following general discussion where Ald. Clancy suggested a review by Fire and Building Commissioner, especially with regard to safety issues such as the grated fire escape, elevator shafts,

etc. Mr. Girard questioned the ventilation space and suggested that also be looked at in terms of heat. Ald. Wihby suggested sprinklers may be an alternative on safety issues.

On motion of Ald. Reiniger, duly seconded by Ald. Domainque, it was voted to defer the item and request the building commissioner to review the space with the elderly services director and report back to the committee.

6. Review of the proposed FY97 CIP Program, and related communications as follows:

- (a) Communication from Families in Transition requesting their funding level remain the same as 1996 at \$7,000.00.
- (b) Communication from NH Performing Arts requesting financial assistance for their educational/cultural program called "The Living Classics". (4/23/96 CIP Committee referred to budget deliberations.)

(Note: Depending upon time constraints, this discussion of FY97 CIP Programs will be continued to May 7, 1996 at 5:30 PM.)

Chairman Robert advised he wished Mr. MacKenzie to present an overview for the committee.

Mr. MacKenzie referred to the CIP budget package noting it was a comprehensive program involving a substantial amount of money. Mr. MacKenzie noted that they had summarized in two pie charts where the money was coming from and where it was going to. Mr. MacKenzie noted that under funding sources the largest share was federal, state and other which included foundations and private donations. Mr. MacKenzie commented that a large chunk was enterprise which was primarily Water Works, EPD, and Airport Authority. A smaller chunk though significant was bonds, 8.9 million, and smaller parcels HUD monies were really federal but was separated because it had different abilities than the rest of the federal funds. Mr. MacKenzie noted the small portion, though an important one, was the city cash portion of about \$800,000. Mr. MacKenzie noted the combined total was almost \$60 million for FY 97.

Mr. MacKenzie referred to the bottom chart in term of where it was going to. Mr. MacKenzie noted that most of the money next year will be going to transportation and environment, and large amount being for airport improvements proposed, runway, reconstruction and other improvements. A large sum was also

going to sewer system improvements, road improvements, the basic infrastructure of the city. Under education was \$12 million, a small portion was physical improvements like a new school, a larger chunk was various grants that the school department gets to run special education and other programs. Relative smaller pieces were related to housing and community development, recreation - \$1 million, public safety - \$1 million, health and human services, public services - \$1 million and community management about \$2.5 million.

Mr. MacKenzie noted the next section reflected the meat of the proposal reflecting five tables. Table 1-1 was federal, state and other funds which were basically grants coming into the city that are pretty much dedicated towards a single purpose, there was not much flexibility in transferring funds from one of these sources to another one, the board did not have much discretion but did have the discretion of removing projects they did not think were suitable for the city, but they could not take funds from one program and apply it to another.

Mr. MacKenzie referred to Table 1-2, noting they were special funds received from the Department of Housing and Urban Development, of which there were three parts. Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), HOME funds for housing programs, and Emergency Shelter Grant funds (ESG) directed towards the homeless and transitional housing. This runs about \$3 million and there was a little more flexibility, there are guidelines that have to be followed, but within parameters the board could decide where the money is going. Mr. MacKenzie noted that the columns reflected a level one funding and a full funding. This was a result of the difficulties at the congressional level in coming up with a budget for FY96 at the federal level. Level one funding was all that HUD would guarantee them, about \$1 million, so if they didn't come to a budget agreement, which was done last week, they could only have applied the level one funding. Mr. MacKenzie stated they were assuming now, though they had not received notification, with last week's budget approval they believe that the full funding for the CDBG will come through. Mr. MacKenzie commented that within the Table 1-2 were a lot of the public service programs, day care, youth recreation, community health, it funded public service programs felt needed in the city and was based upon a lot of requests. In this case they received more requests than there were funds available to pay for the programs. Mr. MacKenzie noted that for public service projects, and they did have a communication from families in transition, he wished to caution that HUD says you can only use 15 percent of all the HUD monies for public service grants and we are at the maximum of the 15 percent at this point, so any monies that the board may want to allocate for example to families in transition they would have to look at taking that away from other programs.

Mr. MacKenzie noted the next was Table 1-3, proposed city cash, explaining that this was cash projects the board allocated funds to which came from an appropriation on the property tax portion of the budget and briefly reviewed the projects proposed under various categories. Mr. MacKenzie noted that most of the initial projects listed were ones that the board had typically funded from year to year, and others of a maintenance variety not eligible or recommended for bond funding.

Mr. MacKenzie explained Table 1-4 outlined the various bond projects to be proposed in the budget, and briefly highlighted the projects listed.

General discussion ensued with regard to bond programs where Chairman Robert recognized Mr. Girard to address the committee.

Mr. Girard stated to get a real overall picture of what we are looking at doing in road reconstruction as a result of that at this time between CDBG and bond monies totals \$1.4 million, resurfacing is in the area of \$300,000 and other infrastructure work, unfortunately they have about \$600,000 of structural work to do at the Center of NH garage which we have to take care of, and about \$400,000 worth of work to do at the Biron Bridge/Kelley Street Bridge there was some serious deck work that needed to be done there, and those were all things that were funded from current and past years bonds that don't impact here. Mr. Girard noted that the Mayor under the CDBG table which was table 1-2 had programmed \$1.5 million to reconstruct Elm Street. Mr. Girard noted it was a section 108 loan. Basically the reconstruction of Elm Street was one of the two top priorities as he understood it of the Highway Department, that and finding more money to do resurfacing in general. This \$1.5 million is a section 108 loan.

It was noted that the project appeared on table 1-1, page 2.

Mr. Girard noted that the proposal was made by the Mayor for two reasons, one Elm Street structurally is a mess. It is at or near the top of Highway's reconstruction list, anyone can see a patchwork of potholes that haven't taken well and the road is crumbling, the other reason for the recommendation was that it was the mayor's feeling that unless the citizens and the businesses of the city see the city itself taking some steps to make changes in the downtown that need to be made, even something as simple as reconstructing a road, he feels that there is not going to be an awful lot of confidence of the businesses either in or around downtown that may be considering downtown as a place to locate to come in. The reason they were using the section 108 loan was because it was a sort of federal pass through, these funds can only be used in a CDBG eligible area, and has to be used in an area that can show substantial economic disinvestment. Mr. Girard commented that they felt strongly that they would be able to make the case to HUD that Elm Street was an area which over time has seen substantial economic disinvestment, both by

private enterprise and the city, and this was our attempt to correct that. Mr. Girard noted that the proposal forwarded to the committee and board is one that was developed by a committee of city officials, downtown business officials and a consultant, as an outcome of a \$50,000 study in the last year. Mr. Girard noted the improvements would reconstruct Elm Street completely, make it a three lane road, with a middle turning lane, install angle parking on the length of the street from Bridge to Granite to enhance and add to the parking spots, and make several needed aesthetic improvements and repair some of the sidewalks if the money holds out. Mr. Girard closed his comments reiterating the importance of the city's investment and making it a more inviting area.

In response to questions from Ald. Domainque, Mr. Girard advised the funds for facades would be under the \$500,000 in Central Business District funds but it would not be only for facade improvements and they would be working with In-Town Management in the future to see how best that money can be utilized. \$100,000 of the \$500,000 came from CDBG, the balance came from a capital improvement fund that the city has been able to set up as a result of the Center of New Hampshire redevelopment; that because the city helped pay for it funds go back to the city in this capital account and can be used for downtown improvements.

Mr. Girard commented on social programs noting that because of cutbacks in federal, county and state level funds the city saw an increase in requests, and with only two exceptions the mayor had not recommended funding any new programs, the one notable exception was the YOU program a vital program in the inner city operating out of the Beech Street School (\$12,000 allocation) and the other was Big Brothers/Big Sisters (\$2,500 allocation).

Chairman Robert noted that there was much to go through and suggested that they generally agree on what they see except for the things that the members bring forward, and develop a laundry list of what the concerns are and they could take the list forward to department heads or whoever involved and they can be present at the next meeting to answer any and all questions to piece the whole thing together in a package they can agree upon.

Ald. Wihby questioned Table 1-2, Pharmaceutical Program, he understood that they had closed the doors down for the last four months, they did fund them more money than last year, but he did not think \$7,000 more from last year would make up for the four months. Ald. Wihby noted he had received calls from Sue Lafond and a couple of doctors on this issue. In response to questions, Ald. Wihby noted that they had asked for \$40,000 and the mayor gave them \$32,000.

Ald. Wihby commented on Operational Assistance to Helping Hands, the city had always worked with them and they have done good work in the past and he would like to see that brought up to the \$6,000 they were looking for.

Ald. Wihby referred to VNA Day Care, asking if it was Optima noting they had not funded it in this year, and questioned why we would be funding it next year. Mr. MacKenzie noted it was funded last year, this was actually proposed at a reduced amount. Ald. Wihby stated it was taken out of the budget last year, it should not have been funded Optima owns it. It was \$80,000 for the day care and he had figured that Optima took it over and they could take care of it, asking if Mr. MacKenzie would check that and noting he could look at the minutes of the last meeting.

Ald. Wihby referred to education, Table 1-4, general obligation bonds, \$2 million for capital improvements. Ald. Wihby commented that he had seconded the motion for Memorial High School last year to take care off the locker rooms in anticipation of taking care of the locker rooms at Central this year, and they also had three items as far as certification, one was ventilation, one was the science labs and the third was the lockers, so the lockers were still not getting done and he wanted to see that put into the number. Ald. Wihby additionally commented that the lockers were the next thing on the school department's priority list submitted for consideration, and so was the next thing that should be done according to their list.

Ald. Wihby referred to west memorial field, 5.10106, the Parks & Recreation priority list showed number 7 as Livingston Park Capital Improvements to fund improvements there including a track field, number 8 was the west memorial field, so somebody decided that number 8 was more important than number 7 even though parks had decided it wasn't and funded west memorial when parks was asking to fund Livingston first, so he hoped they would reverse that and go by what Parks was looking for.

Discussion ensued relative to the priority list from parks and questions as to why all members didn't have one. Ald. Wihby noted he had asked parks to forward him a list. Ald. Domaingue had a problem with the fact that the departments had developed priority lists which included projects in the various wards and she had never seen those lists and the aldermen should be provided them to do comparisons for their wards.

Mr. MacKenzie explained the process noting that according to the city charter the mayor is responsible for proposing the CIP budget. Historically it has been developed that they have a system where the CIP program makes requests or asks each of the departments to submit their requests for the existing year and future years. They get the requests with documentation supporting it, and after compiling the information the CIP staff makes recommendations to the mayor and the mayor uses that and shifts through the program and presents the budget he feels best meets the needs of the city. Mr. MacKenzie noted that the information was available. Mr. MacKenzie commented that they had a public hearing on Livingston last week and Ald. Wihby had asked where the project fell on the priority list, which was why he was

brought a copy tonight, they would not normally give those to the aldermen unless they wanted to see the whole gamut of information. Mr. MacKenzie noted from CIP standpoint in preparing the CIP recommendations to the mayor, they try to follow the recommendations or priorities of the departments, that is why they ask them to prioritize it, it is not always possible. For example if a department comes in and the top priority is a \$12 million x computer, the next priority was \$100,000 program and they only had \$1 million in total they would probably fund them the second priority, but to the extent economically feasible they would try to follow the priority list of the department.

Ald. Domaingue noted that she did not wish to have all of the information in the package but the listing of priorities by the departments she felt was critical for aldermen looking at projects in their ward because projects that you think as an aldermen should be a priority might not even make the priority list.

Ald. Wihby questioned motorized equipment replacement, noting the \$100,000 commenting he thought they had something in the cash part of that. Mr. Girard responded they did but the Highway Department's number one priority was an evactor which basically cleans out the catch drains and the sewer, their's is non-functional. Mr. Girard noted that they had two, one funded with CDBG money so it can only operate in a particular area of the city and the one that covers the rest of the city is dying, because it also does work for EPD they had recommended money from EPD.

Mr. Girard noted with regard to Livingston, it was higher on the priority list, however, it was not the understanding of the mayor's office that \$1 million had anything to do with building a track at Livingston, it was simply to take care of current rehabilitative needs from the pool to the tennis courts to the playgrounds.

Ald. Wihby noted he differed with the opinion and commented that there were private people willing to commit to \$100,000 to give to the city to build the track.

Chairman Robert noted that he wished to construct the list if he could.

Ald. Reiniger noted there was a letter from families in transition on the agenda, asking if they were to take action on it.

Chairman Robert noted that he would put #3 and #6 on the laundry list for future discussion.

Ald. Domainque commented on her concern for lack of money on a regular basis with the street construction noting this was the first thing the constituent hits when they park their car in a driveway, or leave their garage, it was a high priority item for every single person who lives in the city, and she hoped that the aldermanic board could put a little emphasis on it this coming year.

Chairman Robert noted that resurfacing and reconstruction were then a concern.

Ald. Domainque commented she wished to bring Ald. Elise's concern regarding sidewalks. Ald. Domainque commented that her understanding was there was no money for sidewalks in this CIP budget.

Mr. Girard responded there was CD money for selected areas.

Ald. Domainque asked about the Pine Island 4-H Center issue and whether any of this funding could be made available or whether it was ever put on a list, and also questioned where the \$107,000 check was, because she did not want that going back into the general fund.

Mr. Girard noted the \$107,000 was sitting in an escrow account by Finance pending action of the Board. They did make a request regarding Pine Island Park, it was for site improvement and land acquisition, number 14 of 18 in the priority listing, they did not request any money to do anything with the building.

Mr. Girard commented on street reconstruction noting the Highway Department generally likes to see about \$1.5 million a year in reconstruction. With what they did with CDBG and the reassignment of the bonds we have met that level which they feel is acceptable. The other issue here is the Highway Department can only do so much reconstruction in a given year, because of construction constraints and if they wished to contract out some of that work then they could add the money.

Ald. Domainque responded that she could not believe they have a highway department that feels it has enough; that she saw something in a memo which talked about how often we reconstruct or resurface the streets and she thought the current rate the first street on the list gets done 50 years from the date it was originally done. Mr. Girard responded that was not the current rate, it was now about once about every 20 years which was an acceptable life of a road.

Chairman Robert noted that this issue would be on the laundry list for later discussion.

Ald. Clancy noted the JFK Coliseum was a big concern with him because people are going there and feel the building was not safe. Mr. Girard noted Parks and Recreation Enterprise was bonding \$160,000 for structural work to take care of that.

Ald. Clancy stated the roads was his other concern along with sewer and drainage problems. Mr. Girard noted there was \$25,000 allocated for chronic sewer and drain which this committee at a later point in time will be able to direct highway in spending and depending on whether it is a drainage or sewer problem. Some concerns were expressed on the small amount.

Ald. Wihby referred to the monies received from rooms and meals noting that it had been felt this should be set aside for economic development, wondering if it made sense to free up a couple hundred thousand to go somewhere else, suggesting perhaps switching sources under the revolving loan fund and free up funds.

Ald. Clancy noted concern for the self contained breathing apparatuses used by the on line firemen. Ald. Clancy noted that these should not be swapped back and forth each man needed a mask. Mr. Girard noted that there was funding in the CIP.

Chairman Robert stated that he would work on having a listing and have the people at the next meeting who can answer the questions as needed for the members.

NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Robert advised there was one item of new business which needed to be addressed.

An amending resolution and budget authorization providing for the acceptance and expenditure of state grant funds for the Alcohol and Drug Abuse program.

It was noted that the item was being introduced because of time constraints required in accepting the funds.

On motion of Ald. Wihby, duly seconded by Ald. Domainque, it was voted to approve the resolution and authorization.

There being no further business to come before the committee, on motion of Ald. Wihby, duly seconded by Ald. Clancy, it was voted to adjourn.

A True Record. Attest.

Leo R. Berger
Clerk of Committee