

FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES

The Standing Committee on Finance met on *Monday, November 16th, 2020 at 7:00 PM* in the *Council Chambers, Brockton City Hall, 45 School Street*, with Councilor Asack presiding and Councilor Monahan absent with 10 members present, to consider the following:

Public Hearing- Item # 1

1. Ordered: That the City Council of the City of Brockton finds that there is a clear need for an Urban Renewal Plan. In order to achieve the approved objectives on the Brockton Comprehensive Plan, A Blueprint for Brockton., that the Downtown / Trout Brook Urban Revitalization Plan, as described in Exhibit A, prepared by Harriman and RKG Associates, dated June 2020 is an Urban Renewal Plan prepared in accordance with MGL Chapter 121B and 760 CMR 12.00, that the City Council approves the boundaries of the Downtown / Trout Brook Urban Revitalization Plan. Plan located in City Clerk's Office for review.

Invited: Mayor Robert Sullivan

Robert May, Director of Planning and Economic Development

Robert Jenkins, Executive Director of Brockton Redevelopment Authority

*Mayor Sullivan states this is forecasting in the future, could be 5,10,15, 20 years down the line. Multitasking projects, future and present.

*Robert Jenkins states 20-year plan for the city to develop a new neighborhood outside of downtown area.

*Rob May states at the heart of this plan is a 30-acre site, CSX which is abandoned and has been source of illegal activities for several years.

*Councilor Cruise asks if this passes, does this commit us financially or is it just sending a plan to DHC to look at.

*Rob May states no. It is not committing the city of Brockton to spend any money.

*Councilor Thompson asks where are we in the plan?

*Robert Jenkins states at the end of the plan. Need to update the assessors information.

*Councilor Thompson asks Mr. Jenkins if he believes that moving forward with this process will or would be a detriment to any current or short-term future development opportunities here in Brockton?

*Mr. Jenkins states no. It is a matter of priority. This is not a priority for the BRA or the city. This is a plan, if a developer is interested at least we have a plan.

*Councilor Thompson asks if the city of Brockton would assume any liability in regards to the contamination or otherwise if Trout Brook is designated an urban renewal district?

*Mr. Jenkins states no it will not.

*Councilor Farwell states the urgent need in the city is economic relief to people, jobs. A lot of what we do is 15-20 years out. We need to focus on true economic development and bringing new business to the city.

*Councilor Nicastro would like to approve the final product before it goes to the state.

*Brockton resident, Dennis Hursey speaks at the hearing. Mr. Hursey states that people in the city are hurting, we need jobs. Not a lot of economic growth in the past 5 years. We need to get jobs for these people now.

*Councilor Lally asks Mr. May to speak of the positive economic impacts we have had in the city in the past couple of years.

*Mr. May states one of the largest is Peterbilt facility on West Chestnut Street. Also, a new firm on Union Street is expanding their tool and die making precision equipment for the military. Alves garage a facility on North Montello Street, a high-end car repair and storage facility.

*Mayor Sullivan states that a new business opened, Lady C&J now at the BAT Bus terminal.

*Councilor Cardoso states we should focus on the businesses we have now. Applications for funds to help businesses are difficult for some.

*Brockton resident, Elisangela Teixeira speaks at the hearing. States she works for DHCD, emergency shelter housing program. Speaks of people who are being evicted due to not being able to afford their rents or mortgages. Speaks of people who need training to get jobs. Rent is too expensive. Asks what jobs are we bringing to Brockton that will fit the people who live here?

*Brockton resident, Jimmy Valentin speaks at the hearing. Speaks about how Brockton needs jobs.

*Councilor Thompson would like to make a motion to postpone this order. Assessment data needs to be updated.

*Councilor Cruise states the motion would be to keep the hearing open.

Having considered the same, motion by Councilor Thompson to report to KEEP HEARING OPEN until the December 21st Finance Committee Meeting, 2nd by Councilor Lally. Motion carried by a hand vote.

2. Ordered: The City Council reviews an exemption from the residency requirement in accordance with the Revised Ordinances of the City of Brockton Article III Section 2-110, City of Brockton Ordinance Waiver of Residency in reference to James Plouffe of the Building Department

Invited: Mayor Robert Sullivan

James Plouffe, Interim Building Superintendent

*Mayor Sullivan states that Mr. Plouffe has worked for the city for almost 20 years; 17 years of it he lived in Brockton. Mr. Plouffe has really helped the city by disinfecting, installing plexi glass in the Council Chambers, air purifiers, getting the security desk at City Hall, helping with the space study and helped get trailers at the Shaw's Center to hold COVID-19 testing. Really comfortable putting this before you tonight.

*Councilor Farwell speaks of the dynamics of this position. Speaks of the extensive exams you need to pass for this license. It is difficult to find a person like Mr. Plouffe who knows the city and all the principal people in the departments, knows the buildings in the city, knows 780 CMR and local ordinances.

*Councilor Nicastro states that it is a pleasure working with Mr. Plouffe.

*Councilor Rodrigues states he is impressed with Mr. Plouffe and is in favor of this.

*Councilor Cardoso asks Mr. Plouffe what his plans are on making the Building Department more welcoming and seeing that the staff is patient with people. Especially with people that don't speak the language.

*Mr. Plouffe states he has been working on getting the department computerized. Want to streamline the permit process. Currently the application is only in English. With the new system we are looking into having multiple languages through google translate. We do have an employee who is Cape Verdean descent who is very helpful with customers.

*Councilor Eaniri states he is in favor of Mr. Plouffe.

*Councilor Cruise states this is one of the most difficult positions in the city to fill.

Having considered the same, motion by Councilor Cruise to report FAVORABLE, 2nd by Councilor Lally. Motion carried by a hand vote.

3. Appointment of James Plouffe of 3 Carriage House Drive Lakeville, MA 02347 to the position of Building Superintendent of the Public Property Department for the City of Brockton for a three-year term ending November 2023.

Invited: Mayor Robert Sullivan

James Plouffe, Interim Building Superintendent

*Councilor Cruise states he would like to work with Mr. Plouffe on streamlining the process.

*Mayor Sullivan states there is a weekly meeting on permitting and would welcome Councilor Cruise's input.

Having considered the same, motion by Councilor Eaniri to report FAVORABLE, 2nd by Councilor Lally. Motion carried by a hand vote.

4. Ordered: Acceptance and expenditure of the donation in the amount of \$1,000.00

From: C. Carney Environmental

To: Police Department

No match required

Invited: Mayor Robert Sullivan

Troy Clarkson, Chief Financial Officer

Emanuel Gomes, Chief of Police

Having considered the same, motion by Councilor Farwell to report FAVORABLE, 2nd by Councilor Cruise. Motion carried by a hand vote.

5. Ordered: Acceptance and expenditure of the grant award in the amount of \$13,265

From: U.S. Department of Justice- FY2020 Patrick Leahy Bulletproof Vest

Partnership grant

To: Police Department-FY2020 Patrick Leahy Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant fund

Invited: Mayor Robert Sullivan

Troy Clarkson, Chief Financial Officer

Emanuel Gomes, Chief of Police

*Chief Nicastro asks Chief Gomes to explain this grant.

*Chief Gomes states reoccurring federal grant to provide body armor for people in law enforcement. It is a reimbursement grant, we put the money up first and then get a reward on that grant. Vests have a 5-year shelf life.

Having considered the same, motion by Councilor Lally to report FAVORABLE, 2nd by Councilor Rodrigues. Motion carried by a hand vote.

6. Ordered: Acceptance and expenditure of the grant award in the amount of \$25,600
From: Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA)-FY20 Emergency Management Preparedness Grant
To: City of Brockton Emergency Management-FY20 Emergency Management Preparedness Grant fund.
Invited: Mayor Robert Sullivan
Troy Clarkson, Chief Financial Officer
Stephan Hooke, Director of Brockton Emergency Management Agency

*Mr. Hooke states this is a yearly grant to buy equipment with.

Having considered the same, motion by Councilor Cruise to report FAVORABLE, 2nd by Councilor Lally. Motion carried by a hand vote.

7. Resolve: To invite Mr. John O'Donnell, as he is the Chairperson of the Brockton Board of Assessors, and any other persons he wishes to accompany him, to come before a committee of this Council to discuss the results of the recent comprehensive reassessment of all classes of property in the City of Brockton, the resulting proposed 2021 property valuations, and information related to the valuations and tax rate.
Invited: John O'Donnell, Chairperson, Brockton Board of Assessors

*Council President Asack states that Mr. O'Donnell is not able to come as he is not feeling well.

*Councilor Nicastro states she is disappointed that Mr. O'Donnell is not here; hopes he is feeling better. Disappointed he did not send anyone in his place. Would have liked that this information gets out in advance before the tax rate hearing.

*Council President Asack states that Mr. O'Donnell did state that he will provide information in advance of the meeting and will request that he post information publicly for the residents.

*Councilor Cardoso states she is also disappointed that someone did not come in place of Mr. O'Donnell. She has about 26 questions from residents that are very important. She stated she will email him the questions.

*Councilor Rodrigues suggested to vote against this Resolve to send a message that they were not too thrilled.

Having considered the same, motion by Councilor Rodrigues to report UNFAVORABLE, 2nd by Councilor Cruise. Motion carried by a hand vote.

8. Resolve: To invite Rob May, Director of Planning, and the Chairperson of the Zoning and Planning boards to discuss means to inform the public as to the lack of availability of adult use retail marijuana in the City of Brockton.

Invited: Megan Bridges, City Solicitor

Rob May, Director of Planning and Economic Development

James Plouffe, Interim Building Superintendent/ Clerk to ZBA

Anthony Zeoli, City Clerk

Robert Pelaggi, Chairperson, Planning Board

Kenneth Galligan, Chairperson, Zoning Board

*Councilor Rodrigues speaks about the lack of respect to this body. We sent out invites to these people. There is a serious issue with the process of licensing marijuana retail dispensaries in the city.

*Councilor Farwell has a point of order. We all received a letter threatening legal action. This should not be discussed in public. This should be done in an executive session.

*Mrs. Bridges states she is limited in what she can offer, there are threats of litigation. At my request is the reason the other individuals are not here.

Having considered the same, motion by Councilor Cruise to report FAVORABLE, 2nd by Councilor Lally. Motion carried by a hand vote.

*Meeting adjourned at 9:30 PM