

A regular meeting of the Board of Aldermen was held Tuesday, October 11, 2005 at 7:36 p.m. in the Aldermanic Chamber.

President Brian S. McCarthy presided; City Clerk Paul R. Bergeron recorded.

Prayer was offered by City Clerk Paul R. Bergeron; Alderman MacLaughlin leading in the Pledge to the Flag.

President McCarthy

I would remind the members of the Board and of the public to please turn off cell phones and pagers.

The roll call was taken with 14 members of the Board of Aldermen present; Alderman Gage was not in attendance.

His Honor Mayor Bernard A. Streeter and Corporation Counsel David R. Connell were also in attendance.

President McCarthy

Alderman Gage is upstairs at the Zoning Board, and will be in and out as he has a couple of items of interest upstairs.

REMARKS BY THE MAYOR

Thank you Mr. President. This evening, instead of my comments, I am pleased to introduce former Mayor Maurice Arel, Chairman of the Mayor's Healthcare Task Force. Former Mayor Arel chaired a 15-member task force including Alderman Rob Shaw, representatives from the city's 3 largest unions, public sector CEO's and human resource directors, healthcare consultants and key staff from both the city and school administrations.

Mr. President, since the cost of healthcare for city and school employees is rising between \$2 million and \$3 million dollars annually, the task force was charged to explore innovative strategies to manage this rising cost. The Task Force Report centers on five (5) recommendations: three related to lifestyle changes and two that require buy in from the Mayor and Board of Aldermen, the city's employer boards and the city's 16 bargaining units. The first step in the buy in process will begin tomorrow morning when I will meet with the Presidents and Stewards of our city unions to present the report and discuss its recommendations. Mayor Arel will give you an outline of the report this evening. I hope you will read the report and if you so wish, I will be pleased to work with you to make arrangements for you and your Board to discuss it with task force members at your convenience.

Mayor Arel, thank you for your effort in the city's behalf and while I am handing out copies, please begin your presentation.

Maurice Arel

Thank you Mayor and thank you members of the Board of Aldermen. I told the Mayor I would prefer about a two-hour presentation. Alderman Shaw attended all but one of our meetings, and realized that they were all three or four hour meetings. Alderman Lozeau also attended a couple of those meetings so you know I can talk forever. The Mayor outlined the members of our committee; there were six private sector members, three city employees, nine union representatives, and one Alderman, Alderman Shaw. We were also assisted by nine resource personnel; three from the public sector, five from the city and school department, and the city's health consultant, Kevin Connolly of HRH. We held lengthy meetings in July, August, and September. These meetings were recorded, but not transcribed. We didn't have the money to do the transcription, but if anyone wants to listen to them I am sure that Mark Sousa in the Mayor's Office has the tapes available.

The first thing the committee did was to review the HRH Report, the city's healthcare consultant. If you have not had an opportunity to look at it you really should spend some time. It outlines some of the issues that the city needs to deal with if they want to at least control some of our healthcare costs. The committee also viewed a comparison of the health plan for the Cities of Nashua, Concord, Manchester, and Portsmouth in New Hampshire and the City of Lowell and the Town of Chelmsford in Massachusetts. It is interesting. It says basically that Nashua is in the middle. Concord requires no contributions for employees of the HMO, but request a 6% contribution for employees on the POS plan. The City of Manchester requires a 12.5% contribution with the POS plan and the same with the City of Nashua on the HMO. The City of Portsmouth requires contributions of 13-17%. The co-pays are basically all the same. The thing that was surprising for the city and town in Massachusetts the City of Lowell and the Town of Chelmsford have contributions from the employees ranging from 25-37%. They are much higher in those two. I don't know if that is typical of the state, but those are the two that we looked at.

When you compare those to the healthcare plans of the private sector, the private sector generally requires a much higher contribution level from the employees, higher co-pays than the municipalities, and in a lot of cases the benefit plans are a lot higher. They have \$1,000 before you start to pay, etc. etc.

During our long discussion it was constantly repeated, and I think this needs to be pointed out, and I think the Aldermen that served on the committee certainly will bear this out that whatever you do based on what is happening today you probably will not reduce your overall costs, but will basically reduce the rate of increase in the cost. I brought an article to the June meeting from USA Today, which talked about HMO costs. They were looking in the Northeast of HMO costs with an increase of 15.8% for the current year. That gives you some feel of what is happening to our healthcare costs. A few seconds before the meeting we were talking about technology changes in hospitals and how you can see how healthcare costs are being driven by technology changes. You see a lot of it happening in City Hall; well it is a hundred times more in hospitals.

Our suggestions for action – we called them suggestions for actions rather than recommendations, and we have to remember the makeup of our committee. We have all sectors; we have the private sector to the unions. It was suggested that we make suggestions. The first was to open up a discussion with all unions in order to reach an agreement that will allow the city to eliminate the name of any insurer in bargaining contracts, and to bid the administration cost of the city's self insured program to the major insurance companies serving the State of New Hampshire. It was the consensus of the committee members that the administration fee for the city's program is excessive and that through competitive

bidding this fee could be reduced. This would be a win/win for the city and its employees resulting in no initial reduction in benefits to the employees, and a decrease in the city's cost. Ultimately, since the city is self-insured, the health insurance administrative contract should be centralized into one competitively bid citywide contract for all bargaining units. Eventually what should occur is there should be one contract taking care of healthcare for all of the employees. The Mayor is going to start that discussion tomorrow. That is not going to be very easy to do because you have it in each of the 16 contracts. It should be one major healthcare contract.

The next one was that the city should institute wellness programs, such as anti-smoking, weight control. Physical fitness, etc., in conjunction with local providers. These programs are available at the local hospitals. We have representatives of Southern New Hampshire and St. Joe's – they have the programs available and could be done very reasonably. Insurance companies also offer these programs. I am sure Jim Tollner could clarify that even further. Although this will not have an immediate benefit, it will provide a positive payback over the long run because employees stay with the city a long time.

We need to set up a program to focus on health improvement. It was noted that the utilization by city employees are significantly higher than the Nashua population overall. Over twice what the Nashua population is. Identifying these cost drivers such as asthma and diabetes and working with these people and setting up programs to treat these employees will result in lower costs and health employees. A program suggested by Dr. Sabato, the City of Nashua's Medical Director and a member of the committee can be a starting point for such an effort. You have to be careful with the privacy areas, but these drivers really drive up the utilization. That utilization is what keeps your costs going. You have to remember about \$.85 of every \$1.00 goes to the hospital, doctor, and the medication these people use. When those costs go up your costs go up.

The city should pursue development of an education program focused on changing employees and dependents understanding and appreciation of the healthcare delivery system and the program costs. We have discussed news letters, e-mails, employee meetings – try to convince them to use local providers as much as possible -- we have great hospitals in this town and great doctors -- these doctors should be used because they are less expensive that going into Boston - the use of local healthcare provider rather than going to the emergency room, and also the discussion of premium costs. When you only see 5% of the cost you don't understand the total cost of healthcare. The family plan has go to be \$12,000 a year at least.

A significant majority of the city employees are collectively bargained. We all know that. Therefore, any changes in contributions such as increase in co-pays for doctors and hospital visits, changes in benefit levels and increase in employee's monthly contribution level must be bargained. All of these need to be addressed, but they must be bargained.

There are a significant number of possible changes which entail trade offs between contributions and benefit levels (have a higher co-pay, you can balance the contribution over), impact certain segments of the employee population more than others (those that are really sick versus those that aren't sick at all – younger versus older), the impact of the manner in which health care services are obtained or include impediments or incentives for the correct purchasing decision or behavior at the point of purchasing health services – need to make people aware of what healthcare costs and the decisions that they can make that would benefit the cost to the City of Nashua.

All options should be explored with particular attention to those that may be acceptable in a bargaining environments or those that provide the greatest potential cost opportunity without directly impacting the benefit levels or contributions. The City has a great consultant. The committee was very impressed by Kevin Connolly. You have paid for his services, you probably continue to pay for his services – utilize them while you go through this process.

Dialogue between employees and administration must be constant so that you can develop a trust between the two that will allow changes to occur that in the long run will benefit the city and its employees. A difficult task, the Mayor is starting it tomorrow, but one that must be implemented if you are going to gain some control with the costs – again I want to reiterate you are not going to see your costs go down. Jim you know. Everyone in the private sector said the same thing, their costs are not going down, but what they are trying to do is control the increase. Thank you very much.

### Mayor Streeter

I want to thank you Mo and thank the members of the Committee. Thank you Mr. President for allowing the time for the presentation this evening.

RESPONSE TO REMARKS OF THE MAYOR - None

RECOGNITION PERIOD - None

### READING MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN TOLLNER THAT THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF ALDERMEN OF SEPTEMBER 27, 2005, BE ACCEPTED, PLACED ON FILE, AND THE READING SUSPENDED**  
**MOTION CARRIED**

### COMMUNICATIONS

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN LOZEAU THAT ALL COMMUNICATIONS BE READ BY TITLE ONLY**  
**MOTION CARRIED**

From: Roger L. Houston, AICP, Planning Director  
Re: Nashua Regional Planning Commission Nominations and Appointments

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN ROOTOVICH TO ACCEPT AND PLACE ON FILE**  
**MOTION CARRIED**

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN LAROSE THAT THE RULES BE SO FAR SUSPENDED AS TO ALLOW FOR THE INTRODUCTION OF A COMMUNICATION RECEIVED AFTER THE AGENDA WAS PREPARED**  
**MOTION CARRIED**

From: Health Care Budget Ad Hoc Committee  
Re: Final Report & Recommendations

## **MOTION BY ALDERMAN LAROSE TO HOLD THE COMMUNICATION UNTIL THE NEXT REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF ALDERMEN**

### ON THE QUESTION

I make the motion so that everyone has a chance to read the report. The report was done today. I think in all fairness the members should be able to read the report.

### **MOTION CARRIED**

### PERIOD FOR PUBLIC COMMENT RELATIVE TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

Bob Burgess, 32 Bates Drive

The first thing I would like to speak on is the last speaker Mr. Arel on the health insurance to the city. I think we should be able to talk on this. As you look at the staggering figures that the taxpayers are paying on some of these health insurances – Blue Cross Blue Shield HMO (monthly figures) the city pays \$425.18 and the employee pays \$22.38. A family plan the taxpayers in the city pay \$1,147.57 and the employee pays \$60. There is no doubt in my mind the first step – whoever is on this committee or whatever – we have to get these under control. We have to get higher co-pays, more deductibles – the taxpayers just can't continue to support these kinds of increases. This is the first step, and I think definitely the first step we have to do is get these costs under control. A dental plan, a single plan taxpayers pay \$4,200.67 a month, two person plan the taxpayers pay \$80.23 a month, the employee pays nothing. The family plan the taxpayers pay \$134 a month and the employee pays \$12.50. A good many of these dental plans have braces. Some of these things have got to be taken under control. To me this is the first step if we are ever going to get this health cost down. I think we ought to get some of the local employees and see what they are paying for their employees versus what the employee pays. This is the way we have to go.

I would like to speak on O-05-118 – Increase the Elderly Property Tax Exemption and Tax Credit for the Disabled. We go back to 8-26-04 Chairwoman Marylou Blasdell advised – she is the head of the Board of Assessors – advised the board she and Angelo discussed the updates and shifts in commercial and residential properties. The lower end residential properties in the city have experienced the greatest increase. This will be condominiums or property where in the \$125,000 range, which are now \$250,000 with a 90-100%. I think not only the elderly, but we have to think of the blue-collar worker in this city – a good many of those people are hurting here today.

At a Planning Board meeting one of the biggest developers in the city spoke and said we are not building any more starter homes. The day of the ranches and the capes are gone. These hundreds of thousands of dollars homes are the thing coming into the city today. Now we are talking about the Nashua Corporation site on the banks of the river where we are going to put say 200 apartments or condos or whatever for between \$170,000 and \$190,000. I think we will need a cop on board all the time down there when we start building these – where are the youngsters going to play that we put in here? I think we have to take a serious look at what the blue-collar worker is paying in the city today. I think before we make this decision we ought to see how many blue-collar workers we have in the city. I am sure the State Planning Board can give us this information. The young couples that are just starting out – they call starter homes that we have seen 40% increase in the last assessment. If last

year's and this assessment were put together there is no doubt in my mind that all of the boards in the city would be cleaned out if they put the assessments in for the last two years and give it one quick whack.

Something has got to be done not only for the elderly but for the blue collar worker in the city because these so called started homes, the ranches/the lower end, these are the people that are going to see the biggest increase. These are what the people can afford. They can't afford these half million dollar houses – people that are making \$8 an hour at some of these service related jobs in the city. I recommend we look at all of the avenues on this – what the average cost is – I know we see figures everybody is making big money in the city, but boy I sure see a lot of people now that are struggling – some of the young kids that are starting out – we want to keep them in the city, but all we have are service related jobs and with all of the taj mahols we have this education isn't going to keep them in the city because we haven't got any good paying jobs. Thank you.

Robert Hallowell, 6 Chaucer Road

I look forward to reading the report on the health care committee – a few quick comments on that; one thing I think the city should look at is health savings accounts, which is a recent government program, which allows people to spend up to the first \$2,000 of their own money where they see fit and then insurance kicks in after that.

There is also a flexible reimbursement plan that are available here in the city, but I think we should do a better job at educating our city workers that this is a big benefit to them – it saves them federal tax dollars when they use this money out of this account. If it is money that they know they are going to spend it is a very good benefit.

We should also allow employees to examine their bills if they want to say at the end of the year or after some service has been provided so that they can give us feedback as to whether there is an error on the bill or whether there has been something billed that they didn't actually have done.

Finally, one of the things that was touched on a little bit – looking at prescriptions in the city, we have a bunch of pharmacies in town, we know what our most expensive prescriptions are – we should ask the pharmacy to provide us their per pill charge – give a table for the city employees which says here is how much it costs per pill for Lipitor at these various pharmacies. We can't tell them which pharmacy to go to that is against the law in the State of New Hampshire, but we can give them the information to make a wise choice for the city and eventually for them.

What I actually rose to talk about was that elderly exemption. I am glad to see the legislation this evening to adjust the elderly and disabled exemption after the recent adjustments to the assessments. I understand that this is time critical, and I certainly support this blanket adjustment. However, given that the city will be adjusting assessments more routinely now with this new software package, I believe it will need further adjustment for this exemption otherwise you will have to do this every year. The blanket reduction in exemptions means that the degree of help given to the elderly and disabled is contingent upon the worth of their house not on their ability to pay. We should consider moving to a system that increases the exemption based on the income with a cap for a very expensive home.

I feel that as we move forward and income based exemption may enable the city to give tax relief to a wider group of elderly and disabled than we are able to get now. Thank you.

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PETITIONS – None

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NOMINATIONS, APPOINTMENTS AND ELECTIONS

The following Mayoral appointments were read into the record:

-  
Conservation Commission

-  
Peter Temperino, Alternate (New Appointment)

Term to Expire: December 31, 2006

11 Briarwood Drive

Nashua, NH 03063

Ethnic Awareness Committee

-  
Melanie Levesque (New Appointment)

Term to Expire: December 31, 2006

2 McDaniels Drive

Brookline, NH 03033

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN TOLLNER TO ACCEPT THE APPOINTMENTS BY THE MAYOR AS READ  
AND REFER THEM TO THE PERSONNEL/ADMINISTRATIVE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE  
MOTION CARRIED**

REPORTS OF COMMITTEE

Health Care Budget Ad Hoc Committee..... 08/16/05

There being no objection, President McCarthy declared the report of the August 16, 2005 Health Care Budget Ad Hoc Committee accepted and placed on file.

Health Care Budget Ad Hoc Committee..... 08/31/05

There being no objection, President McCarthy declared the report of the August 31, 2005 Health Care Budget Ad Hoc Committee accepted and placed on file.

Health Care Budget Ad Hoc Committee..... 09/07/05

There being no objection, President McCarthy declared the report of the September 7, 2005 Health Care Budget Ad Hoc Committee accepted and placed on file.

Health Care Budget Ad Hoc Committee..... 09/14/05

There being no objection, President McCarthy declared the report of the September 14, 2005 Health Care Budget Ad Hoc Committee accepted and placed on file.

Human Affairs Committee ... 09/21/05

There being no objection, President McCarthy declared the report of the September 21, 2005 Human Affairs Committee accepted and placed on file.

Committee on Infrastructure. 09/28/05

There being no objection, President McCarthy declared the report of the September 28, 2005 Committee on Infrastructure accepted and placed on file.

Planning & Economic Development Committee..... 09/20/05

There being no objection, President McCarthy declared the report of the September 20, 2005 Planning & Economic Development Committee accepted and placed on file.

CONFIRMATION OF MAYOR'S APPOINTMENTS – None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS – RESOLUTIONS

**R-05-282**

Endorsers: Mayor Bernard A. Streeter  
Alderman Lori Cardin  
Alderman-at-Large James R. Tollner  
Alderman Marc W. Plamondon

Alderman Kevin E. Gage

**RELATIVE TO THE ACCEPTANCE AND APPROPRIATION OF A MOOSE PLATE  
CONSERVATION GRANT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$1,911 FROM THE STATE OF NEW  
HAMPSHIRE, DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL RESOURCES INTO SPECIAL REVENUE  
ACCOUNT #313-6180**

Given its second reading;

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN CARDIN FOR FINAL PASSAGE OF R-05-282  
MOTION CARRIED**

Resolution R-05-282 declared duly adopted.

**R-05-283**

Endorser: Alderman Robert Shaw

**RELATIVE TO THE ACCEPTANCE AND APPROPRIATION OF \$15,000 FROM SSJ  
COMPANY INTO SPECIAL REVENUE ACCOUNT #371-7008**

Given its second reading;

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN SHAW FOR FINAL PASSAGE OF R-05-283  
MOTION CARRIED**

Resolution R-05-283 declared duly adopted.

**R-05-286**

Endorsers: Mayor Bernard A. Streeter

Alderman Lori Cardin

Alderman-at-Large James R. Tollner

Alderman Marc W. Plamondon

Alderman Kevin E. Gage

**RELATIVE TO THE ACCEPTANCE AND APPROPRIATION OF \$10,000 RECEIVED  
FROM THE COUNTY OF HILLSBOROUGH INTO SPECIAL REVENUE ACCOUNT  
#332-6308**

Given its second reading;

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN TOLLNER FOR FINAL PASSAGE OF R-05-286  
MOTION CARRIED**

Resolution R-05-286 declared duly adopted.

**R-05-290**

Endorser: Board of Aldermen

**CHANGING THE NAME OF MEMORIAL PARK TO VIETNAM VETERANS' MEMORIAL  
PARK**

Given its second reading;

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN PLAMONDON FOR FINAL PASSAGE OF R-05-290**

ON THE QUESTION

Alderman Plamondon

I put on all of your desks this evening a schematic as to what the memorial stone is going to look like. It will be about 9 feet long and about 40 inches high. It will have the three service memorial pins on it, and will also list the 18 Nashuans who gave their lives in defense of freedom during the Vietnam War. This is a long time coming. The park was originally supposed to be Vietnam Veterans, but the war was still going on, sentiment was still indifferent against the Vietnam War at the time. The memorial stone there did mention Vietnam Veterans, but the legislation at the time did not. This is a housecleaning measure, and it is a long overdue honor to memorialize those from Nashua who gave their lives.

**MOTION CARRIED**

Resolution R-05-290 declared duly adopted.

**R-05-295**

Endorser: Alderman Robert Shaw

**AUTHORIZING THE CONVEYANCE OF A DISCONTINUED UNMARKED WAY OFF EDINBURGH DRIVE TO DANIEL AND MARY BRAZAS**

Given its second reading;

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN SHAW FOR FINAL PASSAGE OF R-05-295**

**MOTION CARRIED**

Resolution R-05-295 declared duly adopted.

**R-05-300**

Endorsers: Mayor Bernard A. Streeter  
Board of Aldermen

**AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO APPLY FOR AND ACCEPT A HUD SPECIAL EDI GRANT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$248,000 FOR THOREAU'S PARK, TO BE KNOWN AS ROTARY COMMON**

Given its second reading;

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN DION FOR FINAL PASSAGE OF R-05-300**

**MOTION CARRIED**

Resolution R-05-300 declared duly adopted.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS – ORDINANCES

**O-05-110**

Endorser: Alderman Robert Shaw

**REMOVING THE TRAFFIC CIRCLE TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURE ON MIDDLE DUNSTABLE ROAD AT ITS INTERSECTION WITH KEVIN DRIVE**

Given its second reading;

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN SHAW FOR FINAL PASSAGE OF O-05-110  
MOTION CARRIED**

Ordinance O-05-110 declared duly adopted.

**NEW BUSINESS – RESOLUTIONS**

**R-05-311**

Endorsers: Mayor Bernard A. Streeter  
Board of Aldermen

**SUPPORTING “THE CITY OF NASHUA WALK FOR RELIEF” TO BENEFIT HURRICANE VICTIMS**

Given its first reading;

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN TOLLNER THAT THE RULES BE SO FAR SUSPENDED AS TO ALLOW FOR THE SECOND READING OF R-05-311  
MOTION CARRIED**

*Resolution R-05-311 given its second reading*

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN TOLLNER FOR FINAL PASSAGE OF R-05-311  
MOTION CARRIED**

Resolution R-05-311 declared duly adopted.

**R-05-312**

Endorser: Alderman Lori Cardin  
Alderman-at-Large James R. Tollner

**RELATIVE TO THE TRANSFER OF \$13,699 FROM ACCOUNT 505-81116 “CIVIC & COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES – SALVATION ARMY” TO VARIOUS OTHER CIVIC & COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES ACCOUNTS**

Given its first reading; assigned to the BUDGET REVIEW COMMITTEE by President McCarthy

**R-05-313**

Endorser: Alderman-at-Large David W. Deane  
Alderman Marc W. Plamondon  
Alderman Robert A. Dion

**RELATIVE TO THE APPROPRIATION OF \$30,180 FROM ACCOUNT #499-975 “UNANTICIPATED REVENUE – PAVEMENT RESTORATION” INTO EXPENDABLE TRUST FUND ACCOUNT #953-533 “STREET PAVING”**

Given its first reading; assigned to the BUDGET REVIEW COMMITTEE and the BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS by President McCarthy

**R-05-314**

Endorser: Mayor Bernard A. Streeter

**RELATIVE TO THE TRANSFER OF \$40,441 FROM ACCOUNT #596-86580 "CONTINGENCY RETIREMENTS, CITY" INTO ACCOUNT #531-11900 "POLICE FULL-TIME PAYROLL"**

Given its first reading; assigned to the BUDGET REVIEW COMMITTEE by President McCarthy

**R-05-315**

Endorsers: Mayor Bernard A. Streeter

Alderman Lori Cardin

Alderman-at-Large James R. Tollner

Alderman Marc W. Plamondon

Alderman Kevin E. Gage

Alderman Robert Shaw

Alderman David D. Lozeau

Alderman Kathryn D. Vitale

Alderman-at-Large David W. Deane

**RELATIVE TO THE ACCEPTANCE AND APPROPRIATION OF THE SUM OF \$400,000 RECEIVED FROM THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, OFFICE ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN FROM THE GRANT TITLED "ENCOURAGE ARREST POLICIES PROGRAM" INTO SPECIAL REVENUE ACCOUNT #331-6230 "OVW ARREST POLICIES GRANT"**

Given its first reading; assigned to the HUMAN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE by President McCarthy

**R-05-316**

Endorser: Alderman David D. Lozeau

Alderman-at-Large Brian S. McCarthy

**AUTHORIZING THE ACCEPTANCE OF A CONSERVATION EASEMENT AND PUBLIC RECREATION AND PARKING EASEMENT ON LAND OWNED BY U.S. LAND DEVELOPMENT, LLC ON WEST GROTON ROAD AND GILSON ROAD**

Given its first reading; assigned to the PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE and the BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS by President McCarthy

**R-05-318**

Endorser: Mayor Bernard A. Streeter

Alderman-at-Large James R. Tollner

Alderman David D. Lozeau

Alderman Lori Cardin

Alderman Kevin E. Gage

Alderman Marc W. Plamondon

Alderman-at-Large David Rootovich

**RELATIVE TO THE TRANSFER OF \$45,002 FROM ACCOUNT #597-86900 "CONTINGENCY, NEGOTIATION – DIRECTOR, COMMUNITY SERVICES" AND \$12,600 FROM ACCOUNT #591 "GENERAL CONTINGENCY" INTO ACCOUNT #541-11240 "PAYROLL, FULL-TIME – DIRECTOR, COMMUNITY SERVICES"**

Given its first reading; assigned to the BUDGET REVIEW COMMITTEE by President McCarthy

**R-05-319**

Endorser: Alderman-at-Large Steven A. Bolton

**RELATIVE TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SEWER ASSESSMENTS  
AGAINST 12 CELESTE STREET (KIMBARK)**

Given its first reading;

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN BOLTON THAT THE RULES BE SO FAR SUSPENDED AS TO ALLOW FOR  
SECOND READING OF R-05-319**

**MOTION CARRIED**

Given its second reading;

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN BOLTON FOR FINAL PASSAGE OF R-05-319**

ON THE QUESTION

Alderman Bolton

Just briefly – these people had a problem with their sewer connection and backing up into the basement of their home. This is the common regular thing that we allow it to be assessed to them over a period of years. It is necessary to get this in place so it can go out and be taken care of. In fact, I am told that on my promise to ask for the second reading tonight, the Public Works has already gone out and started the work. I would appreciate it.

**MOTION CARRIED**

Resolution R-05-319 declared duly adopted.

NEW BUSINESS – ORDINANCES

**O-05-116**

Endorser: Alderman-at-Large David W. Deane

Alderman David D. Lozeau

Alderman-at-Large James R. Tollner

Alderman-at-Large Paula I. Johnson

**PROHIBITING U-TURNS FOR VEHICLES TRAVELING SOUTHBOUND ON MAIN DUNSTABLE  
ROAD AT A POINT APPROXIMATELY 150 FEET SOUTH OF its INTERSECTION WITH  
NORTHEASTERN BOULEVARD**

Given its first reading; assigned to the COMMITTEE ON INFRASTRUCTURE by President McCarthy

**o-05-117**

Endorser: Alderman Marc W. Plamondon

**CREATING A NO PARKING ZONE ON A PORTION OF INTERVALE STREET**

Given its first reading; assigned to the COMMITTEE ON INFRASTRUCTURE by President McCarthy

**O-05-118**

Endorsers: Mayor Bernard A. Streeter

Board of Aldermen

## **INCREASING THE ELDERLY PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTIONS AND THE TAX CREDIT FOR THE DISABLED**

Given its first reading;

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN DION THAT THE RULES BE SO FAR SUSPENDED AS TO ALLOW FOR THE SECOND READING OF O-05-118**  
**MOTION CARRIED**

*Ordinance O-05-118 given its second reading*

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN DION FOR FINAL PASSAGE OF O-05-118**

### ON THE QUESTION

Alderman Dion

This will increase the exemption for people – I don't know if the whole Board has had a chance to read the Ordinance, but I will read what the changes are in case you haven't – for people 65-75 years of age they will be changed from \$100,000 to \$130,000. For elderly people 75-80 years of age it will be changed from \$130,000 to \$162,500, and for people 80 years or older it will be changed from \$155,000 to \$201,500. The tax credit for the disabled will be changed from \$1,000 to \$1,030. This Ordinance should take effect for the tax year commencing April 1, 2005. In other words, if we pass this this evening as I certainly hope we do, will give the people that already qualify the chance to get it for their tax bill coming up the first of December.

Alderman Lozeau

This doesn't change the amount of money that somebody has as far as – not in an escrow account, but their net worth – I believe \$100,000...

Alderman Dion

That is what the change is.

President McCarthy

As written I believe the bill changes the exempted amounts of property valuation and does not change either the limit tests on assets or on income.

Alderman Lozeau

Is that done on the State level or would that be done on the city level?

President McCarthy

That is normally done by us when we adjust the exemption at the same time. In fact it was my intent to ask Alderman Dion if he had intended to change the tax exemptions without changing at least the qualifying income level.

Alderman Lozeau

I would like to see the qualifying income level changed because \$100,000 of assets five years ago is not the same as \$100,000 of assets today. I don't want to confuse the issue, but I would like to see that also change if we can. I thought that was done on the State level.

President McCarthy

The State enabling legislation allows us to change affectively six different parameters; the asset test, the single and married income tests, and the three levels of exemption that are addressed in the ordinance that is before us. It would be appropriate if we want to address that to craft an amendment to change the wording of those sections as well.

Alderman Lozeau

I would like to do that, but I do not have the expertise to draft the wording to that.

Alderman Dion

I would rather pass this this evening. I recall I believe it was you Mr. Chairman that changed it the last time. Maybe you could draw something up and I would be glad to co-sponsor it with you, and we will probably do it at our next meeting if possible.

President McCarthy

I would ask Attorney Connell what the timeframe is in which this has to be passed to address the next set of bills. Perhaps Alderman Bolton has an answer for us.

Alderman Bolton

The problem is the time to apply has already gone by, and you have to apply pursuant to the parameters then in effect. For the coming tax bill it is really impossible for us to change the qualifying levels. We can't and we are getting in under the wire changing basically the amount that will be exempted. In doing that we are sort of balancing it against the general escalation in value that the new assessment brings. People who were qualified will receive approximately the benefit they would have if it had not been for the re-evaluation. I think it is appropriate that we also take a close look, and presumably that close look will resolve in us increasing the qualifying levels, but those changes could not go into affect for this year's tax bills anyway because there would be no way to get people in to apply and so forth. The application procedure happens early in the year some time around April I believe.

What we ought to do is pass this tonight and then in short order change the qualification levels so that next year at the time when people can apply those would go into affect.

President McCarthy

Thank you.

Alderman Lozeau

Sounds good to me.

Alderman Dion

Alderman Bolton said it right on the money. It wouldn't be affective until April so we have all winter long to look at this. I think one thing we have to look at also is the income. I believe an elderly couple cannot get more than \$36,000 I believe – that has got to be changed. Other things have to be changed. We have to keep our seniors in tune with the increases that are going on. I certainly hope we pass this one this evening.

President McCarthy

Are there any further comments? Thank you for that explanation Alderman Bolton. Is there any further discussion on the motion for final passage of O-05-118?

**MOTION CARRIED**

Ordinance O-05-118 declared duly adopted.

**O-05-119**

Endorser: Alderman Richard LaRose  
Alderman Kevin E. Gage

**Authorizing the installation of a stop sign On NORTH SOUTHWOOD DRIVE at its intersection with  
TINKER ROAD**

Given its first reading; assigned to the COMMITTEE ON INFRASTRUCTURE by President McCarthy

**O-05-120**

Endorser: Alderman Richard LaRose  
Alderman Kevin E. Gage

**PROHIBITING TRUCKS WITH MORE THAN TWO AXLES FROM OPERATING AS THROUGH  
TRAFFIC ON NORTH SOUTHWOOD DRIVE WITH CERTAIN EXCEPTIONS**

Given its first reading; assigned to the COMMITTEE ON INFRASTRUCTURE by President McCarthy

PERIOD FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

Bob Burgess, 32 Bates Drive

The other night at a Planning Board meeting the Mayor came out and stated we have 18 elementary classrooms empty in the schools in the City of Nashua. If this is actually true I kind of wonder why a school wasn't closed in the city. We could have saved a million dollars on the taxpayers. I don't know if the School Department would go along with this 18 classrooms empty in the elementary schools in the city – that is hard to believe at this time.

I had the opportunity in the last two weeks to attend a Planning Board and a Zoning Board meeting on different things in my neighborhood. The other night I went to a Planning Board meeting. They go by a laminated piece of paper – this is the rules for running that meeting. Over the weekend in the paper a certain site in my area used my name and said that non-conforming uses are used. Let's look at some

of the zoning laws that the Zoning Board didn't even give me the courtesy to answer. A front yard setback of 15 feet the law calls for 25 feet. They had a rear yard setback of 25 feet – they came in for 15 feet. They moved the structure in a non-conforming lot, which is according to the ordinance illegal. They extended a non-conforming lot, they violated the parking restriction that says any retail outlet needs a 9 x 20 and a 1 foot section stipulating the parking places, and this would practically put this parking lot out into the street.

I lost faith in the Zoning Board and I kind of wonder sometimes when they come up for renewal maybe they have been there too long. This is just a couple of things – Alderman McCarthy as you know I approach you in here, gave you a copy of this thing I got out of the DOT out of Concord. I sent you a letter at home, I furnished this to you and requested if you got back to me – this is several months ago. I requested you to get ahold of the Legal Department to see if the city has to conform to these federal and state guidelines on this. Two years ago I wrote a letter to the Board requesting them to look at that – two years ago (June 30, 2003). Two years have gone by. This thing that came out of the DOT in Concord more or less stipulates the city isn't conforming to the MUTCD laws. Once again I request you here tonight, and I hope I can get an answer before you give up your presidency probably at the end of the year if it is given up that we can get a legal opinion on this document. If you need another copy of it I would be glad to furnish you with it.

Like someone stated maybe you ought to send an e-mail to the Aldermen and we can get a response. Well a good many e-mails with things I have brought up to the Aldermen are totally ignored. I found out one thing in the city – you can't beat City Hall alone you have to come in here with 100 people. Then they will listen. Other than that everything I bring up in this Chamber nobody has the courtesy to get involved and answer any of these questions. I hope Mr. McCarthy by the end of the year maybe I could get an answer on this. Is the City of Nashua going along with these or are we violating the law? I would appreciate an answer. If we are I recommend that the letter that I sent to this Board back in June of 2003 we take steps to take this over. Thank you.

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN DEANE TO RESCHEDULE THE NOVEMBER 8, 2005 MEETING OF THE BOARD OF ALDERMEN TO NOVEMBER 9, 2005 IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE SPECIAL BOARD OF ALDERMEN PUBLIC HEARING ON THE POPE CIRCLE DISCONTINUANCE  
MOTION CARRIED**

REMARKS BY THE MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF ALDERMEN

Alderman Gage

I want to recognize the efforts of the Nashua Fire Department and their personnel – in the last two weeks we have had two extremely large fires in my Ward – five firefighters were actually sent to the hospital in the first one. Thank God they were treated and released. This year I think I have seen several cases of fires where we have had injured firefighters. When I was the liaison to the Board of Fire Commissioners I would get called at 2:00 a.m. and would go out and see these guys at work. I will tell you when you have a building where the rats are running out and these guys are running in – there is a lot of courage there. They are very professional and doing an awesome job. Thank you.

### Alderman Cardin

I would like to promote the Down Memory Lane presentation by the Nashua Senior Center. It will be held at Souhegan High School in Amherst on October 15<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. and October 16<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 p.m. Tickets are available at the door or advance sale tickets can be purchased at the Senior Activity Center – 889-6155 for \$8.00. It promises to be a great show.

I would like to welcome a new business to Ward 7. The Grey Nun Thrift Shop moved in over the weekend and had a grand opening at 25 Marshall Street. With all of the big goings on in Ward 7 it is nice to see some of the smaller goings on. I would like to welcome them. Thank you.

### Alderman MacLaughlin

I just want to acknowledge that a very dear friend of mine and a huge supporter of mine and my neighbor, June Martin of Heritage Village is going in this weekend for knee replacement surgery. Where she has been absolutely invaluable to me over the last several months at many levels, I just want to wish her the very best procedurally and for a full and complete recovery beyond the operation.

Also Ward 8 resident, Bob Scheifele, is the Emergency Director for the American Red Cross, has returned from his duties in Alabama. To me he and everyone who volunteers for and works with the American Red Cross are heroes. He is a local hero. I admire his contribution in that area of the country struggling with the devastation from the hurricanes. It really is a neighbor helping neighbor here when Nashua can contribute so significantly to the recovery of the disaster zones.

I want to also acknowledge the effort of Ward 8 resident, Gerrie Duncan, from Peele Road who hosted and organized the most recent state recognition of the service from our men and women in New Hampshire who are serving our country abroad in Afghanistan and Iraq. She is a citizen. Her husband is serving in Afghanistan, and she took it upon herself to coordinate this rally, which I think was way above and beyond and to be admired.

Also I want to thank another Ward 8 resident, Georgi Hippauf who is doing a fantastic job serving as the coordinator and host of the debates and forums at the Senior Center that people are beginning to tune into. These are all great people and I am sure there are others like them in all of the other wards, but I am particularly proud to know them. Thank you.

### Alderman Deane

I just wanted to let the public and my colleagues know you should take a ride down Temple Street and look at the Senior Activity Center project – it is moving right along. I would hope in a couple of three

weeks the roof will be on it.

Unfortunately I did attend the fire that was up on the corner of Courtland and Webster Street. When I got up there that building was really rocking and rolling. They had dropped a 4" line in from of Genottes the infamous hydrant that everybody is so fond of in that neighborhood – they pulled the line up and I got to actually see our new ladder truck in action. They had quite a few pieces of apparatus there and knocked that fire down rather quickly. They did a great job on that. Thank you.

#### Alderman Plamondon

I would like to acknowledge and appreciate the efforts of Comcast. Saturday before last was Comcast Cares Day. In Nashua there were 60 volunteers that came from the greater Nashua area and donated a days effort at Margarite's Place. The building was inside and outside painted, doors were taken out and painted, the back fence was painted, and it was an all day effort. It was really something to see. Within the State of New Hampshire alone there is over 1,800 volunteers and nationally over 30,000 volunteers on one event. Again I appreciate the efforts there.

I also want to acknowledge and appreciate the work of Nashua Police Department and their efforts within the inner city and outside of the inner city with these roving individuals from Lowell and Lawrence. I also want to especially acknowledge the efforts of the residents who are banding together to be the eyes and ears. I just want to say keep up the good work.

Regarding Ledge Street combined sewer overflow, the work is definitely moving along. There were some calls complaining that last Sunday work was going on. The reason for the work last Sunday was that the asphalt was stripped down to the under layman and the heavy rains we had Ledge Street actually became dangerous with massive potholes and such. At the City's request, Park Construction came to pave on Sunday to make Ledge Street safe. This is not and will not be the norm unless emergencies or the timetable proves that we need to do some additional work prior to winter. Thank you Mr. President.

**... tape flipped ...**

#### Alderman Lozeau

At last week's fire station meeting I am sure Alderman Deane forgot to mention it, but we got a little bit of good news – I think it is good news – the Jersey barriers should be off East Hollis Street before the snow falls. They are just waiting for some documentation on some fencing before they put the fencing up and the guardrail.

A couple of weeks ago we as a Board approved an operating company to manage the eminent domain issue regarding the Pennichuck. We were told at that time that the management costs/operation costs would save us approximately \$2 million. Last week I was invited by the Mayor to attend the

Pennichuck's counter on that and the Pennichuck said that the Sansoucy and company miscalculated that \$2 million savings and in fact it will cost a half a million dollars more. I for one would like clarification on that. I think the citizens deserve clarification on this. I want to know who is wrong, who is right, and what the savings will be for the management and operation company. Through you Mr. President, I would request clarification on what Pennichuck said versus what Sansoucy told us. Thank you Mr. President.

Alderman Dion

Just wanted to let the Board know what is going on here with the zoning and planning in the city. The paper street issues are beginning to get popular. They now have a new fad going. If you have a piece of land behind your house they want to put up a house there. They are starting to get them through the Zoning Board. I am definitely against this. There is a place in my Ward off of Lake Street across from International Show – they are going to rip the house down, there is a lot of density to the lot, they are going to put 3 or 4 units in there. Because the land is so scarce in the City of Nashua they are going to use anything – any excuse to get houses built on lots that don't even have frontage. I am letting you know what is going on. The Zoning Board has granted one already – granted a paper street up on Catherine Street. This is just the beginning. If we don't nip this it will be an epidemic believe me.

I thought I would also bring up the fact of the gasoline - \$3 a gallon, fuel oil - \$2.62 a gallon – the people cannot absorb this kind of increase in their home budgets. What is hurting now is retail. They don't have the money to go out and shop. Everything is being used for fuel. Now we get the 10% tax increase that will be coming with the revaluation. When is it going to end? How can you people run your house with these kinds of increases. I know a fellow that went to visit his daughter this weekend. She lives 200 miles away. It cost him \$50 in has to go back and forth. It is getting to the point where people just don't have any money in their pocket to go shopping. What is happening is our retail sales are going down, the taxes are going up, and there goes your budget again in your house. I don't know how much the people can absorb I really don't. Higher taxes means higher rents for the people that are renting. You know that. That means more money out of these people's pockets. The landlords are not going to absorb these increases they are going to pass it along. I am just letting you know what people are faced with in the City of Nashua especially the elderly and the young people that are just scratching by. It is not everybody making \$80,000 - \$100,000 a week there are a lot of people making \$400 - \$450 a week. Just thought I would bring that up. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Alderman Rootovich

Thank you Mr. President. The Planning & Economic Development Committee has finally finished the daunting task of going through the draft zoning ordinance re-write. The committee spent the past 2 years going through this extensive document section-by-section, chapter-by-chapter. We have had very lengthy meetings with the President of the Chamber of Commerce, local developers, commercial real estate agents, business owners, and members of the public. In July we set up a sub-committee to look at about 250 policy issues, clarification issues, which myself and Alderman LaRose served on.

We spent about 30-40 hours going through that. Again we have completed that daunting task.

I would encourage all of my colleagues to go on line – the re-write is now on line. I would encourage you to go and look at that document. If you have any concerns, issues, language concerns that you come before our committee next Tuesday night the 18<sup>th</sup>. It is our intention that night to make a favorable recommendation back to the full Board of Aldermen for final passage.

I want to thank the committee members, the Vice-Chairman Alderman LaRose, Aldermen MacLaughlin, Shaw, Vitale, for their dedication and hard work over the last two years. It has been quite an experience to go through that document. Again I would encourage members of the Board – we spent a lot of time – I didn't see other than Alderman McCarthy and Alderman Deane a couple of times any members of the Board attend those meetings. I would encourage you if you do have any concerns or any issues with that document that you bring those forward to the committee prior to us making a favorable recommendation next Tuesday night. You will have hard copies in your boxes in the next week. All of the changes that we have made, all of the language that has been omitted you will see have been crossed out and all of the language changes that we have added are in there underlined.

Again I want to thank the committee members and I want to thank members of the staff along with Mrs. Lasky who has attended all of the meetings as well – we will present this document to the full Board. Again I would encourage you to go through that and attend next Tuesday night's meeting. Thank you Mr. President.

#### Alderman Johnson

Thank you very much Mr. President. First of all I would like to send my condolences to Dorothy Gaffney's family. She passed away. I never had the pleasure of meeting this woman, but she would always call me up, and the last word she would always say to me – she would leave a message on my machine – is this is Dorothy over and out. She was in her 80s. From what I understood she was a very lovely woman. Like I said I only had the pleasure of speaking to her on the phone.

I want to let members of the community know that the summer 2005 flooring replacement project – 11 schools carpeting replacement was taken care of. We got some new flooring in the schools so hopefully some of the moldy carpeting is gone and the air quality in a lot of classrooms will be better. I would like to thank my colleagues for voting on this because I felt that it was a very important project that we get some of the classrooms cleaned up.

Talking about classrooms, I was informed that there were 16 empty classrooms at New Searles School. I think that is a lot of classrooms. I called Dr. Earl, but she was away last week up until today. She was out of state so I could not get an answer.

Alderman Dion touched on retail. Retail has been hurting for several years, and I agree with him that things are going to get worse. I know Sunday in the paper all of our assessments were published. My property went up quite a bit. This year my taxes are up 11.68% and my assessment went up 35.59%. That is a lot. That is a big jump in a year. I won't be here next year for the budget. I hope there is a

better handle on the budget next year than this year.

My colleague Alderman Lozeau, Alderman Gage, and myself had the pleasure last night of being interviewed by Carolyn Choate. I am hoping that she is going to bring us back at the end of all of the debates with the Aldermen who are seeking the positions. I think it was a very nice roundtable. We all got along great.

Then we come to this letter that was in the paper this weekend – Nashua has opportunities to dump big spenders – this is from a man in his late 80s and he is talking about he cannot afford his property anymore. This is exactly what is going on in this city. We are getting to the point that our seniors are going to have to give up their homes soon. It is not a question of let the city take over a lien, put a lien on their house so when they pass away the family gets to pay off their debt – that is not what we work all of our life for. We do the 45-year plan and at the end of 45 years when we work guess what we should be able to retire in our homes and be able to live there without paying the high taxes that are going on in this city. It really is a shame. My hat is off to the gentleman who wrote this letter. I think he really hit the nail on the head on it. We really have to take a look and see what is going to happen in this city.

Another big issue that is coming up is neighbors fight landfill expansion. I know that I wouldn't want to push the buffer closer to my property. I hope next year as the new Board comes on we really take a look and see who is paying the bills – it is the taxpayers of this city/the homeowners of this city. Two years ago when I asked about the new assessments, when we were talking about all of this, I asked Mrs. Lemieux about the pendulum – which way was it going to swing – at the commercial would drop and the homeowners would pick up like in the early '90s, and this is the way the pendulum is swinging. It is a shame. If you take a look at West Hollis Street, Lake Street, Kinsley Street – take a look at all of the for rent signs – take a look at all of the homes that are now going on the market. This isn't a time of year when people sell their homes. This is the time of year when people are settling into their homes because the holidays are coming and now the mad rush is how do you get out of the city before you get killed. With that Mr. President thank you very much.

### President McCarthy

I want to address a couple of points. With respect to Pennichuck's claims I guess I think they fall into the category of all of the other dire consequences that Pennichuck has claimed will happen. Our consultants are paid to get us answers. The companies that bid are held to those bids if we sign a contract with them. Mr. Corel has compensation that is based on receiving an extra half a million if he staves off the city's takeover attempt and sells the company, and if he reduces rates he gets zero.

There is every bit of incentive for them to make that case. We would have arbitrated who is right and who is wrong, that is exactly what the proceeding before the Public Utilities Commission is. Those answers will be forthcoming when the PUC renders its decisions after hearings.

I want to address Mr. Burgess' question. I have on several occasions Mr. Burgess told you that I believe you are absolutely right that the city is without question held to the terms of the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices. I have been working on legislation to try and deal with that. It is a sticky issue since of the hundreds of stop signs in the city I would bet that 10% of them have Warrant studies that have been done and the other 90% fall into the category of some that don't pass the

Warrant studies and many others that would if the studies were done. We have to figure out a reasonable way in which to conduct that and get us to the point where we are confident that we do meet the provisions of the State law without simply ripping down all of the stop signs that do need to be there. I am working on that, and that legislation will be forthcoming.

I wish a Happy belated Birthday to Alderman LaRose and a Happy early Birthday to Alderman Johnson.

Committee announcements:

-  
Alderman Cardin

Human Affairs Committee will be changed from October 19<sup>th</sup> to October 20<sup>th</sup>. Thank you.

Alderman Dion

The Committee on Infrastructure will meet tomorrow night at 7:00 p.m. in these Chambers.

ADJOURNMENT

-  
**MOTION BY ALDERMAN DEANE THAT THE OCTOBER 11, 2005 MEETING OF THE BOARD OF ALDERMEN BE ADJOURNED**  
**MOTION CARRIED**

The meeting was declared adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Attest: Paul R. Bergeron, City Clerk