

City of Taunton
Municipal Council
March 28, 2023

The Committee on Finance and Salaries

The meeting was held at Taunton City Hall, 15 Summer Street, Taunton, MA 02780 in the Chester R. Martin Municipal Council Chambers.

Present were Councilor Phillip Duarte, Chairman and Councilors Pottier and McCaul. Also present were CFO Patrick Dello Russo, Treasurer/Collector Christine Clymens, Auditor Ian Fortes, Director of Information Technology Paul Arikian, Chairman – Board of Assessors Richard Conti, and Budget Director Gill Enos.

The meeting was called to order at 5:33 PM.

1. Meet to review the weekly vouchers and payroll for City departments.

MOTION: *Approve the payroll warrant in the amount of \$1,429,459.89. So voted.*

MOTION: *Approve the accounts payable warrant in the amount of \$5,328,654.36. So voted.*

2. Meet with the Finance Department for an update on software and cyber security improvements and efficiencies.

Mr. Dello Russo and the finance team gave a presentation on software and technology improvements. Ms. Clymens highlighted the improvements to the payroll system which is being explored. The intention is to streamline the process, eliminate paper code sheets, and eliminate the manual tracking of time off. Currently, Police and Fire are live on MUNIS. Mr. Fortes indicated that the City is currently looking for a vendor for new software for the financials package. He stated that they are looking to digitize payments and invoices. Further, he indicated that the goal is to streamline the AP process and digitize documentation to eliminate paper. Mr. Arikian indicated that all departments now have access to Permit Eyes and that inspectors and staff can view permits from the field. Mr. Conti talked about the efficiencies in the Assessor's Office that have been gained with Permit Eyes. Now, they know before leaving the office what they are looking for when on site. They have the plans and specs in advance. Mr. Arikian stressed the improved communication with contractors. He also spoke about the IT Department's upgrade to the infrastructure or core. This has improved redundancy. They replicate the data every hour and back it up every day. Ms. Clymens stated that they are exploring additional payment processing options hoping to accept tax payments with Apple Pay, Google Pay, Pay Pal, and Venmo. They also hope to be able to take payments over the phone as well as credit card payments at the office window. Mr. Conti spoke about Nearmap which flies over the City twice a year to create maps. This provides detailed images that can be used by

various departments. Two years ago they experienced 6,700 visits on Nearmap. In 2022, the assessors re-measured 400 parking lots, adding \$160,000 to the levy and capturing more than in the past. Mr. Dello Russo stressed that the team continues to look for areas to improve.

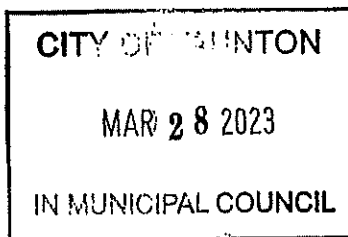
Councilor Pottier asked about cyber issues in the City and suggested that perhaps an executive session on the topic might be appropriate. He asked if payment processing would be through City Hall Systems and Ms. Clymens indicated that they have been looking at a different vendor but learned recently that City Hall Systems could potentially add these capabilities.

Councilor Duarte asked about how permitting was done before Permit Eyes and Mr. Arikian indicated that it used to be primarily paper driven where everything was manually entered and everything was in person. Now, most of the data entry falls on the applicant. He also stressed how more people can access the information more readily. Mr. Duarte asked how other City departments utilize Nearmap and Mr. Conti talked about how Conservation can see a river, for example, over time to see if any of the river has been filled in. He gave some other examples of uses for the fire and police departments. Mr. Duarte asked how these upgrades might address the concerns that were brought up recently around reporting purchase orders and Mr. Fortes indicated that the reporting they have been looking at with different software packages blows Softright out of the water.

Councilor Postell stressed the importance of including other departments who accept payments. In particular, he mentioned the City Clerk's office where they are using a cash register.

Councilor Borges stated her hope that procurement documents could be attached like documents are attached in Permit Eyes.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:03 PM.



Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Maggie E. Clarke".

Maggie E. Clarke
Clerk of Council Committees

REPORTS ACCEPTED. RECOMMENDATIONS ADOPTED.

 A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jennifer R. Leger".

CITY CLERK

City of Taunton
Municipal Council
March 28, 2023

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TAUNTON, MA
CITY CLERK

The Committee on Police and License

The meeting was held at Taunton City Hall, 15 Summer Street, Taunton, MA 02780 in the Chester R. Martin Municipal Council Chambers.

Present were Councilor Jeffrey Postell, Chairman and Councilors Sanders and Borges.

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 PM.

1. Meet to discuss the request to conduct a Memorial Day Parade on Monday, May 29 at 1:15pm.

MOTION: Refer to the Police Chief, Fire Chief, and Safety Officer and approve. **So voted.**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:05 PM.

CITY OF TAUNTON
MAR 28 2023
IN MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

Respectfully submitted,

Maggie E. Clarke
Clerk of Council Committees

REPORTS ACCEPTED. RECOMMENDATIONS ADOPTED.

CITY CLERK

City of Taunton
Municipal Council
March 28, 2023

RECEIVED
CITY CLERK
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TAUNTON, MA
02780

The Committee on Public Property

The meeting was held at Taunton City Hall, 15 Summer Street, Taunton, MA in the Chester R. Martin Municipal Council Chambers.

Present were Councilor Christopher Coute, Chairman, and Councilors McCaul, Dooner, Quintal, and Borges. Also present were Peter Buffington of Taunton Girls Softball, Tyler Doehler of Taunton West Little League, and John Texeira and Kerri Theriault of Taunton Pop Warner.

The meeting was called to order at 6:07 PM.

1. Meet for a discussion with local youth organizations for the potential reuse of the Taunton Nursing Home.

Councilor Coute indicated that the reuse of the Taunton Nursing Home has been on the table for some time. He stated that Taunton Girls Softball and Taunton West Little League abut the property of the Old Nursing Home. Taunton Pop Warner does not have a home field.

Peter Buffington, the President of Taunton Girls Softball, indicated that the league needs more fields, more space, and more parking.

Tyler Doehler, the president of Taunton West Little League that is a direct abutter to the property, indicated that the league's space is very limited. They have roughly 400 kids and the numbers are growing. They could use extra fields. The parking situation goes all the way to Norton Ave. and the driveway can't be expanded due to wetlands.

John Texeira of Taunton Pop Warner stressed that Pop Warner technically has no home field. Currently they play at Coyle field at Hopewell Park which they rent. They also rent a 20x20 storage space which is jammed full. He indicated that the league is all run by volunteers. Kerri Theriault reported that they pay \$3000 for the storage unit and \$1000 per game day for the fields.

Councilor Borges expressed her support for this idea and thought this would be a great expansion. She indicated her thought that the Taunton Nursing Home should be razed and that this would be a great place for the community to come together. She mentioned keeping the community garden and looking for other recreation opportunities such as pickle ball.

Councilor Dooner stated that Taunton is a growing community and athletics have been a staple in the community. She expressed her support.

Councilor McCaul suggested that there could be other locations to be considered for such a complex such as the Bowl property in East Taunton that is not currently being used. He stated that he believes the City needs more housing for the elderly and veterans. He would like to see what else could be done with the property.

Councilor Quintal agreed with Councilor McCaul that there is a shortage of housing but stated that he does not believe this is the place for that. He doesn't want this to turn into another Leonard School to be abandoned for years.

Councilor Coute agreed with Councilor Quintal and stated that he does not believe this is the appropriate place for housing but, rather, this is the place for sports and recreation.

Councilor Borges stated that the Taunton Nursing Home is the center of gravity to bring the community together. The City will never have the opportunity again to expand the fields and parking.

Mr. Buffington stressed the buzz that is around the fields during the season. He suggested this would be a boost to the City and impacts over 700 families.

Mr. Texeira indicated that he has five teams and they are maxed out.

Mr. Doehler stated that they have to increase their roster sizes because of space available since they don't want to say no to a kid who wants to play.

Councilor McCaul stated that the City is paying money to have a study done on the property.

Councilor Dooner suggested that using this space to expand could allow the City to get ahead of the game and make room for more participation.

Councilor Quintal stated that the building is decrepit and that this idea should move forward. He does not believe this is the place for housing. He does not want to see an abandoned building there for years.

Councilor Borges reiterated that this opportunity will never be there again.

Councilor Sanders indicated that he likes the direction of this conversation and stated that the City needs more recreational land. He suggested that if the City owns this land, it should be organized in a way that is flexible so that it can be used by many residents and could include baseball, softball, football, soccer, the community garden, maybe a BMX track, expanded playground opportunities, a walking track. Mr. Sanders agreed that there is lots of opportunity there. He also suggested that if the City is going to be investing in this project, money for maintenance needs to be included. It is important that the City do what is necessary to make sure the resources are in place to keep it looking nice.

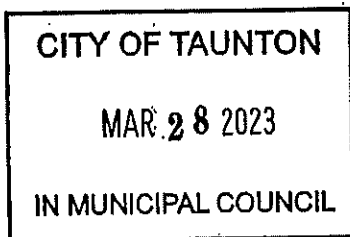
Councilor Pottier suggested that this could be another transformative development that would leave a lasting mark.

Councilor Postell stated that this could have a positive impact on young folks and could provide an avenue from the alternatives. Mr. Buffington stated that his league provides fee waivers to 100% of those who apply. 10% of girls receive waivers. Mr. Postell suggested there may be opportunities for grant funding and other partnerships. He also mentioned how sports are not just about athleticism, there is also mentoring and the providing of positive role models.

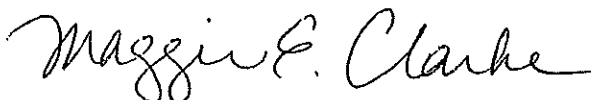
Councilor Duarte expressed his support for this initiative to increase recreational space. He indicated that part of the ongoing study will include input from the public and encouraged everyone to get involved in that process. There will be a public input session as well as an online survey.

MOTION: *Meet with the Park and Recreation Director and CFO to talk about their vision and preliminary financing. So voted.*

The meeting was adjourned at 7:02 PM.

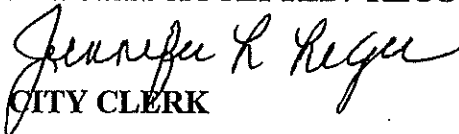


Respectfully submitted,



Maggie E. Clarke
Clerk of Council Committees

REPORTS ACCEPTED. RECOMMENDATIONS ADOPTED.


CITY CLERK

City of Taunton
Municipal Council
March 28, 2023

RECEIVED
CITY CLERK
2023 MAR 31 PM 12:10
CITY OF TAUNTON

The Committee on Solid Waste

The meeting was held at Taunton City Hall, 15 Summer Street, Taunton, MA, 02780 in the Chester R. Martin Municipal Council Chambers.

Present were Councilor Estele Borges, Chairman, and Councilors Pottier, Dooner, Postell, and Coute. Also present were Katherine Nunes, Fred Cornaglia, and Tony Abreau of the DPW, CFO Patrick Dello Russo, and John Oatley, Zachary Donahue, and Dan Gorka of Veolia.

The meeting was called to order at 7:50 PM.

The agenda was taken out of order and the first item discussed was anaerobic digestion.

2. Meet to discuss anaerobic digestion.

Dan Gorka, the director of bio-solids for the Northeast region of Veolia gave some background on the concept of anaerobic digestion. He stated that this is a long standing technology which emerged from treatment of waste water residuals and is focused on volume reduction. It is a biological process where the material is concentrated, heated to 95 degrees and the bi-products are methane and the residual which can be beneficially reused. He stated that because of renewable energy credits the gas can be cleaned to utility grade standard and the credits can be recognized. The bio-solids can be further processed and can be dried, pelletized, and introduced into the retail market. He mentioned that in Taunton there may be tanks not in use that could be evaluated for bio-solid treatment.

John Oatley clarified that tanks at the waste water treatment plan will no longer be used after the upgrade is complete. Those tanks will be abandoned and will be evaluated at that point for their usability for this type of process. He explained that 75% of the waste is volatile and there is reduction of that volatile component.

Councilor Pottier asked when the waste water treatment upgrade would be completed and Mr. Cornaglia stated about 2 years. Katherine Nunes indicated that the City is assessing all options. Mr. Pottier asked about food waste and Mr. Oatley noted that the challenge is where it is separated.

Councilor Sanders clarified the volume reduction to be anticipated. It was stated that the more water you take out of the material, the less material you have to dispose of. However, to get to the drier solids requires more technology which comes with more expense.

Councilor Duarte asked about PFAS and how it factors into anaerobic digestion and Mr. Gorke stated that PFAS is going to be a challenge and there is a lot of uncertainty around this.

1. Meet to discuss the composting RFP for yard and food waste.

Katherine Nunes explained that yard waste is collected curbside three times a year but there have been discussions on starting up drop off services again. They are proposing to start drop off at the convenience center at 340 East Britannia on the week of April 24 with a fee of \$2 for a yard waste bag or open barrel or \$5 for a truck load for a typical pickup truck. They are looking to restrict commercial yard waste. Ms. Nunes stated that yard waste should not be brought in plastic bags or in cardboard boxes.

Councilor Pottier stated that he would be hesitant to vote on this tonight but suggested it be put on next week's agenda. Ms. Nunes agreed to submit the details for next week's agenda.

Councilor Coute clarified the dates and Ms. Nunes stated it would be year round. He asked that anticipated revenue and cost estimates be included with the request.

The Chairman stated that there are still 3 free yard waste collection days and Ms. Nunes confirmed.

Councilor Sanders asked if compost bins are still available at the DPW and Ms. Nunes confirmed that they are available for \$25.

Mr. Nunes updated the Council on the composting RFP. She indicated that new guidelines on food waste impact the schools and they are looking for organic disposal. Mr. Dello Russo stated that they are still in the evaluation stage and will probably have more information in early July.

3. Meet to discuss textile recycling.

Ms. Nunes stated that textiles were banned from the trash stream as of November 1. In 2016 the School Department partnered with Bay State Textiles. There are drop off bins at the schools and the schools receive a rebate for the pounds collected. They added a drop box to the Convenience Center and residents can go to any of the locations.

Councilor Postell asked if there were any issues with overcrowding of the bins or the areas becoming a dump. Mr. Nunes stated that there are security systems in place should there be an event and the bins are emptied regularly.

MOTION: *Make the information provided part of the record. So Voted.*

Mr. Postell asked about the bins' proximity to the school buildings and if that presented any vulnerability to the buildings. Ms. Nunes indicated that they are generally close to the buildings.

She indicated that she would reach out to the schools and work to ensure they are patrolling the areas to make sure there aren't any illegal dumping issues

Councilor Pottier asked how it was procured and Ms. Nunes stated that this was 30b exempt and that she believes Bay State Textiles was on the state contract.

Councilor Borges asked if the money received is used for any particular program and Ms. Nunes did not know but could find out.

Councilor Duarte commended the DPW for establishing this program and suggested that the schools' direct contact with parents and families contributes to the success.

Councilor Sanders asked for the contract length and if others might be considered. Ms. Nunes indicated that this is something that can be looked at. He suggested that over time people will develop the habit of recycling textiles.

Mr. Dello Russo suggested that items 4 and 6 be taken together and that 5 and 7 would be recommended to executive session.

MOTION: *Items 5 and 7 be scheduled for an executive session at a date scheduled by the Chair with the CFO and DPW. So voted.*

4. Meet with the DPW Commissioner to discuss making mattress disposal part of the senior trash program.

6. Meet to discuss senior trash bag program.

Ms. Nunes indicated that the ban on mattress disposal went into effect on November 1 and, since then, 381 mattresses have been collected. She reported no public outcry and no uptick in illegal dumping as they had feared. She stated that they have looked at moving this to the senior bag program but haven't really seen a need amongst seniors. Most of what they have seen at the Convenience Center has been new builds and people moving. If the Council wished to move forward with a mattress disposal program as part of the senior trash bag program she suggested a sticker program. Residents would come to the DPW and, if qualified, would receive a sticker.

Councilor Couste asked for the cost of recycling a mattress and Ms. Nunes indicated that it is \$35 per mattress.

MOTION: *Include mattress recycling in the senior bag program with the DPW to implement as they see fit.*

Councilor Postell asked about the ways people are being educated on what will and will not be accepted. Ms. Nunes indicated that they have information on the website and on Facebook. There was a press release at the program's inception. She also stated that Paul Allison is working to make sure that the information gets to people who have items left behind. She

mentioned the "Beyond the Bin" directory which is a resource with information on outlets for disposal. Ms. Nunes talked about senior drive-by's that are done by Human Services and how they use this as an outlet to talk about different topics. The newsletter put out by Human Services is another outlet. Councilor Postell suggested that the Taunton Daily Gazette could help remind people about the processes in place.

Councilor Borges asked if there are any programs to help people who can't afford this other than seniors and could an organization that does fundraising contribute to a fund for this. Mr. Dello Russo stated that using the Helping Hand Fund is being looked into and this is being discussed.

Mr. Sanders indicated that the senior bag program was originally started as a pilot and he would like to see suggestions for ways to expand it. Ms. Nunes reported that she has met with the Mayor and the Human Services Director to consider ways to expand this. They would like to expand to include those eligible for LIHEAP which is a fuel assistance program. Adding this criteria would likely expand their program. They are looking to add this to the existing application and are working to roll this out for April 4.

Mr. Nunes will put together a proposal for the inclusion of mattresses in the senior bag program.

So voted.

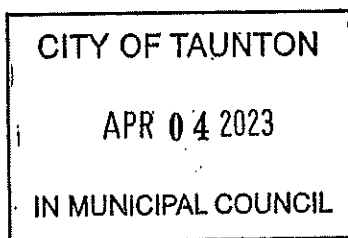
5. Meet to discuss recycling at condominiums.

See motion above to discuss at a later date in executive session.

7. Meet to discuss service challenges with curbside trash and recycling.

See motion above to discuss at a later date in executive session.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:58 PM.



Respectfully submitted,

Maggie E. Clarke

Maggie E. Clarke
Clerk of Council Committees

REPORTS ACCEPTED. RECOMMENDATIONS ADOPTED.

Jeanette Regan
CITY CLERK