

NEW BEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS

MEETING: COMMITTEE ON CITY PROPERTY
DATE: FEBRUARY 26, 2018
TIME: 7:00 P.M.
PLACE: CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER, ROOM 214, MUNICIPAL BUILDING

PRESENT: COUNCILLORS NAOMI CARNEY, CHAIRPERSON; JOSEPH LOPES, VICE CHAIRMAN; IAN ABREU; HUGH DUNN; MARIA GIESTA; BRIAN GOMES; SCOTT LIMA; WILLIAM BRAD MARKEY; LINDA MORAD

ABSENT: COUNCILLORS DEBORA COELHO; DANA REBEIRO

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Councillor Carney called the City Property Committee Meeting to order and took attendance. Communications from Councillors Coelho and Rebeiro were read into the record explaining their absences. These Communications were received and placed on file by Councillor Morad and seconded by Councillor Abreu.

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Notice, City Clerk of reference of a COMMUNICATION, Mayor Mitchell, to City Council, submitting AN ORDER, requesting that certain airport land be declared surplus property and control of the land be transferred from the Airport to the Committee on City Property for the purpose of sale (Ref'd 10/12/17) (11/27/17-tabled) was removed from the table by Councillor Morad and seconded by Councillor Dunn. (1, 1a)

Attorney Eric Jaikes, Airport Representative was present and reviewed the proposed land transfer between the city and the owners of the Jewish Cemetery. The Committee had previously asked that the property be re-evaluated. It was, and the combined value of the land is \$35,000. The property the city will acquire will allow for airport extension and an access road. The current appraisal was as recent as 1/15/18 and was done by Larrivee Associates.

Councillor Morad had previously requested information on the access road and asked if the abutters were informed. Scot Servis, Airport Manager said they were, and that he has been in contact with them. She asked what would happen to the old access road that would no longer be used and was told it would be gated and if needed be only used by the airport.

There was concern issued by Councillor Lopes and Councillor Morad that the appraiser's license was not attached to the appraisal, that this is common practice as they are both involved in a similar industry. Attorney Jaikes could not give a clear answer as to why it was not. Councillor Lopes stated that in the future the license should be attached when submitted.

Larrivee was paid \$350 for their re-evaluation appraisal. They also expressed their concern that you do not normally use the same appraiser to do both appraisals (re-evaluation).

Councillor Morad asked Scot Servis to provide her with a copy of the 2016 appraisal and he said he would.

The breakdown of the property given by Scot Servis, Parcel A \$21,000, Parcel B \$41,000, Parcel C \$35,000. The total value of the parcels being swapped is \$35,000; it is an even swap.

Attorney David Gerwatowski informed the Committee that under the Property Ordinance the Committee should have sent a letter out to all of the city's department heads asking if they have a use for the land that is being proposed for transfer. If none, then they could move ahead with the transfer.

On motion by Councillor Morad and seconded by Councillor Lopes, the Committee VOTED: To send a Communication to department heads asking if they have a need of the property that is being transferred and to table this matter to March 12, 2018, the next City Property Meeting. This motion passed on a Roll Call Vote of Yeas 9, Nays 0.

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Notice, City Clerk of reference of a WRITTEN MOTION, Councillors Gomes and Oliveira, requesting, that the Administration reconsider its decision to take down the wall of former Mayors, located outside of the Ashley room named after former Mayor Charles Ashley, the history and it's intent was for the wall to be located in City Hall, not in some conference room in the south end library; and further, that the City Council go on record in support of putting back the wall of Mayors, to its original location in City Hall (Ref'd 5/12/16) was received and placed on file by Councillor Gomes and seconded by Councillor Dunn. (2)

Ken Blanchard, DFFM Commissioner was present and addressed the Committee. Councillor Gomes asked where the painting is and he was told in the Conference Room in Howland Green Library. It was decided to move it there to make City Hall more appealing to visitors as they first enter City Hall. Councillor Gomes said he was at first concerned and he is aware of the wall in City Hall with photos of past Mayors, but he liked the history attached to each painting in the mural. Commissioner Blanchard informed the Committee that where it is now is in a high traffic area and would be viewed.

On motion by Councillor Gomes and seconded by Councillor Abreu, the Committee VOTED: To recommend to the City Council to take "No Further Action" on the WRITTEN MOTION, Councillors Gomes and Oliveira, requesting, that the Administration reconsider its decision to take down the wall of former Mayors, located outside of the Ashley Room named after former Mayor Charles Ashley, the history and it's intent was for the wall to be located in City Hall, not in some conference room in the south end library; and further, that the City Council go on record in support of putting back the wall of Mayors to its original location in City Hall. This motion passed on a voice vote.

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Notice, City Clerk of reference of a COMMUNICATION, Mayor Mitchell, to City Council, submitting a request from the Zeiterion Theatre, Inc. to enter into a long term lease agreement with the City of New Bedford, that this matter be referred to the Committee on City Property to issue a Request for Proposals (Ref'd 11/21/17) was received and placed on file by Councillor Lopes and seconded by Councillor Abreu. (3)

Rosemary Gill and Justin LaCroix, Directors of the Zeiterion, Inc. were present to address the Committee. They informed the Committee that the Z has been running the Theatre for the past thirty-five (35) years and they are hoping to embark on a large capital improvement fundraising plan, but are being told that in order to do this they should enter into a long term agreement with the City. It would look better if they had such a written commitment when attempting to secure donors.

Justin LaCroix stated the city has given the building over \$3,000,000, which has been used for improvements including a fire prevention system. The city also pays the Z to facilitate/manage the building with other organizations, first year \$180,000, second and third years at \$210,000.

Councillor Lopes expressed his concern of a thirty (30) year lease, maybe a twenty (20) year lease with a bridge to allow up to thirty (30) years which would allow them to move the fundraising efforts forward.

Councillor Morad asked who their consultant was and she was told Helena Hartnet of the Jeremiah Group. She stated her concerns on agreeing to a thirty (30) year lease. She asked how much the city currently pays in utilities to run the building; Ms. Gill did not know. Councillor Morad asked if the Z, if given a lease would they assume utility payments, Ms. Gill was unable to answer that question.

Councillor Abreu expressed his concern that if the fund raising efforts are successful that the average city patron would be priced out of attending events.

Councillor Lopes asked Christina Connolly of the Mayor's Office if a tentative lease has been drafted yet and he was told that Shannon Shreve of the Solicitor's Office was working on it and that there have been preliminary discussions on what it should include.

Attorney Gerwatowski stated a letter would need to be sent to all department heads to see if they have a use for the property that the Committee is considering entering into a long term lease with. The Committee should also be provided with a draft of the lease language from the Administration, so they can review and make changes if need be. The lease and its requirements would then have to be issued as an RFP.

On motion by Councillor Lopes and seconded by Councillor Markey, the Committee VOTED: That the Clerk of Committee's Office notify Department Heads of each City Department that the City Property Committee is requesting each Department Head respond whether their respective department believes the Zeiterion Theatre, Inc., 684 Purchase Street, New Bedford, MA is needed for municipal purposes; and further requesting a tentative agreement from the Solicitor's Office and the Mayor's Office on tentative terms for a lease agreement between the City of New Bedford and the Zeiterion Theatre, Inc. This motion passed on a voice vote.

On motion by Councillor Morad and seconded by Councillor Lopes, the Committee VOTED: To table this matter at this time. This motion passed on a voice vote.

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Notice, City Clerk of reference of a WRITTEN MOTION, Councillors Abreu, Winterson, Bousquet, Martins, Oliveira, Morad and Coelho, requesting that Chief Financial Officer Ari Sky and City Solicitor Mikaela McDermott assess the feasibility of leasing advertising space on City buildings, and to report on the concept, in writing, to the Committee on City Property within the next 60 days (To be Referred to the CFO Sky, City Solicitor McDermott and the Committee on City Property.) (Ref'd 1/28/16) was received and placed on file by Councillor Abreu and seconded by Councillor Gomes. (4)

City Solicitor Mikaela McDermott was present and told the Committee that it would have to be done by Ordinance and that you would have to determine what is and is not acceptable to place as an advertisement on city buildings. The Mayor would like more particulars from the Council. If approved the advertising process would have to go out on an RFP.

On motion by Councillor Abreu and seconded by Councillor Morad, the Committee VOTED: To recommend to the City Council to take "No Further Action" on a WRITTEN MOTION, Councillors Abreu, Winterson, Bousquet, Martins, Oliveira, Morad and Coelho, requesting that Chief Financial Officer Ari Sky and City Solicitor Mikaela McDermott assess the feasibility of leasing advertising space on City buildings, and to report on the concept, in writing, to the Committee on City Property within the next 60 days. This motion passed on a voice vote.

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Notice, City Clerk of reference of a WRITTEN MOTION, Councillor Carney, requesting, that Mary Rapoza, Director of Parks, Recreation and Beaches and the Board of Park Commissioners, develop a fee schedule that charges non-residents, out of town organizations, groups, etc., for the use of all City parks; (To be Referred to the Committee on City Property, and that Director Rapoza and Members of the Park Board be invited to said meeting.) (Ref'd 8/18/16) and a COMMUNICATION, Mary Rapoza, to City Property Committee, submitting an Information Sheet relative to Park Use Fees (Ref'd 2/12/18) were received and placed on file by Councillor Morad and seconded by Councillor Abreu. (5, 5a)

Mary Rapoza submitted the fee schedule to the Committee.

Councillor Lopes asked Ms. Rapoza to provide the Committee with a breakdown of revenue generated on fees charged by the parks.

On motion by Councillor Morad and seconded by Councillor Lopes, the Committee VOTED: To table this matter at this time. This motion passed on a voice vote.

Councillor Abreu made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Councillor Morad.

This meeting adjourned @ 8:01 p.m.

ATTEST:

Denis Lawrence, Jr.,
Clerk of Committees