

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL

July 20, 2021

The meeting was called to order by President McGee at 6:32 PM.

President McGee, filling the roll of Clerk, called the roll. Absent members: 0 Present Members 13  
(Anderson-Burgos, Bartley, Greaney, Hernandez, Leahy, Lebron-Martinez, Lisi, McGee, McGiverin,  
Murphy, Sullivan, Tallman, Vacon)

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Receiving proposals for the American Rescue Plan Act

Councilor Bartley stated that the proposals would be taken up at the committee's meeting on July 26th.

Councilor Vacon suggested there should be strong consideration for infrastructure projects, noting that they would likely have the most long lasting impact for the city.

Councilor Bartley asked for a clarification that the proposals would be available.

Admin Asst Anderson-Burgos stated that they had been provided by Alicia Zoeller from OCD the previous week.

Councilor Greaney asked for a hard copy.

---> Received and referred to the Development and Governmental Relations Committee

Appointment letter of Ms. Penni Martorell as Acting Director of Wisteriahurst Museum for the City of Holyoke.

President McGee stated that the appointment would be effective as of July 20th and would remain in place until the City Council appoints a new director, adding that Ms. Martorell would return to her role as Curator and City Historian at that time.

Councilor Murphy stated that the former director, Kate Preissler, has been hired to assist the Office of Community Development with administration of ARPA funds. He stated that Ms. Martorell expressed a desire to remain in her previous position. He then stated that the process of opening the position to applications had begun.

Councilor Leahy asked where Ms. Preissler would be working.

Councilor Murphy stated that she would be working in the Community Development office. He stated that the programming for the ARPA funds had greater auditing and compliance needs requiring an extra person.

Councilor McGiverin stated that appointment was on the agenda due to a requirement that any personnel decisions of an acting mayor come before the City Council.

---> Received and appointment confirmed.

#### Grant Acceptance of the MassDOT Shared Streets and Spaces Program

President McGee clarified the details of the order:

MCGIVERIN -- Ordered, that in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 44 Sec. 53A, the City Council hereby accepts the provisions of the "HOLYOKE'S SAFE STREETS AND PATHS PROJECT, \$73,100, NO MATCH" grant and authorizes the establishment of a Fund or other method appropriate for the account of the receipts and expenditures of all resources associated with the administration of said grant.

Councilor Murphy stated that the City Engineer spoke with him to request that the item be placed on the special meeting agenda. He noted there were matters that needed to be completed by December 31st. He then stated that referring to committee would be fine as long as it was able to be acted on by the August 3rd City Council meeting.

Councilor Tallman stated that he spoke with DPW Director, Michael McManus, regarding the order. He suggested voting on the order that evening to avoid losing some of the funds. He expressed a preference to hear from City Engineer, Robert Peirent.

Councilor McGiverin stated there would be a Finance Committee meeting on August 2nd, allowing an opportunity to review the grant. He then noted that the members had not yet received a copy of the grant, adding that he would prefer to review the grant before voting on it.

Councilor Greaney expressed agreement that there should be an opportunity to review the grant before voting on it.

Motion was made and seconded to suspend the necessary rules to allow Robert Peirent to address the Council.

B. Peirent stated that the main reason for concern about the schedule was due to funding the purchase of equipment that the city staff would be installing, adding that they expected a 12 to 16 week lead time before installation could begin. He then stated that the DOT would wire the funds the account after approval without a need to request reimbursement, adding that he would then need to file a report on the use of the funds.

President McGee asked if August 3rd would be sufficient for passage.

B. Peirent stated they would work with whatever timeline they had, adding his hope that the equipment came back from the manufacturers in order to meet the deadline.

Councilor Hernandez expressed that there should be no concern with the grant creating a deficit. She then noted that with a concern about manufacturer delays, they Council should move forward with a vote.

Councilor Murphy asked if there would be a penalty if the project was not completed by December 31st.

B. Peirent stated there was a low risk of a penalty, noting that the DOT had been forgiving with a current grant. He then stated that the cold weather in December would be just as much of a concern. He then reiterated that it would be unlikely that the DOT would attempt to take the funds back, adding that there was no mechanism for that.

Councilor McGiverin stated he would vote no, noting there would be questions, need 2/3rd to pass on same evening. Don't have grant in front of us. Trust engineer and DPW, but first hearing of it. Asking for committee to have chance to read it.

On a motion to refer to the Finance Committee, the Chair was in doubt on a voice vote.

Motion to refer to Finance failed on a call of the roll of the yeas and nays. Yeas 6 (Greaney, Leahy, McGee, McGiverin, Sullivan, Vacon)--Nays 7--Absent 0.

Councilor McGiverin stated that there were questions to be addressed. He then urged his colleagues to vote no on passage, noting that passage that evening would require a two-thirds vote. He reiterated that the councilmembers had not yet received a copy of the grant.

Councilor Greaney expressed his intent to vote no.

Councilor Murphy made a motion to reconsider the previous action. Councilor Sullivan seconded the motion. Motion passed on a voice vote.

---> Received and referred to the Finance Committee on a call of the roll of the yeas and nays. Yeas 9--Nays 4 (Anderson-Burgos, Hernandez, Lebron-Martinez, Tallman)--Absent 0.

Adjourned 6:49 PM.