

**FINAL**

**CITY OF LEBANON  
CITY COUNCIL**

Minutes, Work Session, April 25, 2019  
City Hall – Council Chambers  
5:30 P.M.

<b>MEMBERS PRESENT</b>	Mayor Timothy McNamara, Assistant Mayor Clifton Below, Councilors Bruce Bronner, Erling Heistad, Karen Liot Hill, and Jim Winny
<b>MEMBERS ABSENT</b>	Councilor Suzanne Prentiss (listened in via telephone), Shane Smith and Karen Zook
<b>STAFF PRESENT</b>	Shaun Mulholland (City Manager), Tina Stearns (Executive Assistant), Chris Christopoulos (Fire Chief and Interim Airport Manager), Greg Colby (Finance Director), Vicki Lee (Deputy Finance Director), Tad Montgomery (Energy and Facilities Manager), Paul Coats (Recreation & Parks Director), Rick Vincent (Chief Assessor), Jim Donison (Public Works Director), Richard Mello (Police Chief), Phil Roberts (Deputy Police Chief), Shelley Hadfield (City Consultant)

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The work session began at 5:33 PM.

**1. PRESENTATION OF DRAFT OUTCOMES AND WORK PLANS**  
**A. Overview of City Departments**

**Library**

Mr. Fleming mentioned two things regarding the Lebanon Library renovations. There is new flooring in the Children's Room and the front desk has been relocated to make more space for the public. There is scaffolding on the outside of the building for some building repairs. Some renovation expenses come from the City budget and the rest are from funds they have raised. He is intending to do structural work and replace the HVAC system. They will try to raise funds from gifts for the furniture and fixtures they need to replace. The timeframe is still being determined. He is looking for outside consultants to help determine the best timeline and priorities for the renovations.

The Library system is doing some reorganization of positions because there have been resignations and retirements. The library IT staff will provide some help with the records management system setup in the City Clerk's office. The community and meeting rooms are used consistently. Mr. Fleming sees value in allowing the use of rooms and the space on a recurring basis. The parking lot is a limiting factor, especially when meetings are using the rooms. When they are busy there is less parking for people who are using the library.

The libraries are seeing some trends in acquisitions of reading materials. There are about 125,000 users of printed library materials. People still want books, but they also want to access things online, so the library has offered streaming videos, eBooks and audio books. Those users are still about 1 out of 10 of the users.

**Assessing**

There will be a re-evaluation of properties in 2020. The assessor will find a consultant to evaluate the utilities because it is outside the City's expertise. Staff are looking at what the exceptions should be for

elderly and veterans to accommodate letting people stay in their home instead of being taxed out of their homes. The State statute defines the eligibility for veterans. Digitizing is a constant effort for the office.

The issue about the square footage of DHMC was discussed. During Hanover's re-evaluation this year, many properties increased substantially. Mr. Vincent reported that when the 20% inspection is done yearly, the value of a property may change because the property has changed, but it is still adjusting to the last tax adjustment, which was 2015. Based on the market, properties have been selling for more than assessed values. Because commercial property sales have increased, the re-evaluation may not have substantial impact on residential properties. The assessor is unable to predict what the new assessment will do to property values and the tax rate that will be determined for 2020. It is anticipated that the re-evaluation will be finished by 2020.

### **Police**

The Police Department created a business/strategic plan for the department. Some of the highlights are an upgrade to the radio program and repeater system which is a Capital Improvement. The social media site continues to portray the message of service to the community. CALEA and efforts to get accredited are ongoing. For the police, going paperless is going to be challenging because the court system requires paperwork.

The police staff were engaged in the strategic plan by forming a committee from every division of the department to work on the plan, establish a mission statement, and determine their values and vision. Once those were drafted, the community was asked for input. The input of residents was a significant contribution. A business forum was held to ask for the input from business leaders. Together the police staff went into the planning process to determine what to accomplish at this time and what they want to do in the future. They are working on the outcome and goal centered initiatives, as well as best practices and quality initiatives. There are some police facility initiatives and most of them have been completed. They are working on an RFP for the new heating system.

The biggest take away from this effort was reinforcement that the policing model is moving toward being community based and learning how to meet the balance of the community and policing. The department wants to build public trust and the employees embrace these values. There were not any large unexpected surprises because people still want the police to be part of the Lebanon and West Lebanon public concept. The police are a part of the community.

The department is seeing more cybercrime and they may need more dedicated time and technology to help solve these crimes. They hear from residents about phone scams and dissipate the information through numerous resources. It is almost impossible to prosecute these cases because the scams usually come from outside the country. They continue to look at the type of crimes they are encountering and continue to be responsive to those crimes that are increasing. They will respond to those challenges. Employees will be moved to areas of need and the department will be reorganized when it is necessary. The City is getting the support that is needed from the Federal government, and somewhat from the State, including some small State funding. They have good partnerships with the interstate issues from the Federal government. The State is providing some assistance but is unable to keep up with the crime trends that are constantly emerging. The Chief feels they are poised to meet the challenges. They have 5 or 6 trained bicycle officers.

The CALEA process started when the department enrolled in 2018 and they have 3 years to become accredited. A consultant works with the police team to keep the process moving forward. The department is in the self-evaluation step of the process and they are stepping up to make positive changes.

There will be a mock assessment in the next 6 months and the actual assessment will take place within a year, which could result in accreditation. The department does regular biased based training and they are evaluating their arrests for bias. The use of force is a high risk and high visibility area. They follow best practices regarding the use of force. Every incident that occurs is reviewed for compliance with policy and what injuries have occurred for the public and the officers. They also provide de-escalation training.

## **Fire**

The Fire Department developed a business plan this year. Efforts to prevent fires are ongoing with smoke detectors. Ambulance fees have been evaluated. There are plans for the development of facility improvements.

The department engaged all the members of the department to set up a 5-year plan. They looked at their strengths and weaknesses and collectively they rewrote their vision, values and mission statement. They wrote high level initiative tasks and each of the shifts were asked to develop goals and objectives to meet the initiatives. The department has young people and it was good to have the basis of their input. The dynamics have changed with the younger staff, who have high levels of education, and a depth of knowledge. It is a positive impact on the department.

The fire station buildings are old and there are issues that need to be addressed that will impact the budget. The buildings are inadequate from many perspectives and do not meet the required standards. ISO ratings of the buildings were discussed. The Chief explained the need to demonstrate water flow to areas that are outside the City limits, which impacts the home owners' insurance rate.

The SAFER positions are partially funded through 2020. This has helped manage the recall of officers. The community paramedicine program will also improve responses to the elderly populations. The Vision 2020 project pertains to better educating the public, the need to reduce needless calls for emergencies, particularly for false alarms and burnt food. The department is working on educating people how to manage fire alarms and dispersion of smoke once the fire is out. They are looking at better ways for the community to solve their own problems. This does not mean avoiding necessary fire needs.

## **Public Works**

Mr. Mulholland complimented the new Director, Jim Donison, who has only been here a few months. There have been substantial road improvements this year and the roadway scanning project, that will come this year, will be helpful to develop a 10-road priority improvement plan. The asset management system is set to move forward, which is ahead of time. The City will be positioned to know what is needed before it is a crisis. Long term sewer and water infrastructure will be laid out. The Downtown public infrastructure talked about in the Visioning Plan will become part of the CIP.

There are new standards regarding the landfill and which impacts 22 other communities that use the Lebanon landfill. Safe water projects should be completed this year and the GPS mapping of water lines will be done. Waste water treatment work is moving forward, and that will double the capacity. They are looking for ways to meet the costs for sewer and waste water rates.

The roadway surface management system will be done by Street Scan. They will drive each road and develop a color-coded system that maps and ranks all of the roadways. They will prioritize the roads and look at all the infrastructure utilities along the roadways. There are 100 miles of roadway and 55 miles of sidewalks within the City. They will be using Beehive to manage the types and quantities of assets and

work order systems. They will have a data driven system that will help manage information going forward.

The City responded to 34 storm events from November through April. There was a lot of salt and sand applications and there were enough materials. The staff are doing well. They embrace the idea that they are an ambassador for the City, in some cases the only employee of the City that the public sees. The department hopes to have some of the seasonal employees, such as snow removal, eligible for full time funding. The strategies for recruiting new employees was discussed.

### **Energy & Facilities**

Tadd Montgomery presented from the department. They are looking at the solar projects, landfill gas to energy, building renovations and energy efficiency, electric vehicles and street lights. There are two public meetings coming up regarding removing unnecessary street lights.

Vision Energy is working with the City to help the municipality capture the federal tax credits. They are looking at arrays at the waste water plant, City Hall, the Kilton Library, the DPW garage to power the water treatment plant, the landfill on the recycling shed and the maintenance garages, and the Police Station. Almost all of these will be behind the meter. For the time being the airport is not going solar because they would like to have a better system with trackers. This is phase one of the solar project. More phases are planned, including work with businesses and with residents to increase solar energy. The Council changed some rules and regulations to improve the opportunity for larger scale solar facilities. There is some interest in taking advantage of the Lebanon area for solar production due to the new zoning regulations. The State's solar energy legislation was discussed. There are industries that are interested in buying the energy if it is developed, but only a few businesses are going to be developing their own solar capabilities.

Municipal aggregation has been dormant lately because State legislation is being negotiated that will make it easier to aggregate. This will be a platform where locally generated energy can be bought, sold and traded. They are hoping for tax credits to move this forward. There is potential to partner with Dartmouth College to increase the progress of solar and good useful knowledge sharing. It is hoped that Lebanon will be a site for some of the College's test bed ideas. Liberty Utilities is supportive of these endeavors.

A solar charging station near City Hall for electric vehicles is proposed as part of the solar project. There is hope that the smart street lights will enable the City to put charging stations on the new street lights. Phase one of the solar project will be close to a megawatt of energy.

### **Recreation**

The highlight of the Parks and Recreation outcomes continues to be the Mascoma Greenway that is at the top of the list. It continues to be a focus because improvements can still be made, such as opportunities for more amenities and benches. There will be connection paths with APD, the Valley Cemetery, and from Renihan Meadows, which will provide access for bikers. The acquisition of parcel map and lot #105-15 was completed and this to officially opens the area for access.

The softball fields are online right now, but there is a hold up with the Lebanon High School field that is not open yet. A ballfield on the meadow behind Timken is being developed. There is more agreement with Timken that they are onboard with the City developing these playing fields. The access will involve going across Timken property because access through the Price Chopper property is not viable. There are

other parks to develop, but the most energy will be on the above priorities. There is still a deficit in programming and the amount of programming that can be done with the available properties. They intend to do a formal needs assessment to find where there are gaps in programming to determine if the demands they are hearing are a reality.

A number of diverse programs and special events will continue to be offered. It is expected that the special programs will retain 85% of the cost. Regular programming has a 100% cost retention within the programming division. The cost recovery rate is higher than anticipated. Costs are being kept down with fees and business support and keeping the participation high. A goal is to provide programming that attracts more young adults to activities in the City.

There are other properties in the City for future parks and recreation. The hope is to include recreation development in West Lebanon. Those discussions will be part of the charrette. The Council supports the need for young adult activities and organized activities to help keep that population in the community. The recreation department is an arm of the economic development of the City. The maintenance of the trees and grounds are a substantial part of the budget.

A project to use compostable containers during the farmers market is being launched. The containers will not be permanent; they will only be used during special events. The use of the composting containers may be expanded during other upcoming events.

Water bottle fillers are coming to the Lebanon Green. The purchase of the water filler is budgeted, but installation needs to be coordinated with the DPW. There are new projects with the Friends of Lebanon Recreation and the organization continues to be great partners. Smart technology for lighting at the skate board park and converting Storrs Hill lights to LED is proposed.

The department hopes to move to the River Valley College on the mall. They have been able to use the auditorium and the gymnasium at the Seminary Hill School which has been helpful during the winter. They hope to do a full needs assessment to determine the best new location for the recreation department and what is needed as a community center. Parents appreciate that the camps have been extended for another two weeks, but it will require using space other than the schools.

**The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 PM.**

Respectfully submitted  
Linda Billings  
Recording Secretary