MINUTES

City of Concord Finance Committee Meeting
May 21, 2026 @ 5:30 PM
City Council Chambers

Present: Mayor Byron Champlin, City Councilors Stacey Brown, Mark Davie, Nathan Fennessy (late), Jeff Foote (late), Michele Horne, Aislinn Kalob, Fred Keach, Jennifer Kretovic, Judith Kurtz, Jim Schlosser, Kris Schultz, Ali Sekou, Amanda Grady Sexton, and Brent Todd.

The Mayor opened the meeting at 5:30 PM.

Manager Aspell began his review of the budget. He noted that tonight's FY 2027 proposed budget review would cover Community Development, Library, Parks and Recreation, Human Services, and CIP/TIF.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: Revenues, budget to budget, are up $880,000 or 48%. Construction permits are up $887,000; licenses are up $15,000; review fees are down $40,000; and transfer-in from trust is up $15,000 for maintenance of property at 2 Granite Place.

Expenses, budget to budget, are up $122,000 or 2%. This increase is due to wage and benefit increases of $139,000; Professional Services decrease of $22,000; and liability insurance is up $10,000.

Manager Aspell mentioned PCR (#1050-07) in the amount of $5,000 for LED illuminated flashing stop signs at the intersection of Portsmouth Street and South Curtisville Road. Although it was not funded, he feels it would be worth trying and requested the funding for this item be considered.

LIBRARY: Revenues, budget to budget, are down $1,500 due to a decrease in overdue book fines.

Expenses, budget to budget, are up $63,000, or 3%, mainly due to increases in wages and benefits; the elimination of dues to the American Library Association; and a one-time PCR in 2026 for a degree bonus.

Councilor Brown asked where she could see an itemized list of diminimus gifts and donations received by the Library. Manager Aspell noted that a consent report is provided to City Council at their regular meeting each month. Deputy City Manager Finance Brian LeBrun indicated that he will provide a compiled report.

PARKS & RECREATION: Budget to budget, revenues overall are up $54,000 or 4% due to the following:

- Camps are up $7,000;
- Aquatics are down $4,000;
- Program Fees are up $22,000;
- Rentals are up $21,000; and
- Transfers from Cemetery Trusts are up $11,000.

Expenses, budget to budget, are up $56,000 or 1%. This is due to the following:

- Wages and benefits are up $246,000;
- Professional services are down $178,000;
- Communications is down $12,000; and
- Departmental supplies are down $21,000.

There was a brief discussion about having trash cans placed in all the City parks. Parks and Recreation Director David Gill indicated that a carry-in, carry-out program was piloted in 2016 and it was and is still very successful. He indicated that trash cans are provided at White, Rollins and Rolfe Parks. There would be increased costs and staff time associated with placing trash cans in all the parks. If City Council wants to proceed with this, Director Gill said he will conduct an analysis.

There was a brief discussion about the decrease in aquatics and the reasoning behind it. Director Gill indicated that there is a decrease in the sale of non-resident pool passes. He indicated that the price for non-resident passes increased last year and, as a result, less passes were sold.

Councilor Schultz noted that, last year, the City had considered closing one pool. She asked what the savings would be if we were to close one pool this year. She also asked if it might be worthwhile to sell one of our pools. Parks and Recreation Director Gill indicated that, due to LWCF regulations, we cannot sell our pools. Director Gill will prepare a report that outlines the savings of closing one pool.

Other items of discussion included dog waste stations and water fountains at the parks.

Councilor Brown asked if shrubs placed at cemetery headstones are removed by staff, and, if so, if the owners of the plot are notified. Director Gill indicated he would find out and report back.

HUMAN SERVICES: Revenues, budget to budget, are flat.

Expenses, budget to budget, are up $35,000 or 3%. The main drivers for this increase are wage and benefit increases; reduced communications expense; and special programs remain flat for FY 2027.

Human Services Director Karen Emis-Williams provided a breakdown of the number of clients her Department has seen through the end of April 2026, including how many were from other towns and states, the number of medically frail that were seen, and how many clients were referred to shelters and hotels.

At Councilor Kalob's request, Director Emis-Williams provided a summary of hotel costs, security deposit assistance costs, and rental assistance costs paid for by the Department.

Councilor Grady Sexton asked if the Department has any needs from the community in the form of donations. Director Emis-Williams indicated that they will accept anything, even gift cards. The only thing the Department will not accept is expired food items.

There was a brief discussion about HB 1598 which concerns the eviction process. Councilor Kalob shared her concern that the number of homeless and homeless-at-risk may increase due to this bill.

At Councilor Horne's request, Director Emis-Williams explained the difference between State welfare and local welfare.

TAX INCREMENT FINANCE (TIF) DISTRICTS:

Tim Thompson, Assistant Community Development Director, provided an overview of the Tax Increment Finance Districts. At the committee's request, he provided an explanation of TIF Districts and their purpose.

There was a lengthy discussion among the committee about the TIF Districts, including the maintenance of them, the assessed values, the released assessed values, and how the upcoming revaluation may affect their assessed values.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN:

Assistant Community Development Director Tim Thompson provided an overview of the projects recommended for funding in the FY 2027 Capital Improvement Program. Projects that spurred discussion are as follows:

CIP #4 – Fire Department Vehicle Replacement: Fire Chief John Chisholm and Deputy Chief Mick Costello explained the rotation process for putting new Engines into service and keeping older ones as spares. The timeline between ordering and procuring a new Engine was also explained.

CIP #530 – Golf Course Equipment: At Councilor Kurtz' request, BMGC Director of Operations Pat Lanman talked about the ages of the current equipment.

CIP #283 – Traffic Signals & Traffic Operations Improvements: There was a lengthy discussion about this project and if it makes sense to invest in the installation of new traffic signals in the area of D'Amante Drive, Triangle Park, Loudon Road/East Mall Driveway, Dick's Sporting Goods and Wal-Mart, while the planning for redevelopment of the Steeplegate Mall property is in the works. City Engineer Mike Bezanson explained that the City is anticipating a traffic study for that area from the developer, and that the developer's plans are going before the Planning Board in July. Mr. Bezanson noted that the project won't proceed until all the impacts of the development are ironed out.

CIP #59 – Terrill Park: There was a lengthy discussion about this project, which will allow for interim playing field space while Memorial Field and the new Rundlett Middle School are under construction. The City Council will need to decide whether or not to proceed with this project. Councilor Schultz expressed her opinion that the City should have a bigger discussion about the project and include the school district.

CIP #65 – City Hall Renovations: There was a brief discussion about this project, with concerns being shared that this project will proceed before the campus master plan is complete. Manager Aspell indicated that if the Human Services Department is going to move to City Hall when the new Police Station is complete, the planning needs to start now. He indicated that we don't have to spend the money now – we can wait until after the master plan is done.

CIP #555 – Handgun Replacement: Interim Police Chief Barrett Moulton and Deputy Chief Steve Smagula explained how many handguns will be replaced. They also explained that the Department follows the manufacturer's recommendation for replacement timeline.

CIP #671 – Knox Key Secure: As a result of Councilor Brown's questions, Fire Chief John Chisholm explained the need for this project.

Mayor Champlin opened up a public hearing on the Community Development, Library, Parks and Recreation, Human Services, TIF District, and Capital Improvement Program (CIP) budgets.

Theresa Vincent and Julie Jacobson spoke about safety concerns at the intersection of Broadway and South Main Streets. Ms. Jacobson resides at 366 South Main Street and noted that her home has been hit by a motor vehicle three times, most recently resulting in a total loss and the potential for loss of human life. Ms. Jacobson and Ms. Vincent urged the City Council to make safety improvements at this intersection now, which is currently in the outyears of CIP #520.

Concord resident Roy Schweiker spoke about the following:

- New meter maintenance vehicle – suggested the City could buy one for cheaper than the budgeted amount of $65,000.
- Handguns – can't understand how the CPD is shooting 20,000 rounds.
- Terrill Park – feels we should leave it alone and not spend money on an interim solution.
- Human Services Department – suggests it be relocated to the new police station.
- The City is spending too much money on things we don't need.
- The City should assess a water/sewer connection fee to the developers of the Steeplegate Mall property.
- All TIFs should be shut down.

Concord resident Patricia Deangelis shared concerns about increasing property taxes as follows:

- The City should plan in advance for unexpected expenses.
- A fund should be set up that can only be used to reduce taxpayer costs.
- The new clubhouse at the golf course was a want not a need.
- The police station didn't have to be so expensive.
- Memorial Field – why are we totally rearranging it; and is not happy about the number of trees that were taken down.
- The City should put things off that it can't afford now.

As there was no further public testimony, the Mayor closed the public hearing.

With no other discussion, a motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed with a unanimous voice vote and the meeting was adjourned at 9:43 PM.

A true copy, I attest,
Sue Stevens, Executive Assistant