

BUDGET REVIEW COMMITTEE

FEBRUARY 12, 2026

A meeting of the Budget Review Committee was held Thursday, February 12, 2026 at 7:44 p.m. in the Aldermanic Chamber and duly noticed in two places, including the City's website, in accordance with the requirements of RSA 91-A:2 II.

Alderman Richard A. Dowd, Chairman, presided.

Let's start the meeting by taking a roll call attendance.

Members of Committee present: Alderman Richard A. Dowd, Chairman
Alderman Tim Sennott, Vice-Chair
Alderman-at-Large Michael B. O'Brien, Sr.
Alderdwoman-at-Large Shoshanna Kelly
Alderman Derek Thibeault
Alderman Paula Johnson

Members not in Attendance: Alderman-at-Large Alicia Gregg

Also in Attendance: Alderman-at-Large Amber Morgan
Alderman Patricia Klee
Liz Hannum, Economic Development Director
Dawn Enwright, CFO

ROLL CALL

ELECTION OF CLERK

Chairman Dowd called for nominations for the Committee Clerk for the 2026-2027 term.

ALDERMAN SENNOTT NOMINATED ALDERMAN O'BRIEN AS THE BUDGET REVIEW COMMITTEE CLERK

**MOTION BY ALDERWOMAN KELLY TO CLOSE THE NOMINATIONS
MOTION CARRIED**

**MOTION BY ALDERWOMAN KELLY TO VOTE ON ELECTION OF ALDERMAN O'BRIEN AS THE BUDGET REVIEW
COMMITTEE CLERK FOR THE 2026-2027 TERM
MOTION CARRIED**

PUBLIC COMMENT

Bill Ferriero

My name is Bill Ferriero. My home is number 35 Indian Rock Road. Thank you for letting me ask questions at the public hearing and thank you to Liz for trying to answer most of them. But when you're developing budgets, and you do estimates, and you purposely inflate them, and you say stuff like, well, if we don't spend it here we'll just spend it on something else, that's not budgeting. That's making stuff up. Thanks.

Chairman Dowd

Anyone else for public comment?

PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION

- Benefits/Healthcare Update

Chairman Dowd

The presentation has been postponed until the February 23rd meeting on benefits and healthcare.

COMMUNICATIONS - None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS – RESOLUTIONS**R-26-002**

Endorsers: Alderman-at-Large Michael B. O'Brien, Sr.
Alderman Richard A. Dowd
Alderman-at-Large Ben Clemons
Alderman Patricia Klee
Alderwoman Vengerflutta Smith
Alderman Derek Thibeault
Alderman-at-Large Alicia Gregg
Alderman-at-Large Lori Wilshire

AUTHORIZING A ONE-TIME STIPEND TO BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS RETIREMENT SYSTEM RETIREES AS REQUESTED BY THE BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS RETIREMENT SYSTEM BOARD OF TRUSTEES

MOTION BY ALDERMAN O'BRIEN TO RECOMMEND FINAL PASSAGEON THE QUESTIONDavid Fredette

For some of the newer people here is Nashua has a - the Division of Public Works has its own pension plan separate from any other plans in the city, which was started in 1947 when there were no plans. There's a Board of Trustees of seven. Dawn was on the board until recently because the Treasurer/Tax Collector is on the Board and there's members from different organizations within Public Works that make up the seven total. I happen to be the Chair of the Board and I've been involved with the Board since 1992. So I have some familiarity with it.

if you read it, I think it kind of explains very easily what it does. The retirees of the Public Works Pension Fund do not get automatic raises every year. But about eight years ago, so we started giving one time stipends and this, I think, is the fourth or the fifth one that we've done. As you can see, it's 435 current retirees. The longer you've been retired, the larger your stipend is. Again, it's a one-time stipend. We worked on it for about six months easily, trying to make sure that it was fair to everyone. If you look on the second page, it tells you under the fiscal note that as of 2024, we had a balance of \$51,643,000 in the fund.

We just had our year-end report in December of this year and I'm very happy to tell you that number now is over \$63 million in the fund. So it's a very healthy plan and we feel the stipends are something that's good because, you know, as time goes on with inflation, it eats up your pension. So this helps out a little bit with everybody. We currently have a few people that are in their 90s that are retired and still here in Nashua. Again, we work with the committee, and our advisors, and this is what we came up with for this time around.

Chairman Dowd

Any questions?

Alderman O'Brien

Yeah, I would just like to say that just to remind some members of the Board, I am the liaison to this particular Committee. I'm also a beneficiary of the New Hampshire Retirement System. Compared to the two, they're basically apples and oranges. But one of the main glowing things is this one works because it's locally owned and we run it. Up at the State it is crazy. I have been out of the Fire Department for about almost 10 years, 11 years, maybe. I have yet to receive any COLA. Now what is a COLA? It's a cost of living increase. If you look at the way inflation has gone up and any particular time, the cost of living goes up. We don't have COLAs in this particular pension system but we have people who by the grace of God are living longer due to medical beneficiaries on certain things.

This one time stipend will assist them. It's like a 13 Chuck. It will help them out and their basic needs. So it is a very good thing. I came up before Mr. Fredette. You joined the Board. I want was the one that suggested this under Mr. Anderson when he was a former Director. It has worked. This is the second time we have ever done this, you know. As stated, it's a one-time offer. Maybe if it is but according to our one of our people who assist us in running it, which is the Royal Bank (RBC), Royal Bank of Canada, we are doing phenomenal. I mean we're in the 90 something percentile of running this pension system. Compared to what the State is doing, maybe in the 60s. This is something that we're doing it right. So taking some of the money one time for this will go a long way to supporting our people who have worked for us in the Public Works Department and in the system in their retirement. Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Any additional questions? Seeing none.

MOTION CARRIED

R-26-003

Endorsers: Alderman-at-Large Ben Clemons
Alderman Derek Thibeault
Alderman Patricia Klee
Alderwoman Vengerflutta Smith
Alderman-at-Large Michael B. O'Brien
Alderman-at-Large Amber Morgan
Alderman Thomas Lopez
Alderman-at-Large Lori Wilshire

RELATIVE TO THE SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION OF \$200,000 OF ASSIGNED FUND BALANCE INTO DEPARTMENT 194 "CONTINGENCY", ACCOUNT 70100 "GENERAL CONTINGENCY" FOR THE INTENDED PURPOSE OF COVERING EXPENSES TO CLEAN UP MAIN STREET AND THE RIVERFRONT

MOTION BY ALDERMAN O'BRIEN TO RECOMMEND FINAL PASSAGE

ON THE QUESTION

Alderman Thibeault

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yeah, this was Alderman Clemons and mine bill that came through here.

Couple things that I want to respond to. One, no one's inflating a budget purposely here in Nashua. I just want people of the city to know that. No one's inflating it. It's called a "conservative budget" so we don't go the other way, which is something that would be bad.

They talked about the cap a lot in that first in the public hearing. This has nothing to do with the cap. We heard CFO Enwright say that the \$200,000 was in within the cap. So there's no issue there. It was also mentioned that, you know, under previous Mayors that, you know, they cut it to the cap. The issue is, is, yeah, and you know what happened is streets didn't get paved, and things didn't get done, and buildings didn't get fixed that needed it, and now we're paying for all that. We've been paying for that for the last 10 years trying to repair buildings, garages, things that are falling down. We've had the 10 year paving plan that the mayor put in. So that's why. We're held differently than other towns and the cap has put us in a bad place. This appropriation is up because of something that came up within the year. It's not something that's been there. The businesses came to us and we're trying to respond to people in the city that were bringing a problem to us and we were trying to solve, which was helping clean up the downtown.

Similar to the way that Manchester does, unfortunately we can't do it because of our union contracts the way they do it. I've been to Manchester and I've seen the people that the cleanup crew that's been around. It's actually pretty cool. I wish we could do it that way. You know, they got different shirts on. I talked to the Mayor up there, Mayor Ruais and he was like, Oh, they're great. People come up to him and say, hey, where's this place, where's that, and they point them in the right direction, and they're friendly. It's been a big deal up there and I wish we could do it like that but obviously we can't.

It's also just about this - the rest of this year. We're going to talk about the budget for next year when the budget comes up, and that's going to be in that budget, and it's going to be done differently, or it's going to be done the way Director Hannum said. So I don't want us to vote based on what it's going to be because we will have that budget vote when the time comes and we'll have those discussions. Maybe we decide this is something that's not going to work. Maybe it doesn't work and we say, okay, we don't need to do this in the next budget. Because I think it's kind of a pilot. I think it's kind of a trial. If it works and it's great for the city, I think we should find a way to get into the budget. If it doesn't work, then why do we go for - like anything else if something doesn't work, let's not continue to do something that's not working, right? So I think this is very small dollars to try to beautify the Main Street - the Main Street corridor area - not just Main Street but the riverfront and some of the, you know, side streets. She explained she went out further this time than last discussion we had about it. So I think - and you know, she didn't put the overtime on there. I know we may have to need to add pieces about that but I think it's a good expense, a short term, low dollar expense to see if something would help us beautify the Main Street area and help the businesses. Because we really need people to come to these businesses, and wanting to go to these businesses, and the businesses to actually, I've said businesses way too many times, but want them to feel like, you know, they're going into a clean place every morning. That's my thoughts on it. So I hope people support it.

Alderman Sennott

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have two items I'd like to speak to.

The first, I didn't want to bring up during the public hearing because I didn't want to belabor it and get into a discussion but there was some comments Director Hannum that you had made towards the end of the discussion there regarding the expanse of this and the purpose of it. Maybe I misheard but it seemed like we were getting into parks, and graffiti, and as it got bigger and ballooned, it seemed like we were focused less on the intended purpose as stated in the legislation of for the purpose of cleaning the downtown as more of a general increase to the Public Works overtime. So I was hoping you could speak to that because it seemed like at the start of even just the discussion the public hearing, we had a map and a designated area, and then by the end, we were kind of outside that realm.

Liz Hannum, Economic Development Director

Sure. Liz Hannum, Economic Development Director. I did conflate this year's budget and next year's budget in that conversation. So this year, the language says downtown in the riverfront and that map is included in that. That is the overtime that we will be paying for this year. In the future, there's potential for larger areas but for this particular \$200,000, it would just be the downtown in the riverfront area.

Alderman Sennott

Okay, thank you.

Chairman Dowd

All set?

Alderman Sennott

One other?

Chairman Dowd

One more?

Alderman Sennott

Please, yes. All right, so that covers that. A good lesson to all of us to stay on topic.

My further concern, and I had brought this up in the public hearing as well, and, you know, I had a couple of folks whispering to me, and then it was kind of said out loud that maybe this needs amendments. As I look over the legislation, I'm concerned that if we sat here and tried to amend it tonight to focus the purpose, focus the method, we would have to be changing the accounts that we're transferring money into because there would be no need to go to contingency. We know what the purpose and the method is now. It seems to me like if we got two into the weeds with an amendment here, we're essentially rewriting this legislation and then I'm concerned that we have a need for another public hearing.

Chairman Dowd

It would absolutely have to have another public hearing if you make an amendment to it.

Alderman Sennott

That being said, I don't think we should pass legislation that says one thing when the overbearing thought, and intent, and even stated purpose at this point is something else. Whether this - I don't think tabling this is the right approach to take because it needs to be rewritten as far as I can see it. The legislation in front of us is not ultimately what we want to pass. We know what the legislation that we want to pass is and it's down the road. I think this should have been submitted rewritten given how long it sat for the previous term. So in its current form, I'm not comfortable supporting this moving forward. That's all I've got.

Alderwoman Kelly

Yeah, my sentiments on this have not changed. I think there were a lot of things brought up both in public comments but also, you know, discussion around, oh, we don't need to know what it means for next year's budget. We absolutely do. This is a supplemental that is going to fund positions that will then be on our budget and that budget we were told was not going to be absorbed, it's going to be pushed up. So this decision for a supplemental makes a difference on our budget for next year. So I don't like characterizing it as oh, it's just this one-time thing. We don't have to think about it. Supplemental should be for one time things but that's not what this is.

I guess my question is what were we doing before? Were we not cleaning Main Street? All of a sudden there's this huge, you know, mess and Main Street.

Liz Hannum, Economic Development Director

So I can answer that. So right now, we just sweep the Main Street. There is no - they don't do sidewalks or any of that until spring and that was why we did it as a supplemental rather than waiting for the next year's budget because springtime is the hardest and most labor intensive time in cleaning up from the winter and getting ready for the summer. So we wanted this to be able to happen before July 1st. So that was why we did a supplemental as opposed to waiting for next year's budget. We were not doing the regular cleaning that this would be in the downtown. So we don't have DPW people walking around downtown. They ride the street sweeper and they pick up the trash.

Alderman Kelly

Thank you for that answer. I'm still just - I think that there were a lot of questions about wording. This was put up almost essentially what exactly what it looked like last time. I just - I wasn't bored then. I talked to - I actually also talked to the Mayor, and Manchester, as well as an alderman, and their program cost \$480,000 a year. They funded it by ARPA. They also have a fund where the businesses actually put money into it so that the businesses have some skin in the game. But now they have to find \$500,000 to continue this program. Whether its successful or not, great. I was a downtown business owner. I would love to have that but do we have the space in our budget to raise our budget half a million dollars next year or I think you said it was...

Liz Hannum, Economic Development Director

...around \$200,000.

Alderman Kelly

I think you said three for next year.

Liz Hannum, Economic Development Director

Three, yes but 100 would come from the TIF that would not be...

Alderman Kelly

....so it wouldn't be general?

Liz Hannum, Economic Development Director

Wouldn't affect the general fund. Yeah.

Alderman Kelly

But I just reject the idea that this - we can't talk about next year's budget and I think that in general, this, there was some stuff about police overtime for downtown. Like these are things that these departments should be budgeting for. Our downtown hasn't changed dramatically that they shouldn't be able to police it in the correct way and if they need more officers, then ask for more officers in our budget when we budget not in supplementals.

Alderman O'Brien

Thank you. Oh, I'll yield to...

Chairman Dowd

I think Alderman Morgan...

Alderman O'Brien

I'll yield.

Alderman Morgan

Thank you. I appreciate that. I just wanted to clarify something that my colleague had stated about who cleans downtown. You're looking at her. So the business owners are the ones that are going out and are cleaning the sidewalks, the ones that are picking up the gum, the dog waste, etc., the trash that's flying by, the weeds that are there, shoveling the snow removal, and cutting the inlet so that people can access downtown, etc. I could go on but there's no need to. What I love about this is that it goes beyond what we see when we're in our car. There is if you go in the back side, and I don't remember the street, Front Street in between Front Street and West Pearl Street. That side. There is just garbage thrown left there that nobody cares about because they don't drive by it. If somebody actually got out and walked inside, they would complain about it. So this also talks about that.

The other thing is that the way that your downtown looks reflects how the people care about their city. If you don't take care of your public spaces, it shows that we don't take pride in ourselves and I know that's not true. But if we want people to really care about our city, and to get involved, and fill those empty slots that we have on miscellaneous boards, or run for office, or anything else in creating the future that we know and we love, we have to take care of the way that we look. It starts with that and this helps to take care of that.

I do agree with the language. I think that the language does need to be rewritten but overall, the intent and the spirit of the resolution is well written.

Chairman Dowd

All set?

Alderman Morgan

All set.

Alderman Klee

I'm sorry. Thank you, Alderman O'Brien. I'm not on the Committee so I - thank you. I appreciate the time. I want to echo the Alderwoman-at-Large who just spoke. I do agree that it does need to be worded so that it is precise to what we want it to be and that being said, you probably should do an amendment, have another public hearing because you're going to have to do that. It is too general. I'm sorry that mistakes were made but they were made. I see that this being done in overtime and we don't have to hire anybody, I don't see the emergency. We have snow on the ground and they're not going to be out there right now doing it. So I don't see that this would slow anything down.

But having said that, this is so much more than just it's the trash, it's the needles, it's the human waste. We all sat here and talked about how all of that is affecting the downtown and the businesses talk to us. We had that meeting in the library where the businesses talked to us and said, you have to do something. We've put the bathrooms here by City Hall to - I don't know whether or not that's affecting anything or not but this is kind of a follow through. While I agree it sounds like this is going to increase the budget, you all can say no when it comes to that budget and make recommendations that if they want those positions, they have to fill it within it. They are planning for 2027. It's not like they're not and if you say no, you can't have that money, then they have to find out what they want to cut and if this is what they want to cut, that's what they want to cut. No one is going to lose a job. It's not like they're hiring people for this particular thing. They're doing in overtime and that discussion can be had. I don't think it's putting it off.

I respect and I agree with we should never make assumptions. I didn't like funding positions with ARPA whether it be the school, whether it be - and the school did a lot of it. I was very upset by that. Whether it be the city, it doesn't matter. I don't think one time funds should be funded for position. We're not doing that. We're giving overtime for this. It's very costly and so on. If we wait until the 2027 budget, we can't do this until at least July and that means in hiring. So when are we going to bring them on August, September? You know by that time, we've gone through the spring, we've gone through the summer. I agree that it should be worded appropriately but I don't get a vote here tonight. I hope that you will, you know, vote to not necessarily table it, you know, whatever. Put your amendments

through. Do whatever you want to do to make it be accurate and if it needs a public hearing, so be it.

I just don't think - I think the person who came up said he was in favor and then said he was not in favor of it. He was not in favor because he didn't like the dollar amount not being exact. I can tell from having worked in fiscal, having worked at the VA budgets, we don't put the exact number in because things happen. We round it up to the next dollar amount. That's the way all budgets are done. Maybe you don't do that budget in your house but then you're going to find that you're going to have a shortfall. You do round up. That's constant and I believe that the speaker said anybody who wouldn't be - why would anybody not be in favor of this? I'm going to echo those words. I think it is something that's important but I don't disagree with anything that my colleagues have said so thank you.

Liz Hannum, Economic Development Director

Quick comment. I appreciate that. I do think that there is urgency now. If we have other snow storms, we did get a lot of complaints in the most recent snow storms because our equipment only fits on Main Street and not on the side streets and having people that we could have pulled or had stay late to do sidewalk shoveling and things, that would have been really helpful in the accessibility. We had a lot of people that had to walk in the street for almost a week in order to get around on Main Street. So I think that would have been really helpful in these last couple of storms.

Alderman O'Brien

Thank you. I just want to say this particularly to some of the new Aldermen, we held an aldermanic meeting with the people, the business community from particularly the downtown. I listened. I'll tell you what I heard. They were complaining about happened to go out. Not just pick it up, trash that was left along but things that we and as a former firefighter, what we train and protect ourselves against is biological hazards such as human feces, and people who urine - use the bathroom to urinate, and everything else, and you're asking a business owner who when you go in and do a financial transaction, a couple hours earlier, he's out picking up the poop. That's not a good way to run a business. It's not a good way to run the downtown and so I'm in very much in favor of this like to what Alderman Thibeault says.

The thing is if you look at - we have been living - we live maybe what, close to 20 years' worth of spending cap. I bet you dollars to donuts if you looked at 20 years ago and found out how many people actually worked for DPW at that time and compared to the amount of people who are working for BPW today, you find the numbers are less. We have trash trucks that they don't need two guys on the back anymore. They got the one armed bandit type of thing that they could pick it up and lower it in. They're a shadow force.

Now yeah, I can understand this is not perfect but it was comprised in design but it's got to be discussed again in four months. Four months. That's when we're going to have the budget season and like what Alderman Klee said, at that particular time, they can decide if they want to keep this or not. To get it now, they only come into \$200,000 which by our budget, every penny counts believe me. But \$200,000 is not really going to, I think, hurt us particularly where as I was a Captain on the Fire Department, our traditions was we had spring cleaning where we clean up the grounds, and the building, and everything else like that.

This \$200,000 will start it for a downtown spring cleaning which I think after winter and particularly the tough winter that we have, it is. I think this could be adjusted with amendments and everything else like that when it comes to budget season. I think a better program could come up that probably could answer a lot of questions as some may have but initially, this will start the ball rolling. It will help out our taxpayers. Keep in mind people who own businesses downtown pay for that commercial property. So I'm not saying we should give them the complete sun and the moon but keep in mind, they pay a little bit more than the residential people. That's the way the tax system is set up. So they deserve somewhat of our attention. So they're only asking \$200,000 of us to float a new program to clean up something that I think we would all be happy to bring our families down and utilizing the downtown. So it has my support. Thank you.

Alderman Thibeault

Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chair. So I mean who do Manchester residents call? Nashua. Trashua, right? Is that while we want to be known? If I was a business would I want to be on Main Street if I knew I was gonna have to pick up my own - not my own, but someone else's fecal matter? I mean why wouldn't I just go to another town or city that does that or at least gives me space where that doesn't happen.

You know one of those businesses that Alderman O'Brien was talking about mentioned that they, and I think it was a bank, and they have the ATM doors in there, and they had a rug in there that was soaked with human urine. Like is that really what we - are we okay with that? We're okay with letting the business take care of that themselves? So they had to put in the tile floor there and get rid of the rug. That to me doesn't seem like something a city should let

happen and not at least be responsible for helping them pick it up. I'm not saying maybe we go to a system where the businesses pay in but right now, we have a short window to get this started for this part of the budget season. So maybe we look into a stronger program that does like you say have the businesses pay in or whatever. But I'm telling you, businesses are leaving downtown and I'm not saying it's for that reason. It could be the economy is not the greatest but I'm telling you we're going to have more. We have a business owner here that literally just told us what exactly happens downtown. Why don't we believe her? I don't understand that. That's the part I don't get, you know, and we're going to lose businesses. Once we lose downtown, we might as well be Lowell. Call us Lowell or call us Trashua. It's fine by me.

Alderman Sennott

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With respect to how passionate that I know Alderman Thibeault is about this, I do think it's just worth mentioning. I sympathize with the issue that the bank had with their foyer and having to replace the carpet but this isn't going to resolve that. We can't appropriate money to replace a carpet. I get it, you know, and I don't think anybody in here disbelieves what the downtown businesses are facing. But the nuances of this is where I do get hung up and I know it's easy to look past the nuance and just say we have to do this but back to back here, we just had two conflicting stories that once again, bring up the issue. We had resolved the fact that this is not going beyond the dedicated map of that downtown area and where we're going to clean up. It was pointed out by one of my colleagues that this all came out of that meeting at the library with the downtown business owners who are pointing about out needs that had arisen from the increasing and ongoing homelessness issue.

That's all factual. I believe all of that but we didn't pin this down right last term. We didn't get this right and it didn't pass and because of that, we're in February and we're talking about how this money can be used to clear the snow off the sidewalks. That's not what this issue was. We're, again, refocusing where we're going to spend this \$200,000. If we have a couple more storms like we've had recently, that overtime is going to go quick if we're clearing the side streets and the sidewalks. We're just at the point where we're looking at benefits to this that aren't rolling out of the original intent and we've lost the plot.

So for that among the other reasons, I still can't get on board with it. It needs to be rewritten I feel like from the bottom up. It's just - this is not what we want to pass. What we want to pass isn't on paper yet and I feel like the amendments are just going to be too insanely cumbersome for us to get here tonight without legal counsel to advise us. I don't think it's ready for prime time. Thank you.

Liz Hannum, Economic Development Director

Can I just clarify a quick...?

Chairman Dowd

Yes.

Liz Hannum, Economic Development Director

So we did intend for snow removal to be clean up of downtown just so you're aware of it. We're not - it's not a different thing. Trash and snow both need to be cleaned up, cleared away. So I appreciate that you didn't or didn't understand that they were both supposed to be part of this legislation but that was always the intent that it would be a year round position and it would be used for whatever it needed to be used for to clear and clean up downtown.

Alderman Sennott

Can I respond to that please?

Chairman Dowd

Yes.

Alderman Sennott

I don't think there's any misunderstanding on my part of what this was intended for. I actually take a little bit of umbrage with that because I pride myself on doing my homework. This has festered for a long, long time and the circumstances that existed when this first came up are different now. They're completely different. We're looking at a different moving target, and I feel that the cost of this and the anticipated timeline of it is also becoming a moving target, and I don't like that moving target being blamed on my understanding of the legislation. Thank you.

Alderwoman Kelly

Couple questions. So question number one, and maybe this is to Ms. Enwright. How much money is in the Downtown Improvement Committee fund and was that considered?

Liz Hannum, Economic Development Director

I can answer that. So I think there is \$260,000 there right now with an anticipated spend for the rest of the year of about \$95,000.

Alderwoman Kelly

Is there a reason it wasn't considered? It seems like the definition of downtown improvement.

Liz Hannum, Economic Development Director

Yes. So they do intend to put some money in but they only get \$100,000 allocation every year and we anticipated that this would cost nearly \$300,000. So that - unless we want them to do nothing and just put all 100 into this, then - and that is a Charter change for the committee but that's up to you guys. So they did plan to put some funding in and they have been paying for additional cleanings downtown for DPW. They put about \$20,000 in last year and 25 the previous year.

Alderwoman Kelly

Okay. I have a couple of other comments and then another question.

I feel like you buried the lead of the idea that you would be picking up snow on the sidewalks was going to be part of it because I have to tell you, I've gotten more calls about sidewalks. I've seen people fall on sidewalks and not go to downtown in this time of year because of it. So I will tell you over the eight years that I've been, I have had more calls about sidewalks downtown than any of the other things that we talked about in that library meeting.

Liz Hannum, Economic Development Director

Okay. So I guess that was my issue with explaining this process is we are going to have a year round position so whatever is needed to keep downtown clean, our DPW and our Parking Department try to keep the sidewalks as good as they can, but they have a lot of area to cover in snows and so those side streets end up being the last thing. So this this time it took them a week. Sometimes it takes them a day but with additional resources, we could potentially get to everything a lot faster. Sorry.

Alderwoman Kelly

One follow up.

Chairman Dowd

Go ahead.

Alderwoman Kelly

Thank you for that. I still feel like if we want to pass this, it should be more clear and if you are open to working on the language so that we can get it through the next budgets, I'd be interested in hearing and seeing it but I think being more clarity around what is going to be done, who is doing it, where the funds are coming from, I think would be helpful and more transparent. Is that a time issue for you? I think we meet in two weeks because this is a special, right? Our next Budget meeting is like two weeks because this is a special one.

Chairman Dowd

It was pretty loaded agenda at the moment.

Liz Hannum, Economic Development Director

Oh, I thought you said during the next budget.

Alderwoman Kelly

No, like our budget meeting.

Liz Hannum, Economic Development Director

Oh, the next Budget.

Alderwoman Kelly

We can table it and you can work on it for next Budget meeting.

Liz Hannum, Economic Development Director

Yes.

Alderwoman Kelly

Okay, thank you.

Liz Hannum, Economic Development Director

But we would have to have a special hearing at that point, right?

Alderwoman Kelly

Yeah.

Chairman Dowd

Only – well.

Alderwoman Kelly

It depends on how much you change it, right?

Chairman Dowd

If the legislation is rewritten or any amendments are made to it, a public hearing would have to be scheduled and it couldn't be the 23rd because there's this posting limit that's established by law.

Liz Hannum, Economic Development Director

I think it's 30 days, right?

Chairman Dowd

Yeah and Donna has to get it into the papers and everywhere else. So, yeah. So I think I'm going to let Alderman Johnson speak first but I want to make some comments in a minute.

Alderman Johnson

Thank you. I wasn't on the Board when this came up. I have a lot of concerns with this. I agree with Alderwoman Kelly and Alderman Sennott regarding this.

When you talk about the cleanup and you're going to clean up, you know, the needles, the feces, the urine that's down there. You know, I have concerns because listening to all this the meetings that we had about before I got on the Board about the homeless population. Unless you start doing something about the homeless population, this is still going to stay there, and we're going to be spending a lot of money doing cleanup, and we're going to be still be picking up needles. I'll tell you something, I don't really want to expose my workers to the needles and feces because that's hazmat you're getting to at this point because if someone picks up that needle and stabs himself, we now have more problems.

So I know after storms, yeah, it takes a little bit of - it takes a little while sometimes but I know DPW work all through the night to clean up Main Street and they do clean up. They'll start like at 6, 7 o'clock at night and they'll go right around the clock to the morning. So I know Main Street does get cleaned up but can I ask a question regarding the Riverwalk? I mean we keep talking about Main Street, and I know I heard about the bank, and the carpet, the urine, that's private property. We have nothing to do with that. They should lock the doors or have a coat to get in, you know. People should - and they might steal the ATM machine but what's the story with the Riverwalk right now to clean that up? It's the middle of winter. Because you said, you know, downtown and the Riverwalk. So are we going to be doing anything with the Riverwalk at this point or does that just staying snow covered?

Liz Hannum, Economic Development Director

So right now at the moment, DPW does clean the Riverwalk - both the boardwalks on both sides of the river as well as on the east side of Main Street. They do it whenever they can. So right now - and they had done the Renaissance Park and Bicentennial Park prior to this - but we did intend, always intend to add a position out of the TIF fund to do maintenance because it is a lot more of maintenance than the previous park was. So we were always planning to pay for that out of the TIF fund. But with the increased presence downtown, we decided that it might be a great way to get more for less - more for less money out of the TIF and more for less money out of the general fund. So we thought it was a win/win for both funds.

Alderman Johnson

I understand what you're saying here. I'm not going to support this. I'm definitely not going to support this. I think we're chasing our tails because it's always going to be this big cleanup on the needles and the human waste down there. It's just this is just a band-aid to clean it up because we haven't done anything with the homeless population except move them along. At this point in time, I'd like to see something more concrete what you're proposing because I just, I just can't support this. It's nope.

Liz Hannum, Economic Development Director

So if I could ask clarification. You want the actual like hours and times in the legislation going forward or what kind of clarification are you looking for?

Alderman Johnson

I think that we need to know, you know, the - well what's the hours are going to be? Is this going to be like a nine to five job, an 8:30, you know, eight hour job? It says what is the whole detail that they're going to be doing here? We have different times for DPW. So what are we looking for with DPW? Is this going to be more like in evenings? It's going to be a day? What are we talking about here for their time frame here?

Liz Hannum, Economic Development Director

So I'll put in overtime.

Alderman Johnson

Yep, then that's the important thing.

Liz Hannum, Economic Development Director

Which that will be an operational decision but I'll clarify that this would come from over - or this would be specific to overtime this year.

Alderman Johnson

And we're eliminating anything the out of perimeter that you're talking about and you're just talking about the downtown area and the Riverwalk.

Liz Hannum, Economic Development Director

For this year, yes.

Alderman Johnson

For this year.

Alderman Thibeault

Thank you, Mr. Chair. So we are now blaming snow on the homeless. I mean that's part of the cleanup. I'm talking. You don't need to talk. I'm just saying, we're saying there's only needles. No, we just talked about snow and the homeless don't create the snow. It's other things. It's not just the homeless that caused the trash. I talked to a business where there - I think it was the guy that owns the Escape Room was telling me that, you know, people come out drinking and they urinate in the library walkway, right? So it's not just the homeless so I don't want to blame it on just them. Its people, general people create trash. In cities that don't have a homeless problem have trash.

So to Director Hannum, I want a complete bill written where every single type of thing that we're going to pick up is on there - from snow, to cigarette butts, to gum, to needles, for everything because obviously we have to have various - what hours which again like you said, it's operational. It's overtime. It's when they have the time to go out there on their overtime and pick this stuff up. So I don't understand why we're making it - if we made every bill as specific as what people are asking, we would never get a bill passed in this horseshoe.

So, you know, and you know a couple people said, what are we - what about the homeless? What are we doing about the homeless? I don't see any bills coming in front of us that help the homeless. I'd be happy to sign off on anything but I haven't seen anything. So when we say what are we doing about the homeless, that's not Director Hannum's job. She's Economic Director and Planning Director. She's not about the homeless so why are we asking her that? She's trying to get this passed so we have a cleaner area downtown for the economic businesses we have downtown. So I don't understand why we bring up things that aren't her responsibility. It's not her responsibility to deal with the homeless. I know people are going to say it is her responsibility to deal with the homeless or we should be dealing. How do you want to deal with them? Where's legislation and maybe you guys got something - somebody's got something coming to us but I haven't seen it and I'd be certainly happy to sponsor it. We had a lot of sponsors on this bill. We had eight sponsors on here. So it's not like people in this horseshoe didn't want this. Maybe the people - obviously, the people that are here didn't sponsor it but we have a lot of sponsors on it.

So I don't know why this is so controversial. It seems weird to me that a small dollar amount to clean up a big part of our center, our hub of our city that the businesses down there said was a problem. Whether it's homeless people, whether it's me dropping Burger King wrappers, or anybody else out there, the trash still needs to be picked up by somebody. Why would we push the business owners that already pay a lot to be down there to let them pick up their own trash. I'm sorry if they have an opening and there's a there's a rug in there, we still shouldn't have people walk in there and urinate on it. That's still, yes, oh we feel sorry for them. Oh well, their business. Why would we care about our business people? I know when we had that meeting, some Aldermen didn't come because they didn't even want to deal with the businesses. To me, they're still part of our city. They pay taxes. Why do we not care about the businesses? I don't get that. We always say, oh, businesses. Whatever, you know. Well we got a business owner down there so we might as well look at her and say, we don't care about you because that's what we're saying. I don't know, that's my opinion. I'm sorry. I'm still going to vote for it. I hope we do it by roll call, please when we do get to it.

Chairman Dowd

All right, roll call's been called. I'm just going to interject a few things before we get too far into the weeds.

First of all, it's been pretty well pointed out that nobody knows the wording that should be used for any amendments to this particular resolution. So - and it would take time to write those and maybe if it passes the Budget Committee tonight, it's going to go with the full Board. You can make recommendations on amendments at the full Board level if you have time to write them and work with Director Hannum. If it doesn't pass the board this evening, then it's pretty much dead, and would have to be rewritten anyway, and brought back, and by the time this all gets done, it'll be in the next budget season's deliberations which will start around the first of April.

It was saying that it would increase next year's budget. Well we're going to add \$200,000 to our base for the budget but on a \$400 million budget, that's not very much. If we don't use it, it certainly would be absorbed in the budget increase because the budget's not going to stay level. I mean if you read in the Union Leader, you're going to find out that there isn't a city and town in the entire State where it's staying level. It's increasing significantly because of - well, I'm not going to get into that.

I envision this as a this first iteration of \$200,000 as a test case. See what they find, see how it works so that when they go to the budget season for next year, they have something to base their actual work on. Trying to define

exactly what they do, we don't tell people how to - we don't tell DPW how to plow streets or clean sidewalks. We don't tell the School Department how to run their schools. They have a Board of Ed for that. So there's a lot of things that we don't control. This is an effort to try and clean up some of the downtown and to help the businesses downtown. \$200,000 to get this initial thing started seems to me to be reasonable. We could discuss it all night long and we're not going to get any further than we are right now. So I don't know if we're debating it, I know you could try tabling it. If it tables, then somebody's going to have to come up with the ideas to rewrite the legislation. You can't just keep saying, hey, you didn't write it right. You didn't write it right. If you got ideas on how you want it changed, write them down, get it into the legislation. So if you want to table it, table it but I don't think we need to continue discussing it. We're just going round, and round, and round on the same thing. So I would like us to move on unless somebody has something completely new.

Alderman Kelly

One comment and then a motion. I feel it is very frustrating for people to say that this - people who are against this are anti-business. I was business downtown for almost 10 years. I walk around downtown two to three times a week. I'm not saying we shouldn't clean up downtown. I'm saying the manner in which this has been brought forward and the way that it is written is unclear. We had a public hearing where multiple people from the public asked what does this mean? I was like, oh, it shouldn't be written that way. I am sick of us being told that because the public hearing would have to be brought up again, that we should do sloppy legislation. I'm not going to support it. So I moved the table.

MOTION BY ALDERWOMAN KELY TO TABLE, BY ROLL CALL

A viva voce roll call was taken, which resulted as follows:

Yea: Alderman Johnson, Alderman Kelly, Alderman Sennott 3

Nay: Alderman Thibeault, Alderman O'Brien, Alderman Dowd 3

MOTION FAILED

Chairman Dowd

Unless there's further discussion germane to this, we probably ought to vote on the Resolution.

Alderman Klee

Thank you for allowing me to speak. I don't think it would have been bad to table it if it was going to be changed. Once a table motion is made, we can't speak anymore.

But I just want to make a comment about the homeless. The homeless was the precipice of getting this started but to ignore this because we don't have a resource center, I've spoken to constituents about it. To ignore it and say, well let's wait till we have a resource center means it's only going to get worse. So why would we allow it to get worse? Why would we allow the trash and so on to build up until we do this other part? They can work together. It's already said that this is going to become something ongoing and as I pointed out before, it doesn't mean that they're going to get it in their budget and no one has to be fired. You guys can all decide this.

You're talking about this being a pilot program and so on. I'm sorry I keep turning my head to look at my notes. I think it should be clear. I think the legislation should be clear but this is for everything. It is for the cleaning up of snow. So I'm going to put this to all of you here. If Public Works came in and said, I need \$200,000 in overtime budget because the snow removal, and so on, and we're doing all this extra work on Main Street, and so on, and I need \$200,000. I'm not asking you to answer my question. I'm just saying to think about what I'm saying here. Would you deny them that money?

In essence, this is in part that. They're saying that - and to one of my colleagues from Ward 7, I did kind of know that this was no removal but because of another side conversation, I didn't think that this was specific. So I don't disagree with your comment about not seeing snow removal in here. Like I said, I did kind of know it because of a side conversation about riverfront and the safety of that bridge that goes over the handicap bridge and so on. So I did kind of know a little bit about that but I don't think it was necessarily clear here. So I agree with you on your comments on that.

I just think, again, and I'm just throwing this hypothetical out. If Public Works came here and said I need \$200,000 in overtime to be able to do the snow removal and to be able to do this cleanup as we said, which is in essence what

this is, they are asking for \$200,000 to do this. Would you say no to them? And again, I'm not asking to answer me. I'm just saying to if it came in differently and it could. It could come in where Public Works comes in and says, I need \$200,000 to clean up those needles, to clean up the feces, to clean up the that. Instead, this is kind of coming through our economic development people because it is downtown and they're trying to create a whole plan for now and for the future. But we could look at it as that Public Works could just come in and be asking for \$200,000 in overtime. So thank you for letting me speak.

Alderman Kelly

We are three to three. That is where we're sitting right now. I hear other Aldermen who are not on this Committee still echoing that we would like some word changes. I'm not suggesting that we need to put every single thing in there. I think there are small word changes, including where this is happening, a few types of things that these overtime hours will be used for, and how they were calculated, and it's done. I will meet with Director Hannum tomorrow and help her but I think we should do it right, and make sure that it's clear, and not just pass it because we would have to have another public hearing.

Chairman Dowd

Okay. If there are no other comments.

Alderman Johnson

Please, I'd like to say something just quickly because, you know, I brought up, I mentioned the needles, the feces, the urine because it was brought up. This is what people going to be - our workers are going to be cleaning up down - it's not just snow removal. It's clean up of other things. Basically, I want to make sure that they're safe because if they pick up a needle and stab themselves, what's going to happen? I mean there's that's a very important question.

You've got human waste down there and you're asking them to clean it up. I was not the one who brought it up. It was brought up by other Aldermen and it seems like it was my fault because I mentioned it. I brought it back up.

And, you know, Alderman O'Brien you know how important it is to make sure you're safe because you were a firefighter and you had to protect yourself with people with needles, and it could be on them, and human waste because you don't know if they're sick.

The only reason I brought up the fact of the homeless, and yes other people do it too, is the fact that we know that a lot of this with the needles have been because of that. Yes do people when they walk out of bars urinate outside? Yes, they do. Can we control that all the time? No, we can't. Is it right? No, it's not but that was brought up and I just made comments on top of that because I'm concerned about the workers that are going to be out there and we all should be concerned. So there needs to be a plan that should be brought to us to say, you know what, they're going to be cleaning this up and how are we going to protect them to make sure that they don't get sick or injured from that? Is that reasonable? I think it's reasonable.

Liz Hannum, Economic Development Director

Liz Hannum, Economic Development Director. DPW does have a plan and they do train their employees how to deal with needles, and human feces, and it would be just as they already do. So this would not be any new plan. We did calculate some additional equipment that could go into this budget and that would be the only additional thing that they would need but they already do training.

Alderman Johnson

But that's important to let us know, the Committee.

Liz Hannum, Economic Development Director

Yeah, I guess I...

Alderman Johnson

I guess maybe because nobody asked the question and really was more a little bit forceful on it, but I think that's important. And yes, a lot of our employees are trained because of this - the police, the fire, DPW. But you know what, that's an important piece of this whole cleanup and to overlook this, I would never want to see one of our employees pick up a needle and get injured by it would you? No. So, you know, we need to discuss that part of the cleanup on this and this whole thing. I appreciate you clarifying that.

Liz Hannum, Economic Development Director

Yeah, I will apologize. I don't run operations for DPW and so it didn't even come to my mind that I should have mentioned that. So I apologize. That's my fault.

Alderman Johnson

That's okay, thank you.

Alderman O'Brien

Yeah, thank you. You know, thank you Alderman Johnson for, you know, bringing up. But part of the training in EMS and everything else like that, we take universal precautions when we deal with needles and everything else. We go to overdoses, the needles there but you know what we're talking about here is clean up here. At a medical call if there was a needle that was left behind from a drug overdose, well we have the menu to properly dispose of it.

What we're doing here is we're talking about a safety item. Nobody really brought it up but I will. I think these people - it's my intention and I think it will be that they will be trained and how to handle, you know, feces and how to handle spent needles because if you are pricked and then as what happens, they'll probably follow already an established procedure that the City has. If I as a firefighter got ever stabbed by a needle, have to go to the hospital, blood work would be taken, markers would be set on my blood work, and then if by chance if I ever got infected because of it, well it's documented. So I think this would all be done. We know how to do universal precautions medically in this city. So I feel comfortable with this.

I feel where I'm not comfortable with I'd much rather have somebody who was trained from the BPW to pick up the needle in a three year old kid down on Main Street because of what was left. That is the greatest hazard to me. Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

So if there's anything else.

Alderwoman Kelly

We are so far off topic.

Alderman Thibeault

Thank you. I just want to clear it up that I never said that there wouldn't be feces, and urine, and needles. Of course there will be. There's any kind of trash. I believe that Director Fauteux would not allow - okay, let's do some cleanup on overtime and just send out some Yahoos that never have done anything before and just have them randomly picking up stuff. Wouldn't we rather have people from the DPW that are trained picking the stuff up then the business owners that aren't trained to picking it up? Isn't that the better option? I feel safer with DPW people because they go out all over the city now. Needles aren't only on Main Street. Believe me, I've coached enough to see needles in dugouts, in baseball fields, and someone's going to be cleaning those up, and I'm assuming it's the Parks and Rec people which report to DPW.

So I have a strong faith in Director Fauteux's operation. I don't think Director Hannum necessarily had to go over every single thing and who was going to be doing it. We have to put faith in our departments and I think that Director Fauteux and her team would not allow people to pick that stuff up without being trained and have the proper whether it's gloves, or equipment, or hazmat, or whatever they need. So I feel strongly about that. So again, I just want to make it clear. I don't think we're sending out people that aren't prepared to pick that stuff up.

Chairman Dowd

I'm pretty sure that at least some of our Park Rec people are already trained. They're in parks. These things appear in parks all the time and they wouldn't be allowed to clean the stuff up without being trained. So I think we've had enough discussion on this. It think its time to move the question.

Liz Hannum, Economic Development Director

I was just going to offer another option too is we can just add a memo to this with the operational information as well as all the information that you're looking for and at the Board of Aldermen meeting, we can put it on the record with the piece of legislation that wouldn't require a full amendment. So that is an option too if that moves the question at

all.

Chairman Dowd

And people could work with you on what's in that memo?

Liz Hannum, Economic Development Director

Yes, definitely before the Board of Aldermen meeting.

Chairman Dowd

That's a potential solution if we pass it. Any other discussion? If not, would the Clerk please call the roll.

Alderwoman Kelly

Is this to move the question or to...

Chairman Dowd

To move the question. To recommend final passage to the full Board.

Alderwoman Kelly

Wait, those are two motions. Are we voting on moving the question or are we voting on recommending final passage?

Chairman Dowd

There was not a formal motion to move the question.

Alderwoman Kelly

Okay, someone said it. I didn't know if you were taking it as formal.

Alderman Sennott

So final passage.

Alderman O'Brien

Final passage.

Chairman Dowd

Yes.

MOTION BY ALDERMAN O'BRIEN TO RECOMMEND FINAL PASSAGE, BY ROLL CALL

A viva voce roll call was taken, which resulted as follows:

Yea: Alderman Thibeault, Alderman O'Brien, Alderman Dowd 3

Nay: Alderman Johnson, Alderwoman Kelly, Alderman Sennott 3

MOTION FAILED

Chairman Dowd

So the motion fails. It will go to the full Board and no recommendation from the Budget Committee.

Alderwoman Kelly

I think we have to vote to put it forward with no recommendation. If it fails in Committee, it can't just go to the Board.

We have to do something with it.

MOTION BY ALDERMAN O'BRIEN TO FORWARD R-26-003 TO THE FULL BOARD OF ALDERMEN WITH NO RECOMMENDATION OF THE BUDGET COMMITTEE, BY ROLL CALL

A viva voce roll call was taken, which resulted as follows:

Yea: Alderman Thibeault, Alderman O'Brien, Alderman Dowd 3

Nay: Alderman Johnson, Alderwoman Kelly, Alderman Sennott 3

MOTION FAILED

MOTION BY ALDERWOMAN KELLY TO TABLE, BY ROLL CALL

A viva voce roll call was taken, which resulted as follows:

Yea: Alderman Johnson, Alderwoman Kelly, Alderman Sennott, Alderman Dowd 4

Nay: Alderman Thibeault, Alderman O'Brien 2

MOTION CARRIED

R-26-005

Endorsers: Mayor Jim Donchess
Alderman Derek Thibeault
Alderman-at-Large Michael B. O'Brien
Alderman Richard A. Dowd
Alderman Thomas Lopez
Alderman-at-Large Lori Wilshire

AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND CITY TREASURER TO ISSUE BONDS TO REFUND ALL OR A PORTION OF CERTAIN OUTSTANDING BONDS OF THE CITY IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE INTEREST COST SAVINGS

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN O'BRIEN FOR FINAL PASSAGE
MOTION CARRIED**

NEW BUSINESS – ORDINANCES - None

TABLED IN COMMITTEE - None

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Alderman O'Brien

Yes, yeah, I would have voted for the table on this. I'm glad it probably was tabled. It seems like one fraction of the board wants to do it but I hope you do come back with something on this. You got to understand what I already heard from that meeting with the people, they want some solutions. So I hope we do come to a solution, you know. So I'm looking forward to any amendments that you will work with Director Hannum on to bring this back. I'll wait and see. So thank you.

Chairman Dowd

So yes between now and the full board meeting, you can work with Director Hannum and at the full Board level, it can be taken out of committee.

Alderwoman Kelly

But we'd still have to go back to a public hearing.

Chairman Dowd

We probably will.

Alderman Thibeault

Yeah, I mean I don't think it's gonna be worked on anytime in between now and the next budget meeting, or whatever next hearing, or whatever. I could bring it back off the table. Try to get it off the table at the Board of Aldermen meeting as is. So maybe I do that. I don't know but, yeah, I don't think anybody's gonna work on it.

Alderwoman Kelly

I take umbrage with that. I offered. I will meet tomorrow. I will meet on Monday. I have the day off tomorrow. I'm happy to sit down and work through what I think should happen to it. So to say that nothing's going to happen...

Alderman Thibeault

Have at it.

Alderwoman Kelly

I'll talk to you later.

Chairman Dowd

All right. Any other general discussion? Seeing none.

PUBLIC COMMENT- None

REMARKS BY THE ALDERMEN

Alderman Sennott

I didn't think it was germane to general discussion but since the topic of needle cleanup came up a lot tonight, I will just remind people that Revive Recovery still offers that service. If you find a discarded needle, multiple discarded needles, call them up. They'll probably know about it before you even called them. They're really good about it. I've had them out to the library numerous times so.

ADJOURNMENT

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN SENNOTT TO ADJOURN
MOTION CARRIED**

The meeting was declared closed at 8:58 p.m.

Alderman-at-Large Michael B. O'Brien, Sr.
Committee Clerk