

BUDGET REVIEW COMMITTEE

MARCH 23, 2026

A meeting of the Budget Review Committee was held Monday, March 23, 2026 at 8:33 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-at-Large Michael B. O'Brien, Sr.
Alderman-at-Large Shoshanna Kelly
Alderman-at-Large Alicia Gregg
Alderman Derek Thibeault
Alderman Paula Johnson
Alderman Tim Sennott, Vice-Chair
Alderman Richard A. Dowd, Chairman

Members not in Attendance:

Also in Attendance: Alderman-at-Large Lori Wilshire
Alderman Patricia Klee
Alderman John Sullivan (via Zoom)
Liz Hannum, Economic Development Director
Lisa Fauteux, Public Works Director
Tim Cummings, Administrative Services Director (via Zoom)
Kevin Rourke, Chief of Police
Brian Kenney, Deputy Chief of Police
Matthew DiFava, Deputy Chief of Police
Karen Smith, Business Manager

ROLL CALL

PUBLIC COMMENT - None

COMMUNICATIONS - None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

R-26-003, Amended

Endorsers: Alderman-at-Large Ben Clemons
Alderman Derek Thibeault
Alderman Patricia Klee
Alderman 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 \$15,000 OF ASSIGNED FUND BALANCE INTO DEPARTMENT 161 "STREETS", ACCOUNT 51300 "OVERTIME", AND \$40,000 OF ASSIGNED FUND BALANCE INTO DEPARTMENT 177 "PARKS", ACCOUNT 51300 "OVERTIME" FOR THE INTENDED PURPOSE OF COVERING EXPENSES RELATED TO THE CLEAN UP AND MAINTENANCE OF MAIN STREET, THE RIVERFRONT, AND THE LIBRARY WALK

MOTION BY ALDERMAN O'BRIEN TO RECOMMEND FINAL PASSAGE

ON THE QUESTION

Chairman Dowd

I think we heard conversation during the Public Hearing. Is there any additional questions from the Board? Alderwoman Kelly.

Alderwoman Kelly

No questions. I was going to say somewhat of the similar fashion that we've beat this one to death, and I do appreciate everyone who did the diligent work to get it down to this really sharp number, and I will be supporting it.

Chairman Dowd

And I want to thank all the Aldermen involved in rewriting, and tweaking, and spending a lot of time on this. Alderman Klee.

Alderman Klee

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to make some clarifying comments from the public so that they can hear. There was a comment about transparency and I want to make it very clear that both yourself and the Chair of Infrastructure always make sure that with each of the Joint Committee meetings and so on that those reports as far as spending, and where the project is, as well as through the Board of Public Works, or Police Commissioner, and so on. So the comment that was made that we're not transparent and we don't give updates and so on, They are given and they're given in Committees. They're not always necessarily brought forward to the full Board of Aldermen but we - just like me here today - have that ability to go to any committee.

I was on Infrastructure. I was on those Joint meetings and I was on Joint Special. We get regular updates, complete transparency and I want the public to hear that, and to know that, and I appreciate all the hard work that everybody does. So thank you.

Chairman Dowd

All the minutes are online.

Alderman Klee

Yes.

Chairman Dowd

Alright. Any other questions? Seeing none. Motion is by Alderman O'Brien to recommend to the full Board final passage of R-26-003. Would you call the roll?

Alderwoman Kelly

We don't need a roll call.

Alderman Thibeault

Don't need to.

Alderwoman Kelly

He's not on our Committee. We don't need to do roll call.

Alderman Thibeault

He's not on Budget.

Unidentified Speaker

Oh yeah.

Alderman O'Brien

Everybody of our Committee is (inaudible).

Chairman Dowd

Yes, but we – oh, he's not – we have somebody online. You still have to do it.

Alderman Thibeault

He's not on the Budget. He's not on Budget.

Alderman Sullivan

Not on the Committee. He doesn't vote.

Chairman Dowd

Alright.

MOTION CARRIED

Alderman O'Brien

I just saved you a minute.

Chairman Dowd

Yes. Alright.

R-26-007, Amended

Endorsers: Mayor Jim Donchess
Alderman Patricia Klee
Alderman Derek Thibeault
Alderman-at-Large Michael B. O'Brien
Alderman-at-Large Alicia Gregg
Alderman Richard A. Dowd
Alderman-at-Large Lori Wilshire

AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND CITY TREASURER TO ISSUE BONDS NOT TO EXCEED THREE MILLION DOLLARS (\$3,000,000) FOR THE PUBLIC WORKS DIVISION GARAGE DESIGN

MOTION BY ALDERMAN O'BRIEN TO RECOMMEND FINAL PASSAGE

ON THE QUESTION

Chairman Dowd

Alderman Thibeault.

Alderman Thibeault

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I should make a joke about the James Bond reference, right, and say license to build, right? License to build.

So I definitely will be supporting this. I think it's - I mean I've been there and it's been a few years since I've been there. So I mean, it's a crime scene. Chief Rourke should come up here and arrest us for allowing people to be in that building. It's like Director Fauteux said, it's deplorable. It's in bad shape and I mean I know we're in times when spending money is we have to look at every dollar. So it is concerning that we have to spend this kind of money but I mean, how long can you let people live or work in a situation like that?

I do have a question for Director Fauteux. So they put up the slide earlier where it had the different concepts and 200,000+ square feet, and now we're what 130,000 square feet, and it doesn't - it's up to 47% of vehicles covered opposed to what we are today. Is this going to allow that some years in the future – 20, 30, 40 that you could expand it? Will there be room to expand this into a bigger facility if needed someday in Nashua's history or?

Lisa Fauteux, Director of Public Works

I suppose we probably could do that but I feel very comfortable that this will meet the needs of not only our current operation but future operations. We will not be able to store everything inside but we will at least be able to store inside what we need to seasonally, which will be a big help. So this gets us completely under cover in terms of our plow equipment for instance. So that would include all of Streets, all of Parks, everything. So, you know, we'll have some other covered storage. You've probably seen the C-SPAN structures that we have now that the trash trucks are under at the landfill. So we're going to try to utilize that so that everything is at least undercover if they're not inside a building. So we feel we've spent a lot of time the team, and myself, and the experts really looking at this, and we do feel like that it will meet the needs of the Division for many, many years to come.

Alderman Thibeault

Follow up comment.

Chairman Dowd

Follow up.

Alderman Thibeault

So the question was asked in the earlier meeting like how this impacts, or saves Nashuans, or how does it help them? I think the one thing that appealed to me in the presentation that I caught, we've talked about this a lot before. So a lot of those things we'd already gone over but when showing the example of how long it takes to get a vehicle out of there to go plow a street or to do something compared to how easy it would be in the new garage and that half an hour - I mean we get calls. We all probably get calls or emails saying, "Hey, my street's not done yet. What the heck? How come my street's not done?" And maybe this will give that, right, and that will help people get their streets done quicker or whatever their issue is, right, because now you don't have to wait a half an hour. You don't have to do all the work that you have to now to get that out there. So, you know, the comment earlier about transparency, and DPW has been great with any projects. You guys did the obviously, the other building, and I toured that before that building was done, and I toured the facility there. I remember people saying, "Oh yeah, we work here. You know, you can hear the mice going up and down the walls" and I'm like, who wants to work in an office where the mice are going up and down the walls, right? So, you know, that project, I don't I don't see any Right to Knows on that project. So obviously, we were pretty transparent about that and the money was followed in the correct way. So whatever that was spouted was wrong and I feel confident that your Department, and the people that are working with you, and for you, and even Director Cummings I think will be fine in making sure we get the updates we need on this. So I'm going to support this piece tonight.

Lisa Fauteux, Director of Public Works

Okay. Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Is there someone over here? Oh, Alderman Sennott and then Alderman Kelly.

Alderman Sennott

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Alderman Thibeault stole sort of my thunder but I may dwell on that for a second anyway. But I had a question in the immediacy and I guess this would probably be a question best directed toward Director Cummings. We have a lot of projects that I feel like sometimes get hung up in the design phase. I just want to be sure. I like this legislation that's in front of us tonight because it's \$2.5 million dollars cheaper than what was originally being contemplated but I just want to be sure that if we approve this \$3 million tonight this is it for design? Next ask is going to be construction?

Tim Cummings, Director of Administrative Services

If I may, Mr. Chairman?

Alderman Sennott

Oh, he disappeared.

Alderwoman Kelly

He's hiding downstairs.

Chairman Dowd

Director Cummings.

Tim Cummings, Director of Administrative Services

Yes, thank you. I just want to be clear. Yes, this would be it for design. So that's on the record.

Alderman Sennott

Follow up?

Chairman Dowd

Follow up.

Alderman Sennott

Alright. So that covers my concerns here.

Longer term, which I don't want to dwell on too long because we'll be contemplating construction and finalize designs down the road, but the one hang up I'm still sitting here on is 47% of our vehicles indoors is better than 20%. I'm almost a little disappointed that for this sale price we're not getting more indoors. I know we've got a lot. You know, I've looked at other projects. I think one of the one of the firms involved in this did the one down in Lexington several years ago. Lexington and Nashua are apples and oranges but was a higher number of our vehicles indoors contemplated and what was the cost difference on that? Like, to get us at least over that 50% threshold was that considered at all? Was it just too cost prohibitive? Anybody who can speak to that.

Lisa Fauteux, Director of Public Works

Yeah so.

Chairman Dowd

Director Fauteux.

Lisa Fauteux, Director of Public Works

When we looked at this, we really we tried to pare it down to a point that we thought we could operate efficiently within but that was still a fair number for the Nashua taxpayers and that's really - you saw Rob Prunier's slide where he showed that in a perfect world what we would have liked and then what we felt like we would be very comfortable operating within.

Now as I mentioned, the goal is to have everything at least under cover and it that may that might be cold storage but still under cover. So it's out of the snow, and ice, and all of that. That's the goal. We're a good ways towards that now because we do have some of those C-SPAN structures that we will be utilizing. So we'll have a good portion of our equipment will be at least under cover if not in minimally heated storage.

Could we build a bigger building? Of course and we certainly could come back to you with those numbers Alderman Sennott if you'd like us to produce that just for comparison purposes.

Alderman Sennott

I think it's more just a sticking point than anything. You know, you're look at a big ticket price like that, you're hoping that you get more than 47% of the vehicles indoors. Again, it's still better than 20 and obviously, a long time coming given the state of that garage. You've taken me through there before.

If I could one final question?

Chairman Dowd

Follow up.

Alderman Sennott

Just along that same line of thinking, we were presented with a cost benefit analysis which was really happy to see because that's something that a few of us were asking for last year. Those numbers I just want to be certain, are specific to Nashua and specific to this particular arrangement that we're looking at in regard to moving 47% of our vehicles indoors. Those numbers are tied to that configuration.

Lisa Fauteux, Director of Public Works

That's correct. Yes.

Alderman Sennott

Alright. Thank you so much.

Lisa Fauteux, Director of Public Works

Alderman Sennott, I did want to mention one other thing to you too. When - and this is actually something that that Commissioner Gregg mentioned that he thought was important and I think it will be for what you're saying - the 67 vehicles that we have in indoors now, they are like stacked. I mean you can barely - you saw the picture that we had. You can't even walk through those. This would allow us to have the vehicles sort of stacked in spaces so that we can operate much more efficiently. So we could fit a lot more if we stack them like we do now. We could probably fit probably another 50 or 60 but we wouldn't want to do that because what we want to be able to do is get inside the building and have our operation run more efficiently than it does now so that that an employee can get in their truck, back out, drive out, and start plowing rather than having somebody's in the 3rd truck, and then they've got to wait for the first 2 trucks to get out. It's just very cumbersome to operate the way we're trying to operate. So that's another factor too. I don't know if that's helpful for you or not.

Alderman Sennott

Yeah. No, I do appreciate the flexibility. To make the world's worst analogy as somebody who's implemented new ERPs, let's not buy something new, fancy, and shiny, and then recreate the same problems that we have with something new, so.

Lisa Fauteux, Director of Public Works

Exactly.

Alderman Sennott

Thank you.

Lisa Fauteux, Director of Public Works

You're welcome.

Chairman Dowd

Just one question, Director Fauteux.

Lisa Fauteux, Director of Public Works

Sure.

Chairman Dowd

Does the number of vehicles we're storing inside include the ones in the maintenance bay?

Lisa Fauteux, Director of Public Works

No.

Chairman Dowd

No. So there's some vehicles ..

Lisa Fauteux, Director of Public Works

There would be some ..

Chairman Dowd

.. that could be stored in there as well ..

Lisa Fauteux, Director of Public Works

There will be, yes.

Chairman Dowd

.. that are being maintained, so.

Lisa Fauteux, Director of Public Works

That's correct.

Chairman Dowd

There's a few more vehicles.

Lisa Fauteux, Director of Public Works

The 170 vehicles that we would store would just be in the storage building. That's a good point. There will be additional vehicles stored in the fleet area. You're correct, Alderman Dowd.

Chairman Dowd

Alderman Kelly.

Alderman Kelly

Alright, thank you. Just thank you to everyone for the previous presentations in the Public Hearing. It was very thorough. Some of the cost analysis was stuff that, you know, was really helpful for - I know me.

My questions are actually directed to the gentleman from who put up the sustainability slide. Couldn't remember ..

Chairman Dowd

Scott LeClair.

Alderman Kelly

Thank you. So I'm on the Energy Environment Committee and we've done multiple pieces of legislation about our goals. So I had a few questions around some of the sustainability.

So I guess I'll start with maybe this is Director Fauteux but I was wondering if as we're moving to having more EV vehicles, do they have different needs in terms of equipment, or space when you're maintaining them, and did we consider that?

Scott LeClair, Fitzmeyer & Tocci

Yeah, well when you're maintaining them, they definitely have different needs. The current fleet building is being designed to be able to handle the electric vehicles in the bays. So we have, obviously, have charging stuff that's inside but they have different ventilation requirements and things. We also have sprinkler systems and things that can handle that kind of stuff. So the building is being designed to be able to maintain EV vehicles as well.

Alderwoman Kelly

If I could follow up?

Chairman Dowd

Follow up.

Alderwoman Kelly

Thank you. The other thing you mentioned, I think it said it was you're going to place the stuff to put chargers in but will there not be any at all to start?

Scott LeClair, Fitzmeyer & Tocci

No, there will be a significant number of chargers. I think enough for the current vehicles. They don't have a huge EV fleet yet. I don't know how many vehicles there are yet. But so we're putting in a bunch in the front right now but there'll also be the infrastructure is all there to just kind of add them as we need them.

Alderwoman Kelly

And then one more follow-up, if I could?

Chairman Dowd

Sure.

Alderwoman Kelly

I think the other thing you mentioned was solar. It would be equipped for solar but we will not be putting solar in from the beginning.

Scott LeClair, Fitzmeyer & Tocci

Correct, yeah. I mean solar right now is still - there's multiple kind of funding mechanisms for solar and putting them into the project in the capital costs at the front is not that common ..

Alderwoman Kelly

Like owning it.

Scott LeClair, Fitzmeyer & Tocci

.. at the moment because there's opportunities for development of solar, and power purchase agreements, and all kinds of different ways of going about it. So what we want to do with this building is make it flexible enough to be attractive to all the various kinds of ways that you might go about implementing solar. Even as much as how we're putting things on a roof and making sure we have optimum roof space and obviously, a place to just connect. So that's kind of where we're at with the solar part.

Alderwoman Kelly

Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Our solar so far has been a public/private partnership ..

Alderwoman Kelly

Yeah, I know.

Chairman Dowd

.. and no cost to the City, so.

Alderwoman Kelly

Yeah, until we buy them outright. Yup, I get it. Thank you, that's all I wanted to know.

Chairman Dowd

Alderman Sullivan.

Alderman Sullivan

Thank you and I understand that I'm not on the Committee so I appreciate you taking my questions.

My first question was around the slide that was shown where you did a cost benefit analysis and I appreciate that, but I didn't have the presentation in front of me so I just jotted down some numbers here and based on the annual savings, the building will pay for itself through savings between 60 years and 108 years. But I do understand that there were some other savings that were realized and I'm hoping that we can get a copy of that presentation.

Chairman Dowd

It's going to be part of the minutes.

Alderman Sullivan

Perfect. I have a follow-up, please.

Chairman Dowd

Follow-up, go ahead.

Alderman Sullivan

When do we anticipate the full construction amount to be before the Board?

Chairman Dowd

Who can answer that?

Lisa Fauteux, Director of Public Works
I'm going to let Director Cummings.

Chairman Dowd

Director Cummings.

Tim Cummings, Director of Administrative Services

Yes. Can you hear me?

Chairman Dowd

Yes.

Alderwoman Kelly

Yes.

Tim Cummings, Director of Administrative Services

Yeah, I can answer that. Again, Tim Cummings, Director of Administrative Services. I would anticipate us being able to present some sort of construction bond resolution probably in the May timeframe is how I see this unfolding at this time. Something in and around that that type of time frame. We're trying to – CFO Enwright and I are trying really hard to sync it up with the budget schedule and as you know, we're working through some of those details right now but we're definitely this Spring.

Chairman Dowd

All set?

Alderman Sullivan

Thank you. Could I just one more, please?

Chairman Dowd

Go ahead.

Alderman Sullivan

Thank you. There was a gentleman that spoke about the energy efficiencies and there was talk about how the heat captured from the methane gas would be used to heat the building. I'm wondering if we can put a price tag on that how much we would be saving, specifically through capturing that heat to heat this building.

Chairman Dowd

Scott.

Scott LeClair, Fitzmeyer & Tocci

Sure. Yeah, this is Scott LeClair again from Fitzmeyer & Tocci. So it's approximately about \$100,000 a year. The slides do have the numbers in it. They're down on the bottom of the chart against like a code minimum building. It's right around 100,000. That's for the heating energy offset right there.

Alderman Sullivan

Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

All set?

Alderman Sullivan

Yeah. Yes, thank you.

Chairman Dowd

All set? Okay and then I have Alderman Gregg.

Alderman Gregg

Thank you. So I just wanted to talk too about we haven't talked a lot about the efficiency part of this. That they really are running, you know, I think they do a great job right now with snow removal. They certainly were tested this year and right now, they're trying to operate in multiple locations which is tough. So I would just say anybody who has not gone to take the tour of the Streets you really, really should because when we talk about numbers, I think sometimes it's hard to wrap our head around. But like Director Fauteux just talked about that like for like situation when they say they have 67 vehicles inside right now if you made that operational like what they were showing on the diagram with the truck hanging out, it'd probably be more like you could maybe put maybe 20 in there. Like they have to angle these things to get them

in right now and it's really awful. So I think that overall, I would just encourage anyone who hasn't gone and done the tour to make sure that they go do that and really look at that because there are certain things we're not going to be able to put prices on just yet until we start really moving this. But that operational thing, and the hourly rate for our employees and stuff, all of that is going to be affected by having an efficient process.

Chairman Dowd

All set? Alderman Johnson.

Alderman Johnson

Thank you very much. A question for Mr. Cummings, please.

Chairman Dowd

Director Cummings.

Alderman Johnson

You said this piece of legislation - this resolution - we dropped it from \$5.5 million down to \$3 million and you had stated that the \$2.5 million will be going into the construction of the building instead of upfront costs. It's going to be more on the back end. Is that correct what I was reading?

Tim Cummings, Director of Administrative Services

If I may, Mr. Chairman?

Chairman Dowd

Yes, go ahead.

Tim Cummings, Director of Administrative Services

Not all of that 2.5 would necessarily get put into the back end but certainly some of it would. As an example, there's really no need for the early release packages anymore that we were contemplating in the - and I have a feeling that the fire training facility is going to be done in a way that, you know, potentially could be less money. So I don't believe it would rise to the whole 2.5 as indicated.

Alderman Johnson

Okay.

Chairman Dowd

Do you have a follow up?

Alderman Johnson

Yeah, I've got a couple of follow-ups. Thank you.

Okay so we're not going to use that extra 2.5 now but in the scheme of the project - so you're eliminating 2.5 for when you get the bond because you don't need it at the front end so you're not going to need it at the back end either?

Tim Cummings, Director of Administrative Services

Not the whole 2.5. So first I want to say for the record, we haven't finished design. So I really don't know what the true project cost is. We are giving you our best estimates at this time. We need to go through a value engineering exercise. We're going to need to get further along in design before I have any true confidence in what that real number is. But the best I can tell you is we're hovering around \$48 million or thereabouts. At least that's what it's looking like at this time. Now could we go up \$500,000? Potentially. Could we go down \$500,000? Potentially. But, you know, we're in that type of conversation.

Chairman Dowd

Follow up?

Alderman Johnson

Yeah, follow up. When are we going to see all the projects because tomorrow night we're going to be talking about the fire station on Pine Hill. So that's another big project. So I'm going to ask you how many big projects are you putting before us over the - within the next one to two years only because, you know, this is very important. The fire station is going to be very important. You know, there's just so much money of the bonding that can go around and I keep saying what are the priorities of our buildings that we're going to have to do? Because I was looking at the packet earlier, the renovation set on the fire stations. You're asking to build another one. We have to do the DPW garage. So I'd like to get some type of between now and then, I guess, what is going to be our priorities on all these buildings, new buildings, and renovations because ..?

Chairman Dowd

I can answer that. The Ad Hoc Committee that was set up is going to - we passed legislation that we would spend X amount of money on projects a year over the next 5 to 10 years and the Ad Hoc Committee puts them in the slots, and that will break down each project, and when the money is going to be bonded, and that will be coming soon but I don't call that meeting.

Alderman Johnson

Okay because I remember back when, even before I got elected, that the goal was no more than \$25 million dollars a year in bonding if I remember correctly because we were talking about that at the McCarthy Middle School.

Chairman Dowd

Director Cummings.

Tim Cummings, Director of Administrative Services

If I may Mr. Chairman?

Chairman Dowd

Go ahead.

Tim Cummings, Director of Administrative Services

If I may? Yeah, thank you. Tim Cummings, Director of Administrative Services. Almost 100% correct on that statement. It was \$25 million over an average of 5 years. So, you know, you could have some years more or less and again, we're talking about debt service that we can accommodate. It also needed to be adjusted for inflation. That was the policy guidance given previously through the Ad Hoc Committee. We will be certainly following that over the coming months and we will be, you know, having that type of policy level conversation again during this budget season.

Alderman Johnson

May follow up?

Chairman Dowd

Follow up.

Alderman Johnson

Because if you have some years that you have less, it all has to average out at the end. If we're talking about that \$25 million dollar debt service each year, then we shouldn't be going over it even if some years are less and some years a little bit more, you're adjusting for that so it's within the realm. And I just want to ..

Tim Cummings, Director of Administrative Services

That's correct.

Alderman Johnson

Okay. So I'm glad we're on the same page.

I just want to make a comment to Alderman Gregg because when you said about operating out of multiple locations. The garage was always there but the Administration building was in another place. So they did operate out of different locations before. I know that we want to combine it and at this point in time, I'm probably not going to support this till I get more information. This is just for the beginning of the design phase but I need more information.

I will take Director Fauteux's invitation to go take a look because I only saw a small piece of the garage. I've seen the garage before - parts of it - but I know that right now, I need more questions answered and, you know, this is a big project. More money that's being spent. I understand the facility. I know part of what the building is like but, you know, this is a big project to undertake.

Tomorrow night we're going to be listening to the Fire Station #5 and so, you know, we've got to put all this into perspective right now. The cost factor and how many years if we're going to do this next year and is the fire station going to be bonded? Which year exactly is that going to happen because everything's a priority and, you know, it's going to pass whether I vote for it or not and it's not saying that I don't appreciate the employees. I'm just looking at it from each perspective here, and that's what I normally do, and I usually give my reasons why I do and I don't do things. Thank you very much.

Chairman Dowd

Anyone else? Alderman Klee.

Alderman Klee

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I, too, have taken a tour. I took a tour when I became an Alderman 8 - 9 years ago and Director Fauteux and Ms. Byers took me around to all of the places within DPW. I don't want to make it sound like our people are working under substandard conditions but truthfully, I want to say they were working under substandard conditions. The tour that I took of the landfill and the trailers - everybody there had a smile on their face. Everybody there was kind. No one said you have to do something. There was no anger or malice towards anybody here in this room, or management, or anything else like that. Everybody was very good and went with the flow because they understood the tax dollars and they've been taking it in the shorts for a very long time.

So when we say that we care about employees, we care about them cleaning up and making sure they don't get needle sticks. Well, we should care about also where they're sitting, and where they're working, and the safety of getting around equipment, the safety within the buildings. I would never want to work in a place like that and I can tell you, I worked at the Department of Veterans Affairs at the VA hospital in Bedford where every day we used to joke about how fast the mold was growing behind the plaster as it would bubble up. So I know employees do what they have to do to do that.

Comments have been made about, you know, people wanting to leave. I think our Public Works maintains, and retains their employees, and I think this is the right thing to do. I think if the average citizen went and toured this, they would not want their tax dollars to be going to this type of building. We hear over and over again we have to maintain buildings, and we have to do this, and so on. I think that the City has taken on the effort of building maintenance. We are really taking that to heart. We're listening and so on. When presenters - people who work in the field say that it's going to cost more to try to fix that building, or retrofit that building, and still not have what we need as a minimum, I don't want to waste the taxpayers' dollars. We have a fiduciary responsibility to these residents here and we should do the right thing by them.

I'm not on this Committee. I'm not going to get to vote but I will get to vote when it does come to the Board of Aldermen and I will be supporting this. I'm glad we're doing design and I do agree with one of my colleagues who said that sometimes we get bogged down in design and will this be the last one or will we be having more and more? The problem is I think the reason why we get bogged down in design is because it comes to this Board and we say, no it's too expensive do it again, or can we cut this, or can we cut that? I think all the cuts have already been made before it's come to us as far as this cost is. So I think that this will be a good chance.

I do have a question for whoever can answer this. We talked about only having certain percentage of vehicles being able to be into the garage, and we saw in the presentation that there's some major aspects of trying to get the fleet out there quickly because of cold starts, and so on. Is it possible that during certain seasons certain vehicles will be put in there like for the winter? We'll have all the plows and so on so we can get them right off and also, I kind of put it here as, you

know, what we often see in people who have children and so on where you're kind of moving the cars around, will that be something that we'll be doing with these garages seeing we can only have 47 percent?

Lisa Fauteux, Director of Public Works

Yes, absolutely Alderman Klee that's exactly what we'll be doing. We will be in the winter time; all of our plow trucks will be stored inside so we'll be ready to go. We can transition some of those out during the summer months so we can put some of the parks equipment that we need, again, in a moment's notice as well. So yes, seasonally we're going to be shifting equipment.

Alderman Klee

Thank you. I appreciate it and thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Dowd

Anyone else? I just want to say that I get to work with the members of Public Works Department quite frequently and in my opinion, we have one of the best Public Works Divisions anywhere. They go above and beyond more than you know and the only questions I've ever gotten in the recent times is can we hire more people for DPW so they can do more? I mean I say we've tried to hire additional plow drivers but we have a problem with finding people qualified with a commercial driver's license, and we're in competition with bus companies, and everybody else. So they do a great job. They act in a timely manner, and get all the work that they need to get done, done, and it's about time that they've been working with substandard conditions. It's about time that the City stood up and gave them better facilities to work in and the cost savings, I think, will go substantially towards any cost of this bond.

Alderman Kelly

I abstain. Abstain.

Chairman Dowd

What?

Alderman Kelly

Abstain.

Chairman Dowd

On what grounds?

Alderman Kelly

I said it at the last it at the last one. I'm working with one of the parties.

Chairman Dowd

Oh, okay.

Alderman Kelly

I've been required by Counsel to not.

Chairman Dowd

All right.

MOTION CARRIED

NEW BUSINESS – RESOLUTIONS

R-26-017

Endorsers: Mayor Jim Donchess
Alderman-at-Large Lori Wilshire
Alderman Richard A. Dowd
Alderman-at-Large Ben Clemons
Alderman Vengerflutta Smith
Alderman Derek Thibeault
Alderman-at-Large Michael B. O'Brien, Sr.
Alderman-at-Large Amber Morgan
Alderman Patricia Klee
Alderman John Sullivan
Alderman Tim Sennott
Alderman Thomas Lopez

APPROVING THE COST ITEMS OF A COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE NASHUA BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS AND THE NASHUA POLICE PATROLMAN'S ASSOCIATION FROM JULY 1, 2026 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2030

MOTION BY ALDERMAN O'BRIEN TO RECOMMEND FINAL PASSAGE

ON THE QUESTION

Chairman Dowd

Is there anyone here that's going to be presenting? By the way, I believe if I'm correct that the previous motion's going to be on tomorrow night's agenda.

Karen Smith, Business Manager

Yes.

Unidentified Male Speaker

Yes, it is.

Chairman Dowd

Chief Rourke.

Kevin Rourke, Chief of Police

Do you want me to present here or?

Alderman Wilshire

You can sit.

Chairman Dowd

You can sit if you'd like.

Alderman Kelly

Whatever you want to do.

Alderman Wilshire

The hour is late.

Kevin Rourke, Chief of Police

I might need Karen.

Chairman Dowd

Of course you are. Come on up, Karen.

Kevin Rourke, Chief of Police

For the real tough questions.

Chairman Dowd

Yeah, right.

Chairman Dowd

Go ahead then.

Kevin Rourke, Chief of Police

Good evening Mr. Chairman and members of the Budget Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you tonight regarding the Patrolman's Contract. I know that many of you have already showed your support by endorsing the contract with 11 Aldermen and the Mayor's support. We appreciate your continued support.

First, I want to make notion that the three Police Commissioners and I support this contract and I want to give kudos to the Patrolmen because the times we're in with law enforcement, and retention, and recruiting, they came in. They're very respectful. They trusted the process and at the end of the day, they provided a lot of valuable information that we learned with other contracts in the State, which we were very surprised.

So over the years as you know, there hasn't been as many applications in the past for law enforcement where 7 - 8 years ago, we had - we would have 500 - 600 people show up for a test. Last Saturday or the Saturday before we had a test and 19 people showed up. I will say we are one of the premier organizations not only in the State, not only in New England, I would put us up against anybody in the country, and to learn some of this information of - and we were taking people from us - the bigger agencies were taking officers from smaller towns and the smaller towns I think got tired of, you know, us, Manchester, State Police, Londonderry was taking these officers so they started paying the officers and believe it or not, one of our neighboring communities, Hudson PD, Laconia, some of these smaller agencies, even Concord, who lost a tremendous amount of officers over the last couple of years have now started - they're right at the ballpark with us. Actually, some of those have surpassed us. Hudson and Laconia - Laconia is still the highest paid. Even if this thing passes, they will still be the highest paid in the State. So they get tired, I think, of losing their officers because I mean, it is true to train an officer is a lot more expensive than retaining one. So we've found that out over the last 5 years. Just statistics that we've had, we've hired 79 officers over the last 5 years.

So in recruiting, I think we're finding the right officers that come here and as you all know, it's not easy to get hired by the Nashua Police Department. I will tell you that we get a lot of certified applications and over 50% of those applications we turn away. So just because you're a certified police officer does not mean you're getting hired by the Nashua Police Department. We have a tough standard to get hired here whether you're certified or not, so, and we've held that standard and that's probably why we're down 15 officers right now. So to train someone is a lot more expensive than retaining them. So when the patrolman came in a couple months ago for this contract and they started negotiating, they negotiated with Deputy Kenney who did a great job - Karen Smith, Tim Cummings represented, and Attorney Bolton. I can tell you that I was a little surprised of the number that they came in with. I thought it would have been a lot higher. I thought they would have asked for a lot more. They were respectful and they understood what the conditions in the City are and what the Mayor's guidance were. So I do applaud them for that.

But I also believe in we have to pay them a good salary, fair, and be consistent because of what the other agencies are doing, and then what we are about, and I think we're above everybody else in the State/New England in this area. The training that we do and I will tell you, and I think you guys all know, that the past couple years we've been involved in some pretty major incidents. One of them - and you don't know till you get to that because we've seen other agencies fail at that when you have an active shooter. If you watch around the country, there's been many agencies that failed. I will tell you that they performed flawlessly that night. I think anybody that knows anything about what happened that night, they will say the same exact thing and why were they flawless? Because they trained. They had the courage and you don't know till you get to that spot whether you're going to have the courage to go into a spot.

We saw down in Florida where there was a shooting in a classroom and they stood outside the classroom. Well the men and women of Nashua ran right into that restaurant and that event that night. So it is a different agency and they can be

trained that way. We hire and I always say, we hire good people and we make them great police officers and I think that recipe has been successful over - I've been here for 27 years. I'm very proud to work here and now to be Chief but the people we hire is a different level. So on that spiel just to get back that, again, we brought this to the Police Commissioners; they agreed with it right away; I agreed with it right away.

But in today's - I think that we can all agree in today's world policing has become increasingly complex. Thirty years ago when I started, they do a lot more than we did 30 years ago and not only the complex policing, but now add in all the technology that we have. Several of our specialty units are the best around. When there's a major incident and you've seen the officer involved shootings or major incidents in the State, they call the Nashua Police Department for advice. Our policies, accreditation, we're at a standard with CALEA. They have State accreditation. CALEA is the next level. We have 462 standards that we have to abide by. We just got accreditation a couple months ago. Perfect score again. If you guys remember two years ago when we had our accreditation, our four year process, we got 462 standards - perfect score, advanced accreditation not the straight accreditation. So we have more standards. Not only do you have the Standards but you have to show proofs that you're doing the policy of what they say. Accreditation if you don't know that, CALEA is the gold standard of police work. It's kind of I say it dumb it down, it's a playbook of law enforcement. So they provide you with a standard. You have to follow the Standard and you have to show examples that you do it. Like I said, perfect score four years ago. We just had our annual one this year. Another perfect score.

So I think in the Contract what they negotiated was mostly raises and I can go through those raises for you. It's a four year contract. The first year is a 4%. The second year is a 4%. The third year is a 3.5% and the fourth year is a 3.5% percent. In there what we saw is in that first 10 or 12 years, we're doing very good standing up against other agencies. Right now, our biggest problem right now is retention. So yes we've hired 79 officers in 5 years but we've also lost 75. So we've gained four officers in four years, which is amazing when I saw the numbers. We have a tremendous amount of them just leaving the job. When I came on 30 years ago, no one left the Nashua Police Department. If they did, they went to Mass State Police or they went to a federal agency, which we trained them up and then they go to a federal agency. That still does happen don't get me wrong. You don't see us leaving to go really to another New Hampshire agency but they still do go to the feds and they go to Massachusetts State Police because as you know, probably 80% of our Police Department's from Massachusetts, including myself. So they will go back down there but now what we're seeing over the last five years is officers leaving the profession altogether because of the complexity of it. So I would say more than half of those, half of the 75, have left the profession and gone somewhere else and went into the private sector. That is concerning because we need more police officers.

Recently we did an assessment with the formula for the International Association of Chiefs of Police where you take the amount of calls for service, how long you spend on those calls, also motor vehicle stops that we conduct. We put that into a formula that International Association Chiefs of Police has designed and right now, we should have 18 more police officers in the City in patrol - just in patrol. That's not Detectives or anywhere else in the building. That's just in patrol and we all know what's going on in the City with the growing – with the development of housing and more people moving into the City which is great but at some point, we're going to be in trouble here because we're going to be behind the eight ball.

You also had two large casinos move into town. So, you know, you have one officer right now. The way we have it set up, we will look at our sector bound coverage but right now, you have one officer that covers from the area of Tully Buick, all the way down the Daniel Webster Highway, all the way out Spitbrook Road to the Mass Line - one officer and you have a cover car. So essentially, two officers and if it's busy downtown, that other cover car is downtown. So we are definitely going to have to look at expanding but I can't honestly come before you when I'm down 15 people and ask for more officers. I just I can't do that. I will never do that as long as I'm Chief but that day is going to come. Just be prepared and when we get back up to full staff with the housing, which is great, and more businesses is fabulous to bring into the City but response times, and officers' safety, and the safety of the community is going to be important. So that day is going to come. I don't know if I'll be here when that day comes but that is definitely a problem coming forward.

If you guys have any questions about the Contract, I can go through it but, again, they mainly focused on raises because they wanted to be compensated. They could have asked for other stuff. They were respectful, professional. I applaud them for that. I think they definitely could ask for a lot more stuff. They were really good is what I'm saying.

Chairman Dowd

Questions? Alderwoman Kelly.

Alderwoman Kelly

Ah, thank you. Thank you Chief for coming in. I know you guys run a tight ship and I'm always proud that we have such an incredible group of people on the Nashua Police Department.

My questions - I think this is a fair contract. My questions are a little bit more logistical. So the first one, I was actually hoping Director Cummings was going to stay on but I had the same question when we had the last contract in front of us. Both this contract and the last one instead of keeping it sort of vague in terms of our healthcare plans, you put in every little line item and I was just wondering why we shifted to putting such detail instead of like well, we'll offer an HMO into this plan. I don't know if you can speak to that or if I have to ask Director Cummings?

Karen Smith, Business Manager

Karen Smith. In the contract itself?

Alderman Kelly

Hmm mm.

Karen Smith, Business Manager

That's how the Contract has been over the years and we didn't change it is basically for the different plans - the HSA and the HMO.

Alderman Kelly

Yeah. It's a lot more detailed. I can give you a page number. For example, page 15. We used to have just basically any eligible member will have, you know, HMO, or Point of Service, and we're replacing it with very specific details. Point of service - specifically what your copay will be. What your - it used to be like it has to have that minimum net and you can see it line item in the Contract. So it may not even be a question for you because this is the second time we've seen it but it goes very specifically into detail about what our deductibles are, and there does seem to be a clause in here that would help. I'm just wondering like what if we need to change something? What if the insurance company no longer has that plan? This is so specific and we just we used to kind of keep it kind of vague.

Karen Smith, Business Manager

Yes, I would have to have Director Cummings answer that but my assumption is that we're just trying to get all the language in line with all the contracts within the City. I believe that's the answer to this.

Alderman Kelly

Yeah, there's a little opt-out clause but I've seen it twice. So I'll ask Tim.

Karen Smith, Business Manager

The opt-out clause is new.

Alderman Kelly

Okay.

Karen Smith, Business Manager

That is new but as far as the rest of it, I would say that they're probably getting it to be consistent within contracts.

Alderman Kelly

Just on the record, it makes me uncomfortable what used to be a little bit more. We're going to offer some plans that have these things versus like putting in for four years that these are the exact pharmacy benefits. We know that healthcare is changing all the time and it's the number one pusher of our budget. So I was just surprised about the specificity and this is not your contract in general. It's just I've seen it twice now. I'm like, hmm mm.

Karen Smith, Business Manager

That's why I'm leaning towards consistent (inaudible).

Alderman Kelly

Consistency. But maybe consistently not the best choice.

Karen Smith, Business Manager

But, again, you probably do want to check with the Director.

Alderman Kelly

Yeah, I'll have him offline or memo us on that.

One other question I had. So on uniforms, they went up from like \$750 to like almost \$1,100. Can tell me what that's, Chief?

Kevin Rourke, Chief of Police

Sure. So do you know how much a pair of these pants cost?

Alderman Kelly

I don't.

Kevin Rourke, Chief of Police

Well that was about 2 years ago, mine were \$195. So these are the men and women that are out in the street every day. So they jump fences, they run, they slide.

Alderman Kelly

Yup.

Kevin Rourke, Chief of Police

They wear their uniforms out more than anybody in the building. So they should actually get the highest in the building and also, \$1,100 doesn't go far because many of these officers are on specialty units. So they have to buy gear for specialty units too. So it really is probably underpriced but we did bump them up because now they're on – they're coming back since I've been Chief, this is their second Contract back. So for them to only get \$1,100 bucks is pretty good.

Just to outfit them, I think a shirt was like \$135 - \$150. So you can't wear the same uniform. Well you shouldn't wear it all week, especially in July and August. Two sets of uniforms, you're already at \$600. You haven't bought a flashlight yet, boots, and we do inspect the officers each day. So when you come through roll call, you get inspected. Your boots should be shined. Your brass should be shined. Your uniform has to be intact, so.

Alderman Kelly

Can I follow up?

Kevin Rourke, Chief of Police

\$1,100 doesn't go far.

Alderman Kelly

I figured that was the case but I also was wondering if it was potentially pushed up by our decision to do body cams if that was part of the push up or if it was just general cost of clothing is more.

Kevin Rourke, Chief of Police

Yeah, just a shirt - this is almost \$400 bucks so it's expensive.

Alderman Kelly

It's a good-looking uniform.

Kevin Rourke, Chief of Police

It's expensive.

Alderman Gregg

It's designer.

Alderman Kelly

Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

All set?

Alderman Kelly

Yup.

Chairman Dowd

Alderman Johnson.

Alderman Johnson

Thank you. I'm going to support this Contract. I read some of the language changes in here and I was happy with some of the language changes. I support our police because without them ..

Kevin Rourke, Chief of Police

Thank you.

Alderman Johnson

.. we'd have a lot of riots, I think, here in the City. I mean they're very important to us, you know, when things happen. I work in retail and there are times that I wonder if somebody's going to come through that door, you know, and we see a lot of the homeless population come in. So I'm going to support this. Thank you. Thank you for everything you do for us.

Kevin Rourke, Chief of Police

Yeah, thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Alderman Thibeault.

Alderman Thibeault

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I mean you guys know how I feel about the Police Department. I think we have the best - definitely best in the State. Probably best in the country or at least as close as you can to it.

I'll support this. I don't think that to your point, I don't think they get paid enough I don't think. So to be fair, I'm glad they were fair about it and made it easier for us. But I mean, you got to have a good police force in a City like this, and a City that continues to grow, and we want to keep – I mean in my grandfather's day, nobody left the force like you said, and now they get to their retiring age and they're gone, or/and they go and get another job, and they still get their pension. So the more we can keep good officers here and to keep the citizens safe, I think that's important. So I'm going to support it fully. Thank you.

Kevin Rourke, Chief of Police

Thank you, Sir.

Chairman Dowd

Alderman Klee.

Alderman Klee

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm not on the Committee but when it comes to the Board, I will be supporting this.

I just wanted to make some comments. I agree, they're not paid enough especially when we can - we were able to poach and now we're being poached or not necessarily being poached but people are seeing the grass greener on the other side. I think the not being paid enough is true amongst our entire City of employees and so on depending upon the different departments.

I also want to kind of do a little commercial for you. For all the citizens that are listening here and wonder what our incredible Police Department does, they have a wonderful Citizen's Academy and I know my husband went to it - not the City Citizen's Academy but the PD one. It was quite impressive. I've been lucky enough to have a ride along and thank you Chief for that. When you do the Citizen's Academy, you will see all the work, all the departments, and so on, and you will see all these people that are putting their on the line. It's not just the officer directing traffic, or you know some drug bust, or something. It's completely - and what happened at Sky Meadow is proof positive how well trained you all are and I've heard nothing but incredible things about our Fire, and our Police, and our Emergency Management. So I think the City is well run in part because of our incredible Police Department. So thank you.

Kevin Rourke, Chief of Police

Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Any other questions? Seeing none.

MOTION CARRIED

Chairman Dowd

Thanks, Chief.

Kevin Rourke, Chief of Police

Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Thanks, Karen.

Multiple Speakers

Thank you.

Karen Smith, Business Manager

Thank you.

Kevin Rourke, Chief of Police

Thank you for your support.

Alderman Wilshire

Thank you.

NEW BUSINESS – ORDINANCES - None

TABLED IN COMMITTEE - None

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Chairman Dowd

I want to mention that in talking with Donna, we've had issues with some of the Division's meeting the dates in April as well as some of the Budget Committee members that are going to be gone during that week on vacation. So at the current time, we're looking at pushing the Budget meetings. We may have one the 16th of April but the rest of them will start in May and we will probably have to move the Public Hearing on the budget out a week. So Donna is working her magic with a Ouija board back there trying to schedule everything and we'll have more information as it comes.

Any other comments? All right.

PUBLIC COMMENT - None

REMARKS BY THE ALDERMEN – None

ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting was declared closed at 9:30 p.m.

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