



**City of Fitchburg
Massachusetts 01420**

CITY COUNCIL

Councilors at Large

**Jeffrey A. Bean
David Clark
Marcus L. DiNatale
E. Thomas Donnelly
Dean A. Tran**

President

Michael P. Kushmerek

Vice President

Amy L. Green

Ward Councilors

**Ward 1 – Amy L. Green
Ward 2 – Paul R. Beauchemin
Ward 3 – Joel R. Kaddy
Ward 4 – Michael P. Kushmerek
Ward 5 – Angelo J. Bisol, Jr.
Ward 6 – Jody M. Joseph**

Finance Committee

April 2, 2017

Dear Councilors:

A meeting of the Finance Committee was held on Tuesday, March 28, 2017 in the Memorial Middle School Library, 615 Rollstone Street, Fitchburg, MA and called to order by Chairman DiNatale at 6:03 p.m.

Committee Members Present: Bisol, DiNatale, Donnelly, Joseph, and Kushmerek

Other Councilors Present: Bean, Beauchemin, Clark, Kaddy, and Tran (Bean arrived 6:07 p.m.; Beauchemin arrived 6:31 p.m.)

Others Present: Mayor Stephen DiNatale; Vincent Pusateri, City Solicitor; A.J. Tourigny, Mayor's Chief of Staff; Anna Farrell, City Clerk; Susan Christensen, Community Development Administrator; Liz Murphy, Housing & Development Director; Calvin Brooks, Treasurer; Police Chief Ernest Martineau; Robert Jokela, FPS Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations; Steve Curry, Director of Public Health; Nate Larose, Recreation Director; Kevin MacLean, Our Father's House Director of Homeless Services; and Donata Martin, Executive Director of the Boys & Girls Club of Fitchburg and Leominster.

Discussion and action as follows on:

COMMUNICATION: From Mayor Stephen L. DiNatale regarding the Year 43 Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) – Total Recommended Funding - \$950,073.

Chairman DiNatale read the Year 43 Funding Requests and the Mayor's Recommendations for the program.

PUBLIC FACILITIES (4 Recommendations @ \$150,000)

Action: (5-0) be adopted.

PUBLIC SERVICES (5 Recommendations @ \$137,000)

Discussion:

- Councilor Joseph asked why Our Father's House is not self-sustaining, requiring City support, adding that hopefully the state will supplement with mental health and addiction services. The Mayor responded that we will benefit as a community by being proactive, rather than the Police and Fire departments dismantling shelters around the city, and that many of the homeless seeking help are our Veterans. He added that Mr. MacLean is an expert and this agency does it best.
- Councilor Tran asked why the Planning Board recommended \$-0- be allotted to the Drug Enforcement and Patrol program. The Mayor responded that although ideally this recurring effort would be funded in the budget, the City lacks its' own resources to fund and does not want to use Available Funds.
- Councilor Bisol commended the Boys & Girls Club and its Executive Director, Donata Martin, and thanked them for the fantastic programming provided, including science projects, and extended congratulations for the Club's recent seventh seed at the WPI FIRST Robotics Competition. Ms. Donata said that this funding will allow Fitchburg students to be transported to the Club, and other funding such as Grants/Foundations/Operating Budget will pay for vans to transport children whose parents are unable to pick them up at the end of the day.

Action: (5-0) be adopted.

PUBLIC SERVICES (1 Recommendation @ \$8,000)

Discussion:

- Councilor Joseph stated that he was not in favor of funding MIHN and that the funds should be allotted to the Spartacus program. Councilor Bisol added that the Spartacus program assists children ages 13-18 with a bright future, when they are most vulnerable, and that it helps the Police.

Action: (4-1) be adopted. Councilor Joseph opposed.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (2 Recommendations @ \$95,000)

Action: (5-0) be adopted.

REHAB AND PRESERVATION (1 Recommendation @ \$150,000)

Discussion:

- Councilor Joseph asked if there was any way these various positions will come in to the City budget. The Mayor answered that the intent is there, but the process will be incremental as the budget absorbs these salaries. Councilor DiNatale added that the Building Dept no longer has grant funding.

Action: (5-0) be adopted.

CLEARANCE ACTIVITY (1 Recommendation @ \$235,073)

Discussion:

- Councilors thanked and roundly supported the Mayor, NICE Committee, Treasurer, and all those involved in the effort to bring down blighted buildings and lots, and keep the community safe; they have heard resounding approval and appreciation from Wards throughout the City. The Mayor stated that the effort will now be moving away from the City center and in to neighborhoods, and hopefully the City will supplement this allotment with Available Funds. Councilor Donnelly expressed frustration with the cookie-cutter approach to Federal funding not allowing cities to distribute these funds as they see best.

Action: (5-0) be adopted.

PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATION (1 Recommendation @ \$175,000)

Discussion:

- Councilor Kushmerek echoed concern over the percentage of City positions funded by CDBG. He was pleased to hear the commitment from the Mayor to move funding to the City budget. Councilor DiNatale reminded all that the City does still pay the Retirement and OPEB costs.

Action: (5-0) be adopted.

Meeting adjourned at 6:35

Respectfully submitted,



Jacquelyn M. Cronin, Clerk