

MANAGER’S CONFERENCE MINUTES
Portsmouth City Council Meeting on
August 13, 2018 – 7:24 p.m.

1. Property Demolition Fund Appropriation

CM-18-40

Acting City Manager Sutherland requested the appropriations be increased for emergency demolitions. JNH had presented an invoice for a house that had been torn down in February of 2018 for a total of \$14,000 which if paid would put that account line in the deficit. He and Mr. Gedeon had discussed an amount of \$50,000 to complete 2018’s teardowns. The total amount needed would be \$64,000. Councilman Lowe stated that \$14,000 was a lot of money and asked if it was a commercial property and Mr. Sutherland stated that it was a house. Solicitor Haas asked if this amount included the structure on Waller Street that the City had agreed to demolish (former Swick Lounge). Mr. Sutherland said that this amount should take care of it. Councilman Meadows requested that the contracts should include a 30 day billing from the date of completion to prevent receiving a bill 6 months after the job was completed and the stipulation that a percentage would be deducted from every month that a bill was not received. Mr. Sutherland said he would pursue that arrangement. Mr. Lowe asked also that before a check was released to the contractor, the property needed to be looked at to determine if the job was done properly because he could go around to 4-5 that have been done and whoever had done them did not do a good job. He said one of the lots just had junk thrown in it and it was not usable property. Mr. Sutherland stated that usually when the properties are quoted off, they were supposed to seed, straw and make them presentable. Councilwoman Aeh said there was an ordinance that said that nothing could be dumped into the basement. Solicitor Haas said there was one company that we no longer use. Acting Mayor Johnson said he believed there were only two approved companies: Solid Rock and JNH. Mr. Lowe stated there should be someone going around approving the finished lot before a check is issued.

Councilwoman Aeh motioned to accept Alternative #1

There were no questions or comments: VOTE: 5 Ayes – 0 Nays

2. Plant Portsmouth Project

CM-18-41

This was added to City Council agenda as an emergency item due to time restraints.

3. Appropriation Request for Mound Park Projects

CM-18-42

Acting City Manager Sutherland stated that he had asked Community Development Director Tracy Shearer to come to the meeting to answer any questions about the Park because there was not enough money appropriated to take care of the projects. An amount of \$175,693.00 will be needed to complete the project. Councilman Lowe asked how much had already been spent on the project and Ms. Shearer stated that \$14,000 had been spent. Mr. Sutherland stated that the amount didn’t include the amount of hours that had already been put in on the project by Ms. Shearer. Acting Mayor Johnson stated that there had only been one meeting where they spoke about the path through the park and other than that, he really didn’t know what was going on. Ms. Shearer stated that in 2016 a grant was received for security, Ms. Shearer wasn’t at the microphone and a lot of the conversation could not be heard. Notes taken from her report show that lighting and security would be primarily funded by the 2017 CDB grant but the city had committed to match an amount of \$66,693.00. There also had to be archeological studies done which was in an amount of \$41,000 for the geophysical report and excavation oversight during the construction phase. That was a requirement in order to complete the project using State grant funds. Engineering for the project was estimated at \$43,000. The former City Manager had committed \$25,000 to Portsmouth Connex to assist with their efforts in constructing a paved asphalt path throughout Mound Park that was in addition to lighting and security. Councilwoman Aeh stated that City Council was given what they thought was a balanced budget which had extra money as savings, however there wasn’t enough money put into the budget to pay for all of the commitments that had been promised. The budget should have been bigger and the savings should have been less. Councilman Meadows stated there were more promises that weren’t allotted for in this budget. Mrs. Aeh said that the money is there but everyone should understand that while the announcement was made that the city had big savings, there wasn’t really any big savings. She also didn’t want people thinking the city was spending \$50,000 here and there, they were trying to

accommodate the promises that were made. Mr. Meadows asked Auditor Williams if the money isn't spent this year, would it be carried over to 2019 and Auditor Williams replied that it could be carried over. Auditor Williams summarized what was actually being done:
The match is \$66,693, will come out of 301.661.5289
Geophysical \$41,000, will come out of 301.661.5502
Engineering is \$43,000, will come out of 301.661.5502
Paved Walk path \$25,000, will come out of 301.661.5502
\$250,000 from CDBG was already appropriated which was budgeted.

Councilman Meadows motioned to accept Alternative #1.

There were no questions or comments: VOTE: 5 Ayes – 0 Nays

The meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m. on a motion by Councilman Meadows.

Submitted by: *Diana Ratliff* – City Clerk