

COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE

MINUTES

October 17, 2022

Zoom Conferencing System

6:00 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER Chairperson Ricketts called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

PRESENT Councilors Ricketts, Gilmour and Terounzo.

ABSENT Councilors Bottomley and Lapienski.

ALSO PRESENT Recreation Director Christy Moore; DPW Director Marlo Warner; Susan Worgaftik and members of the public.

CHAIR STATEMENT: This meeting is being recorded by the Community Relations Committee. If any other persons present were doing the same they must notify the chairperson at this time. In accordance with MGLc 30A SS 20(g) “No person shall address a meeting of a public body without permission of the Chair and all persons shall, at the request of the chair, be silent. No person shall disrupt the proceedings of a meeting of a public body. If, after clear warning from the chair, a person continues to disrupt the proceedings, the chair may order the person to withdraw from the meeting and if the person does not withdraw, the chair may authorize a constable or other officer to remove the person from the meeting.”

It was the consensus of the Committee to approve the Community Relations meeting minutes of September 19, 2022.

Communications from Department Heads, by invitation – Recreation Director Christy Moore reported the following:

- Update on the construction of the Skate Park.
- Shayla Demers had recently been hired as the Program Supervisor.
- Reserving gym space in the Greenfield Schools for winter basketball and other activities.
- Preparation for Winter Carnival and Halloween Rag Shag Parade.
- Began work on next year’s Spring activities as well as the budget for FY2024.
- Recently submitted a grant request application for the Cultural Council and festivals.
- Ongoing plans for after school programs.

DPW Director Marlo Warner reported the following in regards to Greenfield’s recycling program and other waste collection:

- Recycling and trash receptacles/compactor units (also known as “big bellies”) were situated outside of the City Hall was received as part of a grant.
- The other receptacle/compactor units received under the same grant were situated in front of Greenfield Market and near the entrance of the Energy Park, respectively.
- Current pricing for dual trash and recycling receptacle/compactor sets were approximately \$4,000 per unit.
- Recycling becomes an issue due the fact a good amount of unrecyclable trash was also disposed of in recycling bins; which caused the DPW to either throw the compacted waste away entirely or take the time and effort to separate trash from recyclables.

- Greenfield Market had requested the receptacles be removed approximately 4 years ago when they began placing outside seating in front of their store.
- Collection from these receptacles dependant on the amount of activity at the location sites.
- Disposal of abandoned encampments or illegal dumping at the parks.
- Volunteers who help to clean up around Greenfield can contact the DPW if they discover large sites that need clearing.
- Suggestions for placement of the receptacle unit that was previously housed in front of the Greenfield Market.
- The possibility of using a composting unit that could further reduce the amount of trash.

Housing in Greenfield -

Susan Worgaftik presented the following:

- Affordable housing was defined as an individual or family not spending more than 30% of their income on housing.
- Greenfield's median income was estimated at \$30,000 less than the State median income.
- Due to the restrictions as a result of the pandemic has eased, there were a significant increase in evictions in Greenfield and Franklin County.
- Last winter, with funding received from the Interfaith Council and the Commonwealth, the unhoused community was placed in motels.
- As of now, the Wells Street Center was filled to capacity and the motels used last year were occupied.
- This situation was not unique to Greenfield and Franklin County, it was occurring through the Western Massachusetts area.
- Community & Economic Development Director MJ Adams, who had been working on this issue, believed she could find accommodations during colder weather; however, there was an issue of proper staffing.
- Encouraged the Councilors to aid in obtaining volunteers for the shelters.

Saul Shanbrook presented the following:

- Long term plans to address homelessness prevention and aspirational housing to support the community.
- Two housing cooperatives had recently purchased housing for workers and also people who were formally incarcerated.
- A Community Land Trust would help in long term affordable housing.

Nancy Hazard presented the following:

- "Housing First" concept where an individual would be given a place to live at no cost or restrictions through supportive housing which had round the clock, seven days and week staffing for availability to people.
- Status to requested funding for this project would be by the end of December.
- Partnership between Bill Miller of CSO (Clinical Support Options) and Alyssa Larose from Rural Development Inc, in which RDI would construct the building and CSO would own and manage the building.

Councilor Ricketts would prepare a statement in regards to asking the Council for their support in finding volunteers to help in the shelters.

It was the consensus of the Committee to adjourn the meeting at 7:05 pm.