

# **FINANCE COMMITTEE**

## **Lewiston, ME**

### **Minutes of February 10, 2020**

**PRESENT:** Councilor Safiya Khalid, Councilor Lee Clement, Denis Theriault, Roger Philippon and Renee Bernier.

**ABSENT:**

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Assistant City Administrator, Denis D'Auteuil, Finance Director, Heather Hunter, Assistant Finance Director, Ralph Lenfestey, Purchasing Agent, Allen Ward, Facilities Manager, Louie Turcotte, Information Technology Manager, Craig Starr, Economic Development Manager, Misty Parker, Lead Program Manager, Travis Mills, Project Engineer, John Kuchinski, Michael Marcotte, and Norm Lamie representing Museum L/A.

Meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by the Chairman

On motion of Councilor Clement, seconded by Ms. Bernier it was

**VOTED:**

**(013-2020)** To approve the minutes of the previous, meeting dated January 27, 2020 and to accept and place them on file as presented by the Clerk.

**VOTE: 4-0**

Mr. Philippon arrived at 5:33 p.m.

On recommendation of the Asst. Finance Director and on motion of Councilor Clement, seconded by Councilor Khalid it was

**VOTED:**

**(014-2020)** To award Bid 2019-075 for the Bates Mill 5 Weave Shed Cleanup Consultant Services to Ransom Consulting, LLC. Portland, ME at their proposed fee of \$55,890 for the base scope of services identified.

The terms of the contract shall include these identified project priorities within the proposed fee;

- Realistic project timeline and adequate weekly progress reporting through all phases
- Communication and coordinated efforts of all activities of the project through all phases
- Accessing/leveraging additional funding resources available for the project
- Coordination/Addressing of the Historical Preservation Components of the project
- Flexibility in scheduling for clean-up scope of services for best pricing / contractor completion

**VOTE: 5-0**

## FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES

February 10, 2020

The Chair requested additional possible contract input from the PW Director and to see the terms of the contract when finalized.

On recommendation of the Asst. Finance Director and on motion of Councilor Khalid, seconded by Mr. Philippon, it was

### **VOTED:**

**(015-2020)** To recommend to the City Council the following methods for disposition of City owned property.

-To dispose of 159 Pine St. through a formalized bid process (Property Disposition option 5.3) by sealed bids to abutters and other interest parties for no set minimum bid.

To dispose of 1028 Sabattus St. through a formalized bid process (Property Disposition option 5.3) by sealed bids to abutters and other interest parties for no set minimum bid **contingent** on a favorable vote of the City Council to tax acquire the property.

To dispose of 49 Beech St. through direct negotiation with the developer (Property Disposition option 5.5)

**VOTE: 4-1**

**Mr. Theriault opposed citing there was inadequate information to vote in favor**

The Chair requested that the parameters of the sales be presented to the Committee when known.

On recommendation of the Asst. Finance Director and on motion of Ms. Bernier, seconded by Councilor Khalid, it was

### **VOTED:**

**(016-2020)** To approve Change Order #1 with Norris Inc. for bid 2019-077 for Police Department Access Controls for an amount not exceed \$14,865, for a total revised contract amount of \$90,408.

**VOTE: 5-0**

On recommendation of the Asst. Finance Director and on motion of Councilor Clement, seconded by Councilor Khalid it was

### **VOTED:**

**(017-2020)** To approve Change Order #1 with Webster Tree Services for bid 2019-070 for Canal Cleanup and Maintenance for an amount not to exceed \$6,000 to extend the project scope to include clearing along Oxford St. in front of the Continental Mill, for a revised total contract price of \$28,000.

**VOTE: 5-0**

On a motion made by Ms. Bernier, and seconded by Councilor Khalid it was

**VOTED**

**(018-2020)** To approve the FY21 LCIP recommendation and forward it to the City Council in accordance with the City Charter subject to reviewing the final content as prepared by the Finance Director.

**TO:** Mayor Mark Cayer

And Members of the City Council

**FROM:** Finance Committee

**SUBJECT:** **Finance Committee FY21 LCIP Recommendation to Council**

**DATE:** February 11, 2020

The Finance Committee has reviewed the FY21 Lewiston Capital Improvement Program (LCIP) as requested. The Finance Committee recognizes that this document is a long-term planning tool utilized by the City Council and Administration, and that all projects are subject to scrutiny of the budgetary process.

The FY21 LCIP lacks a much needed higher level of detail in its presentation. The reviewer is left with many questions on need of service or items. It lacks a historic approach to a problem. It lacks an implementation explanation. Much of our forward planning is now left up to private companies giving us estimates on what they want, and not on what we need or can afford. At this time, the FY21 LCIP has too many large changing financial components for the Finance Committee to give a clear directional financial picture of its possible impact. We will highlight a few areas of concern.

School Department Request of \$1,155,000

Given their available \$4.3 fund balance, the Finance Committee is recommending not to fund the requested projects through the issuance of bonds. Fund balance should be used to fund all School capital requests for the coming year. Further, consider moving the FY22 LCIP security camera project up to FY21 and fund this project also through fund balance.

Additionally, the School Committee may wish to revisit the scope and budgetary amount of \$255,000 for the Dingley Safety and Security Project. Some items noted, for example protecting the existing air intakes, seems somewhat excessive given existing risks.

Bates Mill 5 Environmental Clean-up Request of \$505,000

Given the uncertainty of the development of Mill 5 and the "option" effective until February 2021, the Finance Committee recommends curtailing costs as much as possible until the option is triggered. The Finance Committee strongly urges the City Council not to extend the option further.

The Finance Committee recommends moving forward with the site cleanup, keeping in mind the cost differential between developing Mill 5 and demolishing it, by proceeding with what can be done in the coming year on asbestos and lead paint remediation until more information is known. Thus, avoiding potential duplication of efforts and the costlier expense of PCBs encapsulation. The City Council should proceed with extreme caution before locking in future contracts that are not to Lewiston's benefit.

#### LA911 FY2022 Request of \$300,000

Considering future LA911's capital requests, the Finance Committee is extremely concerned with a proposed change from the current cost-sharing agreement with the City of Auburn and strongly urges the City Council to maintain the existing 50/50 cost-sharing arrangement.

The Finance Committee strongly urges the Council to review all FY21 LCIP items as they are injected into the final City budget. There needs to be a closer follow-up between the City Council, Planning Board, and Finance Committee, once particular items are agreed upon. The Devil is in the detail and the implementation of a "wish or need" item should be reviewed by all branches in order to have a solid plan of project implementation. The explanation in the LCIP could be far from what we all envision unless we are made aware of its working components.

The Administrator's monthly report was designed to bridge part of that gap of knowledge. It was designed to provide the general public, and Boards and Committees a vision of how we are implementing our LCIP and budget. Showing what we have done is great, but equally as important is where we are going and how to get there.

If projects as requested are approved, including both the Administrator and Superintendent's recommendations, the proposed FY21 bond authorization amount would significantly exceed the 80% bond issue limitation by \$3,627,037, as established by the City Ordinance (Chapter 2, Article II, Section 2-34: Council Action on Bond Issue Authorization).

**Having said this, the Finance Committee supports the 80% standard until the increase in economic development can support an increase in debt spending.**

The Finance Committee will be able to better respond to the LCIP variables once various components have been selected for budget consideration.

**FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES**

**February 10, 2020**

The Finance Committee stands ready to aid the City Council and Administration in coming up with alternative ideas to save money, streamline projects for cost effectiveness, and more. We look forward to seeing the final draft of the FY21 LCIP as the City moves into the future.

*A motion was made by Ms. Bernier, and seconded by Councilor Khalid to approve the above FY21 LCIP recommendation and forward it to the City Council in accordance with the City Charter. The motion passed 5-0.*

Respectfully Submitted,

Denis L. Theriault, Finance Committee Chairman

**VOTE: 5-0**

**VOTED:**

To adjourn at 6:55 p.m.

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Allen Ward  
Clerk  
Finance Committee