

Draft Minutes
Finance Committee Meeting
2:30pm, January 26, 2016
First Floor-North Conference Room, City Hall

Present: Vice-Mayor Gwen Wisler (Chair) , Councilman Cecil Bothwell,
Councilwoman Julie Mayfield

Staff: Gary Jackson, Robin Currin, Ken Putnam, Alex Carmichael, Paul Fetherston,
Dawa Hitch, Tony McDowell, Frank McGowan, Barbara Whitehorn, Stephanie
Monson-Dahl, Polly McDaniel, Roderick Simmons, Melissa VanSickle

1. Approval of Minutes

Councilman Bothwell motioned to approve the minutes. Vice-Mayor Wisler seconded.
Motion was approved unanimously

2. Updates/Reports

- **Budget Calendar**

Members reviewed the budget calendar and discussed times for the meetings.

- **Clean Water Management Trust Fund Grant**

Ms. Stephanie Monson-Dahl presented a grant request that was recently identified by staff for the RADTIP project. Due to a short deadline for the application submittal, Ms. Monson-Dahl asked that the finance committee provide guidance on whether staff should move forward with the application. The grant is up to \$500,000 to be used for innovative stormwater management devices in the River Arts District.

Vice-Mayor Wisler recommended that staff move forward with the grant application.

3. New Business

Convenience Fee for Credit (Smart) Card Parking

Mr Ken Putnam provided a background on current City of Asheville parking meters and associated issues. Beginning in July, staff is planning to replace parking meters over a three years time span. Staff recommends using a Smart meter, which would allow the use of credit cards as well as coins. These meters will also help staff update and monitor meters more

efficiently. Previously, Council passed the use of passport parking and a resolution for the ability to have a convenience fee of \$0.25. Staff would like to move forward to amend the resolution. Since the credit card issuer provides government agencies special rates they have the authority to impose regulations on the use of convenience fees. Therefore, to align with these regulations, staff would like to amend the resolution to make the use of convenience fees optional. Members discussed the restrictions on fees and the revenue of the use of meters. Passport parking is still able to have a convenience fee, but staff recommends not using the convenience fee so that it does not reduce the use of that form of payment. Members discussed the average transaction amount, which is about two dollars. Staff believes that these average amounts will remain. Therefore, staff would like to take action at the February Council meeting to change the language of the resolution and then move forward with those changes.

Councilman Bothwell motioned to approve staff's request to move forward to full Council. Councilwoman Mayfield second. Motion approved unanimously.

Skate Park Staffing Request

Mr. Roderick Simmons discussed the background of the staffing at the skate park and associated concerns from the community. In 2001, the skate park operated with an attendant but over the last 14 years, the model has changed. Staff has been researching best practices, looking at how to maximize operations. It has been found that other cities have un-supervised and expanded hours of skating. With unsupervised hours, the park would be open from dawn to dusk and staff does not anticipate more crime. Vice-Mayor Wisler asked to first discuss community concerns in terms of finance for the staffing of the skate park.

After public comment, members discussed the safety concerns and how to move forward with those concerns. Staff suggested that members allow time to gather data and work with the police department, then report to the Public Safety Committee. In the meantime, staff will begin to control the area and assess the conditions.

4. Public Comment

Mr. Bart Hodgins expressed concerns with the location of the park and discussed how it is not comparable to some other cities, which have skate parks within larger facilities, rather than in their downtowns. Mr. Hodgins discussed possible other ways to help fund the park, such as increasing user fees or using a hybrid model to have supervision at the park. Without supervision, Mr. Hodgins does not feel that the park would be used how it is supposed to be used.

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 3:07p.m.