



Legislative Committee December 11, 2020 Meeting Minutes

The December 11, 2020 remote Committee meeting was called to order by Chair Pious Ali at 10:30 AM on Zoom.

Councilor Pious Ali (Chair), Councilor April Fournier, Council Nick Mavodones, Mayor Kate Snyder, City Manager Jon Jennings, Dena Libner (Chief of Staff), Kate Knox (Bernstein Schur), Chris Feeney (Bernstein Schur), Alysia Melnick (Bernstein Schur), Rep. Michael Brennan, Rep. Ed Crockett, Rep. Grayson Lookner, Rep. Barbara Wood, Rep. Rachel Talbot-Ross, Rep. Sam Zagar, Rep. Mike Sylvester, and Rep. Ben Collings were present.

City Manager Jon Jennings presented a memo of policy priorities identified by staff for consideration by the Legislative Committee.

Rep. Zagar requested information regarding how the City balances budget priorities between police funding and rescue interventions. Jennings described the departments' respective budgets and programs.

Rep. Brennan described changes in revenue sharing between the City and State. He said State revenue is not down as much as had been originally projected. Jennings said that the City's priority is to maintain current funding levels and to prevent any cuts to revenue sharing, particularly as Federal assistance is not guaranteed.

Jennings described the need for funding support from the State for a homeless services center, which acts as a regional center due to a lack of any other publicly funded centers.

Rep. Talbot-Ross requested information about the inclusion of a bill to prevent “doxing” of law enforcement officials. Specifically, she asked why this priority was included and other pieces of reform were not.

Jennings said that the City is working on reforms within the Police Department, including the development of a better system on data collection to help inform ongoing reform efforts. He added that several officers were targeted over the summer, at their homes, and the City is interested in correcting issues throughout the entire system. He said he would ask the Police Chief to provide additional information on the Department’s request.

Council Mavodones asked for additional information about the security needed by other municipalities when officers were targeted at their homes.

Rep. Sylvester requested that staff provided legislators with information about challenges related to homeless services. He said that it would be helpful for the City to engage with legislators in that way.

Rep. Crockett asked if a bill was being drafted to address funds for homeless services in Portland. Rep. Brennan stated that Maine State Housing Authority is interested in creating a regional system of emergency shelters and seeking funding via a bond issue for that purpose.

Councilor Mavodones made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mayor Snyder, vote 4-0. The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 PM.