



**City of Portland, Maine
Public Safety / Health & Human Services Committee
September 9, 2015**

Meeting Minutes

Committee Attendance:

Chair Councilor Suslovic, Councilor Costa, Councilor Brenerman;
Councilor Duson

City Staff Attendance:

Jon Jennings, City Manager; Michael Sauschuck, Police Chief;
Jerry LaMoria, Fire Chief; Chris Corson, Public Health; Adam
Lee, corporation counsel; Keith Gautreau, Assistant Fire Chief;
Julie Sullivan, Acting Chief of Staff; Toho Soma, Director of
Public Health; Stephanie Gagne, Public Health; Kristen Dow,
Public Health

AGENDA ITEM 1 - Meeting Called to Order at 5:45pm

Chair Suslovic moved to accept minutes from the June 9, 2015 meeting. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Agenda Item #2: Housing Safety Office Update (action item)

Julie Sullivan provided an overview of back-up material outlining a \$35/unit annual registration fee with available discounts to provide incentives for safer buildings. Councilor Duson questioned public process and noted tenants unions or representation were not present.

Public Comment opened at 6:55pm.

1. Jim Harmon from the Southern Maine Landlord Association supports the proposal in place and supports the stakeholder group staying in place moving forward.
2. Carl Winslow of 257 Auburn Street is a landlord and agrees with Jim and would like to see this come back to the council for review after implementation to ensure fees remain low
3. Mark Adelson, ED of the Portland Housing Authority supports the proposal but estimates approx. \$18k in fees for his group – but does believe safety is a priority.
4. Dana Totman of Avesta Housing supports the proposal and believes the process and discussion were healthy and with 600 apartments he believes this is the right thing to do.

Public Comment closed at 6:02pm

Chair Suslovic opened the discussion to committee members:

A short discussion was had regarding sprinkler requirements and the incentive is for retro-fitting. Councilor Duson asked if the City should vary inspection response for units being inspected by other agencies. Julie will do a write up to assure Councilor Duson a full complement of inspections will be done.

The committee had further discussion of discounts and the Chair suggested the committee vote to move this item forward to the full council given previously suggested timelines. The City Manager offered comments to update the committee that the Housing Safety Officer position has been offered to a top candidate who has accepted the position and will begin in the coming weeks. Chair Suslovic asked Julie Sullivan if the proposal before the committee was a product of consensus. Julie answered that yes, it was a full consensus. There were some issues to begin with smoking and sprinkler system discounts but those have passed.

A discussion was had surrounding the ordinance reflecting a registration fee that began with \$25 and increased to \$35 through the budget process. A base minimum of \$15 was proposed. A motion was made, moved and seconded on an oral amendment by Adam Lee to reflect the base minimum fee of \$15. The motion passed 3 to 1 with Councilor Duson voting against the amendment.

The committee moved to the proposed action item to include the motion as amended (above). A short discussion was had to note that councilors recognized the need to move this item forward for a higher level discussion at the full council meeting despite a lack of support for some portions of the proposal (discounts).

The Chair asked if all were in favor of the proposal as amended:

In favor: Councilors Suslovic, Brenerman and Costa
Opposed: Councilor Duson

The item passed 3 to 1 of members present. The committee discussed a schedule of a first read on September 21st and a second read on October 5th. The City Manager will poll councilor regarding a workshop and a public notice will be made to stakeholders, the task force, interested parties and the media.

Agenda Item #2 Smoking Ordinance Changes (action item)

Toho Soma provided an overview of back-up material and provided that current state law lists public clubs as exempted and there are 6 states banning smoking in clubs.

Chair Suslovic asked if it is legal to propose this for private clubs. Adam from corporation counsel said yes. Of 9 private clubs, 3 are smoke free.

Public Comment opened at 7:06pm

1. Rodney Anderson is a member of a private club who pays a fee and opposes this proposal.
2. Steve (last name unknown) was also in opposition of this proposal.
3. Abraham Dector (?) of Deering Street agrees with the proposal

Public comment closed at 7:14pm

A short discussion was had by the councilors who agreed second hand smoke is an issue. Two councilors believed this issue seemed to be a civil disagreement between one establishment and a resident that could be handled at a lower level rather than moving this item to the full council. The definition of private clubs was discussed and whether or not smoking is allowed in quasi-public clubs. It was moved to postpone this item to October to learn more about the legality of this item by Councilor Brenerman and Chair Suslovic seconded the motion.

Vote in opposition: Councilors Duson and Costa
Vote in affirmation: Councilors Brenerman and Suslovic

The motion failed and the item will not be included in the October agenda.

The next item before the committee (smoking in public spaces) was recommended to be passed as an amendment for a council order. Seeing no members of the public wishing to comment, a motion was made to pass the amendment and seconded. This item passed unanimously of all four councilors present. This is an item requiring two reads before the council.

Agenda Item #4 Municipal Fire Alarm System Update

Assistant Chief Gautreau and Chief LaMoria provided an overview of the back-up material and essentially wanted to give the committee a heads up that the department is currently in the process of a two year migration from a wired alarm system in Portland to a wireless alarm system. The committee will be asked to vote on ordinance changes at the October meeting that will include some fee changes as well. A short discussion was had surrounding the reason for the change and potential cost to the City and subscribers. That information will be presented in full at the next meeting.

Agenda Item # 5 Quarterly Update on Mayor's Subcommittee on Substance Abuse

Chris Corson provided an overview on back-up material and discussed efforts to increase safe storage and disposal of sharps in Portland. The group is working with businesses and schools on messaging and educating folks to keep prescriptions out of reach.

Chief Sauschuck gave a brief overview of Portland's current status with overdose related deaths in Portland that led to Governor LePage and Senator King hosting drug summits to discuss education/prevention/rehab/treatment options. Chief Sauschuck gave a brief presentation at the Governor's summit on a municipal approach. The City Manager complimented the Mayor's subcommittee and noted there is no funding for a city owned resource center. A discussion was had surrounding substance abuse driving crime rates and opportunities for drug take back events. All opportunities for funding are being considered.

With no further business to attend to the committee adjourned at 8:38pm