COMMITTEE ON INFRASTRUCTURE

OCTOBER 21, 2025

A meeting of the Committee on Infrastructure was held Tuesday, October 21, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. in the Aldermanic Chamber and duly noticed in two places, including the City's website, in accordance with the requirements of RSA 91-A:2 II.

The roll call was taken with 5 members of the Committee on Infrastructure present:

Alderman-at-Large Michael B. O'Brien, Sr.
Alderman Richard A. Dowd
Alderman Patricia Klee
Alderman John Sullivan
Alderman Chris Thibodeau

Members not in Attendance:

Also in Attendance:

Alderman Derek Thibeault
Alderman Ernest Jette
Alderman Tim Sennott
Alderman Tyler Gouveia
Alderman Melbourne Moran, Jr.
Alderman Thomas Lopez
Alderman-at-Large Lori Wilshire
Mayor Jim Donchess
Tim Cummings, Administrative Services Director
Brian Kenney, Deputy Police Chief (via Zoom)
Steve Buxton, Nashua Fire Rescue Chief
Liz Hannum, Economic Development Director
Jill Stansfield, Parking Manager
Matt Sullivan, Community Development Director
Bobbie Bagley, Public Health and Community Services Director
LaTonya Muccioli, Housing Services Officer
Camille Correa, Transit Administrator
Heidi Peek-Kukulka, Health Officer (via Zoom)
Steve Bolton, Corporation Counsel
Brian Kenney, Deputy Police Chief (via Zoom)
Jennifer Deshaies, Risk Manager
Dr. Chuck Cappetta

ROLL CALL

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman O'Brien

I want to speak to all my committee members, aldermanic guests that are here, to the crowd and to our special guests that are in the inside of the horseshoe. What our main purpose is tonight is really the question and what are the questions? Is the ordinances that are on the docket. Anything else, I brought the gavel and I'll smash your fingers. I don't know (laughter). But the thing is, this is a very intense subject. My common sense is telling me we're not going to solve it tonight. But what we can solve is some of the ordinances that are before us and believe me, that will go a long way to working towards helping us with this problem.

So this is a big issue. You know, I'm not going to get into the politics but we have things out happening to health care, other things, and you think we've got to get a dime off the State. Don't hold your breath, you know. Our taxpayers are got some burden and we got to take that into consideration. So please do not get frustrated. I think there's other committees that can work together and we can get to the goal. But right now I'm going to ask the favor, please stay on focus and narrow the discussion to the questions that are before us. With that said, I'm going to open it up to Public Comment.

Alderman Klee

And (inaudible) their names, Sir?

Chairman O'Brien

Yeah. And with Public Comment as is our custom when you come up or called up to the mic, please give your name, and your address, and you have 3 minutes. We will time you. If you notice at the front here, you'll see a yellow light and then a red light. When you see the red light, I'm going to ask you the courtesy to keep in mind and to cease. I will, you know, give you a few minutes to, you know, finish your thought. Well few seconds but I'm going to ask that because potentially, how many pages do we have?

Alderman Klee

We have 22 people that want to speak.

Chairman O'Brien

We have 22 people and Public Comment is supposed to last by NRO 30 minutes. The thing is, we got a lot to discuss tonight. So if you hear something, we want to hear from you but if you hear some somebody else got up and expressed their opinion, you can choose maybe just briefly get up, but we definitely want to hear from you because it really helps us to make decisions on this matter. So but I'm going to ask to the public the courtesy to try to, you know, keep focused as I have asked the members of this Committee. So can the Clerk please call the first one?

Alderman Klee

Mr. Chairman just for your knowledge. There are people that are here in the circle that had signed up. I've scratched their names from it because they'll be able to speak...

Chairman O'Brien

No, I'm going to let them - they may want to, you know, open up, have prepared speeches, and it will give them an opportunity to focus.

Alderman Dowd

I would think maybe you hear from the public first and when they're done then we can hear from these people.

Chairman O'Brien

I could go with that. Okay, so we're going to hear from the public first and then we'll get back to the Directors.

Steve Kenney

Hello. Steve Kenney, 9 Sagamore Road and I am current Chairman for the Mine Falls Advisory Committee.

Last week at the Aldermanic meeting, I witnessed the approval of two new stop signs. The review and unanimous approval took only minutes. It seems the problem - undesirable driver behavior such as speeding and reckless driving, and the solution - the stop signs were easy to grasp, easy to justify, and therefore easy to approve. I think we all agree that the goal of the stop signs is to change the behavior of those driving poorly in the area . It would also seem likely that the police, although I can't speak for them, would have discretion regarding giving tickets to someone in the area going through a new unfamiliar stop sign. So again, we introduced the stop signs to change driver behavior and improve public safety.

I see the proposed Ordinances 25-079 and 25-080 as being virtually the same as the implementation of the stop signs. The two proposed ordinances will be used to help alter the behavior of those who want to reside in Mine Falls Park. We want to change that behavior. The discretion the police will have along with the outreach of the Division of Public Health and Community Services would help ensure that those who want help have access to it. Some will take advantage of the resources. We also know, however, that some will not and those who are found to be involved in criminal activity would hopefully be handled accordingly.

Regardless, no one should be allowed to camp in Mine Falls Park. I'm just a concerned citizen who volunteered to help maintain the park and now I'm here today defending it. The park is a resource to a Nashua community of over 90,000 people and to others in the area. Everyone is encouraged to use it in a safe and lawful manner. Maintaining it falls on the

responsibility of Parks Department but I can tell you without a doubt that it would not be as well maintained if it wasn't for the help of volunteers.

On our monthly trail days we have scores of people, young and old from Nashua and beyond who show up on a Saturday morning to get their hands dirty by picking up trash, painting, pruning, doing trail repair, and about anything else that needs to be done. They show up because they, like me, take pride in the park. They use it but they also appreciate it. It's more than just a parcel of land. For some it's for fitness, for others it's for fishing, or walking with a friend, or a place for personal reflection. Everyone has the right to use all of the park.

Unfortunately, we can't hope that the current situation will remedy itself. We need to enact these laws so we can get to repairing the damage that has been done to the park as well as planning for future improvements. So what do we do? We enact these laws presented before us. Like the stop signs, we change the behavior, we use discretion when enforcing, and we offer help to those who want it. I sincerely hope that everyone reside in the park who needs help will get it but camping in the park cannot be allowed. Thank you.

Chairman O'Brien

Thank you, Mr. Kenney. Next, please.

Alderman Klee

I apologize. I'm trying to do too many things at one time. Mike Apfelberg?

Mike Apfelberg

Do I get those 45 seconds?

Alderman Klee

No, pardon me here. I'm just …

Chairman O'Brien

Man, you're good.

Mike Apfelberg

Good evening. Mike Apfelberg, President of the United Way of Greater Nashua. I'm also a member of the Public Health Advisory Committee, the Continuum of Care, and the Mayor's Task Force on Substance Use Disorder.

So good evening. We all share the same goal - a clean, safe, compassionate Nashua. But as we talk about the idea of clearing homeless encampments, we must also remember one fundamental truth, people need a place to go. That place needs to be open at night. It needs to allow for rest and safety and during the day, to allow for stability, and connection to resources, and it needs to be low barrier because not everybody can access traditional shelters. Some people have pets. Some people have criminal records or behavioral challenges. Many are living with substance use disorder or mental illness. Remember, these are diseases of the brain not choices. These neighbors still deserve dignity, compassion and a pathway forward.

Over the past 3 years, United Way has spent more than $20,000 on tents, tarps, paracord, sleeping bags, and drinking water - emergency survival supplies. We'd much rather invest those funds in a safer shelter or engagement center where people can rest and rebuild their lives. We've already seen what's possible. We've mobilized over 50 volunteers to support the overnight warming station, which literally saves lives every winter. We propose expanding that space to serve more people and allow for true rest.

Beyond that, we encourage the creation of a daytime engagement center and resource center. A welcoming place that offers case management, computers for job searches or applications, tax preparation possibly through our Vita Tax Prep volunteers, laundry, and secure item storage, and physical and behavioral health services like those from St Joseph's Hospital or Greater Nashua Mental Health. United Way will gladly rally volunteers, contribute resources, and help coordinate partners but we must have an answer to the question people will ultimately ask when asked to move. Where shall I go?

During covid, our community rallied quickly and compassionately. We tried new things and if something didn't work, we

adapted. We can do that again together to create solutions that are both humane and effective. Thank you.

Chairman O'Brien

Thank you. Next up?

Jen Bishop

Jen Bishop, 45 East Dunstable Road. I'm also the Board President for the Board of Education but I am here tonight as a social worker for the City of Nashua and a local area hospital.

I wrote up some comments because I'm not good at listening to directions and following the 3 minutes. So if you guys know me at all, you know, I have a phrase that I like to say all the time and that's "proper preparation prevents - I'm saying pretty tonight - poor performance". While this legislation is a start, it lacks the planning, resources, and systems shift required to avoid harm and ensure lasting success. We've seen this before. Well intentioned policies that started with promise but failed without long term funding, infrastructure, or follow through.

I'll name some of those. De-institutional is - I can't do this without my glasses sorry. De-institutionalization Policy was formalized in 1963 but in 1973 the funding stopped. Community mental health centers never recovered and the result has been band-aided care, overburdened staff, and the criminalization of mental health. In 1970, we had the Controlled Substances Act prioritized enforcement over treatment leading to racially discriminatory outcomes and a lack of rehabilitation for those without privilege. Mental health parity laws in 2008 aim to improve insurance coverage but failed due to loopholes, and weak enforcement, and more recently, the opioid crisis response brought in medication assisted treatment but uneven access and biased responses have held back its impact. What all of these efforts lacked was a coordinated systems approach. One that uses data, evolves with need, and doesn't rely on public opinion to decide who gets it. This tiny piece of legislation being considered could be a powerful moment if we use it to push real system change.

And here's what that looks like according to data and research. Coordinated entry systems or as Public Health has been talking about for years, a resource center - housing first models which show 75 to 91% housing stability and major cost savings in jails, ER visits, and crisis response. Affordable housing, income support, prevention services and workforce retention are all critical to long term success. We simply cannot pass legislation we can't implement. We don't have enough shelter beds, especially for people on MET, the registry, or with medical needs, and we don't have the staff. Listen to those asking for help. Police want safety for all. Public Health has been consistent in calling for evidence-based intervention for years. Let's use this moment for more immediate safety and long-term systems change so we're not back here again. If you're asking how do we do this? Sorry, I put it in the notes. Great I brought a list of books, articles and even films that lay out clearly through academic resources. I'll pass that around if anybody's ready for a deeper dive but whatever we do, it must be flexible, accessible and funded. Thank you.

Chairman O'Brien

Thank you.

Alderman Klee

Susan Elberger.

Chairman O'Brien

Actually, Representative.

Alderman Klee

Sorry, Representative Elberger.

Chairman O'Brien

The Honorable.

Alderman Klee

I apologize. My apologies.

Chairman O'Brien

Yeah, does that work?

Susan Elberger, State Representative for Ward 1

You know, I'm shorter than most people.

Chairman O'Brien

Could you help, please? Thank you.

Susan Elberger, State Representative for Ward 1

Got it, thank you. My name is Susan Elberger. I live at 11 Birch Hill Drive in Nashua and I'm a State Representative from Ward 1,which is for those of you who don't know is the area up by the airport.

Last summer, I had gone shopping at the Market Basket Plaza, Somerset Plaza on Amherst Street and parked the car and saw a couple of spaces away from me what looked like a couple who were living in their car. I walked over to them and said are you okay? Well they had been thrown out of their apartment because landlord raised the rent. They were trying to live in their car. He had a full-time job at Dunkin Donuts and then the head gasket on the car blew and they had nothing. It was Friday afternoon around 3:30. I called around to all the places that they probably had already tried and there was no room at the inn. I took them in, bought them as much food as they could eat without it going bad because there was no refrigeration in the car, and then sat down and said this is unacceptable.

From 2022 to 2023, New Hampshire had the highest percentage increase in homelessness in the country. Just to make sure that we hadn't messed that up, the next year 2023 to 2024, we repeated that dubious distinction. This isn't acceptable. We are a wealthy State. We have resources and it's not a new problem. We cannot say as the last two speakers have pointed out, that we only can look at solutions or approaches that we've tried before, and haven't worked before, and we need to find flexible ways to do things that we may not have tried. Moving people from one place to another without giving them shelter is futile. Where do we want people to go if we don't give them housing?

By criminalizing behaviors, we're telling people that...

Alderman Klee

30 seconds.

Susan Elberger, State Representative for Ward 1

They're criminals. Thank you. So I would like us to take a good look at figuring out who the criminals are, who is putting out criminal behavior, the people who have nowhere to go, or the people who aren't helping them to find a place. Thank you.

Chairman O'Brien

Thank you, Representative. Next?

Lauren Bucci

Thank you for the opportunity to speak. I want to be very clear, this is not about a lack of compassion for people.

Lauren Bucci, 18 Harbor Ave. I work in and around Celina Ave. This is not about a lack of compassion for people who are homeless or struggling with mental illness. Many of us have loved ones facing these issues. What we are looking for is accountability and effective solutions because what is happening right now is not. It's putting businesses, customers at risk. If this were a matter of people simply choosing to live a different lifestyle in peace, I would not have come up here to talk about it. For years those of us who have worked in local plazas and business areas have witnessed drug sales, drug use, theft, violence, individuals wandering into traffic while screaming, and more. We have seen used needles, drug paraphernalia, human waste, puddles of blood, and piles of garbage. Though Celina Ave has been temporarily cleaned up, I can see the issue slowly reoccurring and I'm concerned that this will become a destination for this type of behavior once again.

We are heartbroken to see people suffering. It is painful to watch people while we are driving into work. Some who look like they may die at any moment. Compassion does not mean allowing dangerous and destructive behavior to continue unchecked. Many individuals struggling with addiction and mental illness have not reached the point of wanting help and continued enabling through unrestricted camping, panhandling, housing and services without accountability only prolongs the cycle. At the same time, businesses are being asked to shoulder the burden. We are trying to create a safe, welcoming environment for customers. We are paying taxes, employing residents, and contributing to the City's economy yet the current approach makes it harder and harder to do so.

Some proposed solutions like simply allowing public camping and building public restrooms that will cost nearly a million taxpayer dollars to build and maintain does not address the root problem. Bathrooms and turning a blind eye will not solve addiction, mental illness, dangerous behavior. In fact, this approach only precipitates the issue and makes it harder to manage. I'm running out of time, so I'll skip down.

It's very clear that what is happening right now is not working. While Nashua ..

Chairman O'Brien

30 seconds.

Lauren Bucci

While Nashua may be working towards building more housing, the issue of homelessness continues to grow. If we truly want a thriving city and economy, we must create an environment that is safe for workers, patrons, and businesses, and one that actually helps people who are struggling get the support they need to rebuild their lives. We do not hate these individuals. We want them to get better. We want them to join us in creating a thriving community but you cannot sacrifice public safety, economic growth, and people's livelihoods in the process. Thank you.

Chairman O'Brien

Thank you.

Reverend Sally Newhall

I'm Reverend Sally Newhall. I live at 33 Digital Drive here in Nashua, Unit 308. I guess I need to say - I've asked - I'm nervous. I've asked Reverend Leah Rumsey to stand with me. We are tonight representing six faith leaders from the greater Nashua area. We strongly oppose these ordinances that ban camping, and parking in particular places presented as a solution to homelessness here in Nashua. Our faith traditions teach that every human being is made in the image of God worthy of dignity and care. When people are reduced to nuisance or offender by the law, we lose sight of their inherent worth. Criminalizing survival when no viable alternatives are available effectively punishes people for being without shelter.

This is a posture of judgment not compassion. We are called to stand alongside the marginalized to advocate for justice, mercy, and transformation not to hide them or cast them away. We appreciate that some believe in a camping ban is a cheap and quick fix but the experience of other cities who have imposed such bans shows that this is not the case. There are costs in enforcement that add up and encampments usually do not just go away but instead, transition to more hidden or dangerous encampments. Outcomes that worsen public health, social costs, and neighborhood tensions.

We recognize that many in Nashua legitimately worry about safety, cleanliness, property values, and public order. We do not dismiss those concerns but we also believe that a city of conscience must ask how do we solve problems without creating new ones or compounding suffering. A policy that treats homelessness as a moral failing or a public nuisance is a failure of imagination and empathy. Our City has an opportunity to lead differently. Instead of adopting the proposed camping bans, we urge the Mayor and Board of Aldermen to research and consider possibilities like safe rest areas, and rapid expansion of low barrier shelters, and transitional housing. These opportunities offer services and support to the unhoused population rather than criminalizing them.

A city is measured by how it treats those with the fewest options. If we ban without care, we risk making invisible the humanity of people in crisis. Our role is not merely to manage homelessness but to heal and transform communities and that requires creativity, courage, and consistent care. This is a moment to lead with humanity not fear, with compassion not punishment. Thank you for your service and for hearing these remarks. We pray that Nashua's response to homelessness may be a city of compassion, and justice, and hope. This statement is endorsed by Reverend Allison Palm, Rabbi John Spira-Savett, Reverend Kelly Turney, Reverend Sally Newhall, Reverend Kristy Besada, and Reverend Leah Rumsey. Thank you.

Chairman O'Brien

Thank you, Reverend.

Pat Busa, R.J. Kelly Company

Good evening everyone. Pat Busa. Unfortunately, I do not live in Nashua. I'm representing the RJ Kelly Company. We own and manage 14, 16, and 18 Celina Avenue.

I'm here to talk about the parking ban and to save some time, some comments obviously have already been made. So we have experienced all of these issues with some of our tenants. We have had tenants that have left our buildings. We have young women who are afraid to walk to their cars at night due to the encampment that was on Celina Ave for a while. It has negatively affected tenancy for us and bringing new business into Nashua. Specifically, we've had new tenant prospects come in. They'd like to see a space. They pull up to the street. They won't even get out of their car sometimes.

While we understand that this is obviously an epidemic, we really do – sorry. It's been a while since I've done public speaking. We really strongly agree with the parking ban. Since the RVs and campers have been removed, we have seen far less drug issues on our properties, far less people trespassing at night, wandering around. In the past, we've had many people whether they're high or if they have mental illness on our property sleeping. We've had to call the police and we've had a slew of issues. So we really do stand behind the parking ban. Thank you.

Chairman O'Brien

Thank you. Next, please.

Justin Gerstenfield

You got it right.

Alderman Klee

Did I?

Justin Gerstenfield

Yeah. All right. Thank you. Justin Gerstenfield, 79 Gilson Road. I'm going to talk fast cause otherwise we will be here all night for those of you that know me. So good evening. Y'all face a tough job and a decision because you're not only deciding where people sleep but you're also deciding the direction of the City and what type of city that is that we want to be.

We currently receive over $2 million in HUD funding to support our unhoused population and that amount has stayed the same. Even though we have more residents to shelter because of federal funding cuts to our DEI policies, it's not going to be expanding anytime soon. So we are having to take on more residents and help more people without any expanding funding. What does that mean for us? That means that Nashuan's are being asked to address a growing problem with stagnant funding.

So what does this look like? At the same time in this political time when we're going up for election, we're hearing sound bites of I'm going to lower taxes, I'm going to help control out-of-control spending, and we're going to at the same time maintain infrastructure, and we're going to support our first responders, and that's all great and well but where is all of this money going to come from if we're not getting any increased funding and we're seeing grants being taken away to help our cities support this population. That math is not mathing for me. You cannot expand shelter beds, case management, outreach staffing, addiction recovery supports, and traditional housing capacity without any new dollars, especially when the federal government is not increasing its contribution.

Without federal partnership, cities are left bearing the burden and unless someone has secretly discovered a stash of unspent money in our budget, which if you hear anyone we haven't, it means we either invest sincerely or pretend we can do this with wishes and slogans. Criminalizing homelessness doesn't solve the problem. It shifts it elsewhere. Cities like Manchester, Portland, and Phoenix have tried this approach. The encampments don't go away. They just lead to more costly police responses and more frequent cleanup efforts. Taxpayers end up paying more while experiencing less compassion and stability.

The people we're talking about are still residents of this City. They remain human beings. When the choice shifts from out of crisis to out of sight,…

Alderman Klee

30 seconds.

Justin Gerstenfield

…the issue isn't resolved, it has just been pushed out of view. Compassion is not free but neither is avoidance. The question is not whether we spend but what we spend on and whether it actually works. I'm asking y'all to adopt a solutions focused approach grounded in realism not rhetoric. If we want safer neighborhoods, cleaner public spaces, and real solutions to homelessness, then we need stable funding and policies that address the root causes not just their visibility.

Alderman Klee

Time.

Justin Gerstenfield

Thank you.

Chairman O'Brien

Thank you. Next?

Bob Keating

Hello. My name is Bob Keating at 5 Coburn Woods Drive. I'm speaking asking the Committee to not support the three ordinances related to homelessness until there is a plan for the people who would be affected by that who are living outside or living in RVs.

Twenty-one years ago, the city passed the - Continuum of Care adopted a plan to end homelessness by the year 2012. So we're 13 years after that and in the beginning of the overview it says, "The idea is straightforward. We will eliminate homelessness in our community by the year 2012. We will do this by ensuring that everyone in our community will have a permanent place to call home." We did not do that. The plan calls, the full title that is "a home for everyone". I suggest that the audience is particularly about banning camping moves us to a different position. So instead of saying that we'll have a home for everyone, we now have a plan that says that you can't sleep. You can't sleep in this city in a public place.

Secondly, I'd say it goes even further than that and you've heard me speak most of you many, many times. So I've been very supportive and I'm involved in how we got there or we're still in this place. Specifically, it means that the plan to ban camping is similar in my mind to sunset towns in which people of color were illegal to be out in the city after dark. In this case, what we're doing is making it so that people not only during the day but also during the night are to be moved along. People have to sleep. So in the remaining seconds, I'm just emphasizing is that we set a plan, we haven't done it. We've spent millions of dollars on many, many different projects. We have a $360 million budget and we had allocated nothing for permanent solutions.

Alderman Klee

30 seconds.

Bob Keating

We have a plan for the Health Department which is a good step, but it still is not permanent housing. With the same amount of money that we're spending per month for police patrol, we could house 40 people a month. So that's their perspective. We have just not done and I'm part of that. I've kept saying we've done really good. Twenty-one years is not good. It just simply is that. We might have the right to do this but it's not the right thing.

Alderman Klee

Time.

Bob Keating

Thank you.

Chairman O'Brien

Thank you.

Stephen Scaer

Good evening. Steven Scaer, 111 East Hobart Street. As anyone who's walked through downtown knows Nashua's problem isn't primarily homelessness, it's addiction. In the winter, the numbers of people camping out in Mine Falls disappears mostly or entirely and then every spring when the weather gets warm, they return. What this tells me is that people are finding other places to stay when they need to. Not everyone but most people. Perhaps these are places where they're staying where they need to follow rules pertaining to their addiction and no longer do they have to because they can sleep outside.

When we accommodate camping, we're enabling and encouraging addiction. Every spring as a result, the numbers of people camping outside and the numbers of people we see walking around downtown with addiction problems increases. And as these things increase, what we'll see as we see in a lot of cities just suffering and death in front of us on a massive scale. Please stop enabling addiction. Don't allow people to camp in public parks. Thank you.

Chairman O'Brien

Thank you. Next, please.

Cynthia Whitaker, President/CEO of Greater Nashua Mental Health

Good evening. I'm Cynthia Whitaker, the President//CEO of Greater Nashua Mental Health, which is located in lots of places throughout our great city.

So thank you for your time and for recognizing that our community needs to address homelessness in a meaningful way. On behalf of Greater Nashua Mental Health, we appreciate your commitment to finding solutions. We understand the concerns about encampment and their impact on our community. There are real concerns that deserve our attention. However, I'm here tonight to ask that we choose humane and respectful approaches rather than punitive ones. The individuals affected by these proposed ordinances are people experiencing homelessness. They are our neighbors. They are elders, they're our parents, they are children who are facing circumstances none of us would wish upon ourselves or our loved ones. We cannot simply remove camping and parking options without providing sustainable alternatives. Research shows that criminalization of homelessness is both costly and ineffective. Cities that have taken the punitive approach spend tens of thousands of dollars per person annually on enforcement while people experiencing homelessness report that citations make it harder for them to actually exit homelessness which is, of course, the intention we all have.

Enforcement without alternatives doesn't reduce homelessness. It merely moves people from one location to another often into more dangerous and isolated situations where it comes harder for outreach workers to connect them with the services that they need. We're asking people to be invisible without giving them anywhere to go. This approach fails everyone.

Instead, other cities have shown us what worked. Evidence based approaches like supportive housing, housing first models that have been shown to be both effective and cost effective. These aren't just compassionate approaches, they're proven cost-effective solutions that require partnerships. The city is not in this alone. So we need a both/and approach addressing both community concerns while simultaneously constructing real pathways out of homelessness. In the…

Alderman Klee

30 seconds.

Cynthia Whitaker, President/CEO of Greater Nashua Mental Health

…short term, this could be enhancing services at the warming station or creating supported housing options. In the long term, we need to address our affordable housing crisis. I ask you consider investing in these alternatives first. Greater Nashua is committed to being part of the solution. We stand ready to be a partner and we know that moving people is not solving homelessness. Let's invest in solutions that work. Let's be a community known for…

Alderman Klee

Time.

Cynthia Whitaker, President/CEO of Greater Nashua Mental Health

…solving problems not simply displacing them.

Chairman O'Brien

Thank you. And, next.

Ben Heney

Hi everybody. My name is Ben Heney. I'm at 2 and 1/2 Verona Street. I've had a privileged enough life that until I started getting involved with a mutual aid group, I never really had to interact with the homeless population and if I did, it was, you know, at people's worst moments. It's not something I think a lot of people, you know, take time to talk to people or, you know, really understand why people are out there. But they are people. They're people with names, they're people with histories, they had jobs, they have families, they have people who love them. Some of them weren't lucky enough to have people pick them up when they fell down. You know, nobody wants to camp. Nobody's out there because they want to be there. They're out there because they fell on hard times and they stayed there.

Everybody who's speaking in favor of these proposed ordinances, I think we hear a lot of buts, right? You know, we care about the homeless population but. And that but's really hurtful. It's really dehumanizing. It says that there's somebody who matters more. You know, these are our brothers, these are our sisters, these are our neighbors, and if camping on private property is trespassing, and camping on public property is illegal, you know, you're criminalizing their existence. So please think about that when you vote tonight and thanks for hearing me out.

Chairman O'Brien

Thank you.

Tonia Knisley

Hi. My name is Tonia Knisley. I am a Nashua resident of 83 Major Drive. I'm really thankful that there are a lot of agency members here tonight because they are able to give out a lot of facts that I may not be able to remember. So thank you very much for that. I personally am also against the new ordinances. Just like everyone else here if you don't give someone an option and a place to go, they're not going to have one. Unfortunately, a lot of the people that have been bringing up with the drug use or the crazy instances, I have found personally with working with the Soup Kitchen that a lot of the homeless people even if they're new to it, even if they have just incurred some sort of a traumatic experience whether it's, you know, the rent going up, or a gasket on their car being gone, but a lot of times when they become in this situation and it is in the fall and the winter weather, the other homeless people literally tell them right away that they should start drinking because that is the only way that they can stay warm for the enduring cold hours of the long nights and into the morning.

So unfortunately, some of those bad behaviors are incurred because when you decide to stay warm and drink alcohol, it doesn't actually make you make the best decisions which leads to some of the other issues that are occurring in the homeless encampments and with the homeless around Nashua. So again like everyone else, I would definitely like to suggest that we open our minds, and our hearts, and we please come together as caring agencies and think about some outside of the box solutions that can not only house people temporarily and permanently but also make them part of the solution so that they can have some pride and maybe something to work forward towards themselves instead of us just putting them down constantly for not being able to get ahead. Thank you so much.

Chairman O'Brien

Thank you. Next, please.

Eric Bozoian

I'm from 9 Johnson Street.

Chairman O'Brien

Timer, please.

Eric Bozoian

I'm here to ask not to pass an ordinance that fines and criminalizes sleeping outside. Sleeping in a car and other visible homelessness does not solve homelessness. It just hides it. It pushes people who are already suffering deeper into crisis. Even the US Supreme Court in its most recent ruling on camping bans reminded us that homelessness is complex. It's causes are many. That's not an endorsement of criminalization. It's a call for thoughtful, effective policy. What works? Evidence is clear. Housing first, service rich responses reduces unsheltered homelessness, reduces strain on police, EMS, and jails, costs less than cycling people through tickets, jail, and emergency rooms. In central Florida, a regular study tracked 107 chronically unhoused neighbors. Leaving people on the streets costs about $31,000 per person per year in ER, hospitalization, and jail costs. Providing permanent supportive housing costs about $10,000. A 68% reduction with far better outcomes.

In Denver, a randomized evaluation providing supportive housing reduced shelter stays by 40%, police contacts by 34%, and jail stays by 30% with a large offset in local emergency costs. That's a real public safety relief and real fiscal prudence.

Closer to home, Nashua is already part of the regional system. The Greater Nashua Continuum of Care that coordinates this kind of housing first by name list approach. You don't need to reinvent the wheel. You need to invest in what works.

Comparative cities have shown the way. Santa Barbara, California - 88,000 like Nashua runs a nationally recognized safe parking program so people living in their cars can park legally overnight, meet with case managers, and exit to housing addressing exactly the conduct this ordinance would criminalize.

Rockford, Illinois - population - 147,000 used a data driven built to zero model, coordinated entry real time by name lists, landlord engagement, flexible funds to reach functional zero for both veteran and chronic homelessness. They made homelessness rare and brief without criminalizing survival.

These aren't soft approaches. They're proven public order strategies that free police to focus on crime, reduce calls for service, and lower costs. By contrast, national legal policy experts warn that criminalization backfires. It scatters people away from outreach teams, saddles them with fines they cannot...

Alderman Klee

30 seconds.

Eric Bozoian

…pay and increased jail and ER churn. No one chooses their hardest night. As Franklin Delano Roosevelt put it, "the test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much. It is whether we provide enough for those who have too little". If Nashua measures progress by how we treat its neighbors with the least, then our next step is to help not handcuff. In the end, none of us chooses our hardest night, a layoff, an illness, a divorce, a rent hike, maybe...

Alderman Klee

Time.

Eric Bozoian

…Nashua is one crisis away. The question before you isn't whether we value order, it's how we achieve it. Help first, then enforce as a last resort. Once every Nashuan has a real alternative to a sidewalk or a car. Thank you.

Chairman O'Brien

Thank you. Next, please.

Tori Markiewicz

Hello. My name is Tori Markowitz and I live at 759 Grove Street in Manchester. I live in Manchester but I'm a community organizer here in Nashua. I just want to say that I'm opposed to the camping and parking bans just like I was when they went through in Manchester.

Many folks who were picked up and fined in Manchester after the ordinances were passed were never able to pay those fines. A lot of people were forced to go to rehab but then when they got out, they relapsed because they still didn't have a home to go to. There's a park near where I live that's also near the homeless shelter in Manchester and there was often many homeless people there before the bans. Now there's not but there's a lot of police there. Every time I walk through there, I see police talking to anybody who's sitting or laying in the park. It just feels wrong to criminalize resting in public spaces. I also just feel like enacting camping and parking bans like others have said without providing an alternative place for people to go is unjust and exacerbating the problem by shifting people from place to place, making them less able to rebuild their lives, and exit homelessness. I feel like the root cause is that our system has failed, and our neighbors don't have homes, and they shouldn't be penalized for this. So please use the money that you would put towards policing camping and parking bans towards a 24-hour resource center and a housing first method. Thank you.

Chairman O'Brien

Thank you. Next, please.

Skylar Wheeler

Hello. My name is Skylar Wheeler. I live at 7 Vagge Drive . I'm here cause I am opposing criminalizing homeless people.

It's just as many people have said, it's just wrong. There are many other people who have stated the facts, and the research much better than I have, and so I'm sorry I'm a little bit scrambled in my words. But just please don't criminalize homeless people. It's not their faults that the system failed them and that people have failed them. Being homeless is already traumatizing enough, so criminalizing them and throwing them in prison, or jail, it's just going to be even more traumatizing and horrible for them, and it's just all around wrong. This issue could be fixed if the people in power could actually use the funding and the money that y'all get correctly and, you know, move that funding over to actually helping and taking care of the people like y'all are supposed to. That's what y'all sworn yourselves in to do to take care of the people and obviously, that's just not going well and the system is failing these people. So just please don't fail them further and don't criminalize being homeless. It's stupid to put a morality on it. All right. That's it. Thank you.

Chairman O'Brien

Thank you. Next, please.

Sam Howorth

Good evening. My name is Sam Howorth. I live on Nowell Street in Nashua. Sorry, I don't talk often and I'm a little nervous.

Criminalizing public camping and criminalizing parking on a certain street is not going to fix the issue. People are going to go to a different street. Does that mean you're going to criminalize parking on every street one after another, after another? That's not a solution. And if this crowd instead of people who are mostly housed, or usually are assumed to be housed, if this crowd in back of me right now was filled with people who camp at Mine Falls would you vote yes to this ordinance? They're someone's son, someone's daughter, someone's mother, someone's father. I ask you to have a heart. They're people. They're not an issue. It's a crisis. Please think about this compassionately. Thank you.

Chairman O'Brien

You did a fine job, thank you. Next, please.

Philip Molbeck

How ya doin? I'd like to say I'm grateful to be here.

Alderman Klee

Your name and address.

Philip Molbeck

Philip Molbeck, Kinsley Street out in Nashua. I've experienced homelessness since 2016 other than a couple years when I had gotten my own place. I want to say that because of the lack of the shelters, I've been homeless up in the sea coast area. I've been homeless in Nashua. I've been homeless in Manchester. Just, you know, everywhere I go until I get myself on my feet, and I'm grateful for the programs that are out here that offer the housing. Also the OATS program and everything they've done for me when I was close to being homeless just a couple months ago because I was short on my rent.

That survival instinct that you're going to be homeless again and you're in a situation where you're housed, that's always going to be there when you have that experience for so long. What I can say worked was when I stayed at the Crossroad Shelter in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, back in 2016. That was a 24-hour shelter like what Mike and them was talking about. 24-hour shelter, access to the resources, access to the case management, the mobile health clinic would come by, you know, and I've seen people including myself use that to our advantage to where we're able to get back on our feet. We know we have a place to stay. Once we know, especially in the wintertime, we know we have a place to stay that lowers off our back and now we're focused on working. The shelter would work in phases where if you're there for 30 days, and you're staying clean, and you know you're working, and progressing, then you get to a different spot in the shelter where you know you have more personal space. It just keeps going like that and then while you're being assisted to get into your own apartment or whatever the case may be for that.

So I think that that's something that would be very effective, especially out here because moving people around that's all that's going to happen. If one encampment gets moved, people are just going to find somewhere else to go. I see both sides of the spectrum. I've been homeless out here. I used to sleep down by the library and I can tell you the police officers always came by. They acted like gentlemen, checking on people. They weren't coming down there bashing anybody or, you know, throwing fines, and arresting people, or nothing like that. So, you know, that's always a good thing. I personally being homeless out here sleeping at Temple Street Market or, you know, wherever...

Alderman Klee

30 seconds.

Philip Molbeck

…Manchester in the garage, and library out there, things like that. I personally I'll say that like Nashua as far as how homelessness is being handled, as far as the people, I personally have seen a lot of compassion with me and others as well. I can tell you the people that are homeless out here right now are very intelligent. I know a lot of them and what needs to happen more and I'm willing to do it and be a foot soldier for it is get them the information they need to know that the resources are here.

Alderman Klee

Time.

Philip Molbeck

So, thank you.

Chairman O'Brien

Thank you.

Paula Johnson

Good evening. My name is Paula Johnson. I live at 15 Westborn Drive. I want to say that all these stories tonight, there's a little bit that we all can relate to. I had a nephew that was going to be homeless. Unfortunately, he committed suicide. We all tried to help him with money and everything and nothing. I just got the news one day and I thought I was going to die myself.

But I think it comes down to resources and I think it's just not one size fits all here. When we talk about uncontrolled spending, we're talking about where is our resources going? Is it going into a riverwalk that's not going to benefit or it's

going to benefit the beauty of downtown when we have this problem, or are we talking about how we're going to take care of this problem?

Now this last gentleman who spoke - and he was 100% right about resources and shelters. At the end of the night when the morning comes, we open up the doors and we send the people out and where do they go? The biggest problem that I see, we've heard Ken talk last week who I've known for 25 years. He used to help me on all my campaigns, Ken. The greatest guy in the world. Okay - been homeless. We had a long talk last week in the parking lot about it. But it's the difference of we're talking homeless people and we're talking about addicts too. Ken always had been in an encampment. You never knew that he was around because nobody - it's the way that encampment was. I think the biggest problem that's come to light it's been the addiction out there, the addicts. You hear that about the Pine Street Extension what's going on there with the drugs?

So I think this isn't just a one size fits all. This is basically how do we address all of this? Where the last speaker said - resources. I talked to the Mayor in 2022 about the homeless crisis and I wasn't even elected. I wasn't running for anything, and I could see this, and I don't come downtown that much, and I talked to him about can we take city property and maybe put tiny homes so these homeless could have some shelter, especially in the wintertime. They'd have facilities and we wouldn't have to worry as much. I guess it went on deaf ears and now we're sitting around as a group trying to figure out how do we figure out the dam is breaking and how are we going to figure this out?

Well, it's a long time coming ..

Alderman Klee

30 seconds.

Paula Johnson

And so we have to figure this out but there's pieces to it. There's some people that hit economic hard times. That's one piece. How we're going to get them housing to get them back on their feet. We've got the homeless, and we've got the addiction, and the people have mental illness. So you can't put that all one lump sum. We have to address it separately otherwise it's never going to work. Thank you.

Chairman O'Brien

Thank you. Next, please.

Travis Morgan

Good evening city officials and fellow residents. My name is Travis Morgan and I've been living in what you call "tent city" here in Nashua for 3 years. Four years total along the streets fighting tooth and nail just to keep my sanity, my dignity from slipping away. Thank you for letting me speak. Even if my voice shakes with the weight of it all because this isn't just words, it's my life you're deciding on. I choose this out here. It's raw, it's unforgiving but it's mine. No suffocating walls, no endless bills that bury you alive. The river murmur at dawn brings me back from the brink. I've clawed through hell to rebuild here leaning on neighbors who stare down the same abyss. Addiction, loss, the kind of pain that hollows you out, the place is in chaos. It's my fragile anchor in a world that keeps trying to drown me. Why would you tear that away? It set me back all over again and God the drugs and mental health storm raging through us. It's tearing hearts apart and I can't hold back the tears thinking about it.

I've lost friends to addiction. Those vicious thieves that steal everything - your hope, your health, your will to fight. They turn quiet desperation into screaming agony amplified by the cold nights and endless uncertainties of the street. I felt that razor's edge myself. The pull of oblivion when the world kicks you too hard. It shatters families, crushes spirits, and leaves ghosts where people used to be. But there is a way through. Harm reduction that saves lives without shame. We're talking clean needles to stop disease from spreading like wildfire, a safe space to test substance so no one drops dead from fentanyl laced poison, overdose reversal kits handed out like lifelines because every second counts when someone's slipping away. Guided therapies with psilocybin, real science showing it mends the broken minds scarred by trauma, PTSD, and the endless cycle of depression that homelessness feeds. I've seen it spark hope in the eyes that were dead inside but without onsite support/counselors who meet us in the mud, programs that treat us like humans worthy of saving, we're just waiting for the next tragedy. How many more bodies? How many more shattered souls before you act? Harm reduction isn't enabling. It's compassion in action.

Alderman Klee

30 seconds.

Travis Morgan

Pulling us back from the edge with tools that work. Give us that here in tent city and watch us rise instead of fall. I ain't got time to finish but thank you.

Chairman O'Brien

Thank you. That is the last of the public that has wished to speak. So at this time, we do have some presentations from our…

Alderman Klee

There were 3 members of this group here who wanted to speak.

Chairman O'Brien

Right. Gonna have our Directors speak. We'll follow the same rules. Introduce yourself so it can get transcribed and we're gonna go with the 3-minute rule.

Alderman Dowd

I think since these people are our city officials who have a lot to say, we probably ought to give them more than 3 minutes. I think that if they have something to say, we need to hear it.

Chairman O'Brien

Okay, I don't disagree. How say you all? Agree? Extenuating? Okay, shall be done.

Steve Buxton, Fire Chief

Good evening. Steve Buxton, Nashua Fire Chief. Thank you for giving me a few minutes to speak tonight. I'm not just here as the Fire Chief but I'm here as somebody who's deeply concerned about the safety and wellbeing of Nashua residents, housed, and unhoused alike. Over the past several months, our Department has responded to a growing number of calls at the homeless encampment located near Pine Street. These calls include fires both accidental and intentional as well as medical emergencies. The conditions at the site present a serious and growing public safety concern not only for those living there but for some of the surrounding neighborhood and for our first responders. Open flames used for cooking and warmth are a common sight. Tents and makeshift shelters are often placed in dangerously close together positions and flammable materials are used in ways that would never be allowed in permanent structures. This creates a tinder box scenario, particularly as we approach the colder months.

Beyond fire hazards, we are seeing delayed responses due to scene hazards such as needles, large dogs, cluttered conditions, as well as unsafe pathways. Most importantly, the encampments normally occupy a large area and do not have a registered address creating an additional challenge for responders to locate the person in need. These delays can mean the difference between life and death in an emergency. Several of my firefighters have also expressed concern about personal safety when entering the area, especially at nighttime hours. We often require the assistance of the Nashua Police Department on scene to assist in controlling the situation, bystanders, and on one occasion members of the encampment began to surround the apparatus as our members were attempting to fulfill their duties.

I want to be clear. This is about safety, dignity, and accountability. The current conditions are neither safe for the people living there nor are they sustainable for the City of Nashua. We need a coordinated plan between all agencies to reduce risks and protect everyone involved. Last week, you heard directly from Chief Rourke. Today, I come before you reinforcing the same urgent message. This is a matter of public safety, public health, and basic community standards.

You have now heard from both of your top public safety leaders. The need is clear. The risks are growing and the time to act is now. The solution must be grounded in public safety, health, and human dignity. I recognize that we all want a compassionate solution but compassion must include safety. Please support the proposed ordinances. Thank you for your attention and for your continued commitment to the safety and health of all within our community. Thank you.

Chairman O'Brien

Thank you, Chief.

Chuck Cappetta, MD

Good evening. My name is Chuck Cappetta of 2300 Southwood Drive in Nashua, and I'm Chairman of the Nashua Board of Health, and have been a member of the Board for the past 11 years, and a practicing pediatrician in New Hampshire for the past 35 years.

I sit here tonight to speak against the ordinances proposed and to strongly advocate for finding the necessary and appropriate funding for support of a resource center in Nashua. Lack of suitable affordable housing is not just an adult concern. Data from the National Conference of State Legislatures reveals a staggering statistic of 1 in 10 adults, ages 18 to 25, and 1 in 30 youth - ages 13 to 17 will experience homelessness each year in the United States and 700,000 of which are unaccompanied minors, meaning they're not part of a family, or accompanied by a parent, or guardian. As a pediatrician, this data is both overwhelming and heartbreaking to read and even fathom in this day and age and is happening every night in the Granite State.

Homelessness as we've heard tonight is not a crime and to treat as such is strong professionally in my opinion and has now reached a public health crisis level in New Hampshire just as important as substance use disorder, our mental health epidemic and reemerging infectious diseases. The American Academy of Pediatrics, our national governing association, coined the phrase “medical home” over 20 years ago as a way to help explain to the public what pediatric providers like myself do for a living and how we act as gatekeepers for the health and wellbeing of our patients. The AAP policies defines the medical home as an approach to comprehensive primary care that is family centered, accessible, continuous, comprehensive, coordinated, and culturally effective. A medical home is not defined by a clinic, a hospital, or physical office space. It is not closed in by simple geometry and a building plan with a floor ceiling and four walls. A true medical home is the universal provision and appropriate access to quality health care wherever you are regardless of age, ethnicity, gender identity, income level, demographics, place of residence or medical condition.

I'm here tonight asking this Committee to stand up to do what is right and support the financial and economic strain of finding a suitable medical home/resource center in Nashua for our fellow neighbors where members of our public health care team can be available to help provide shelter, food, warm water, and access to care there's many times so badly needed and not accessible anywhere else. By shutting down present areas of encampment and prohibiting certain areas for camping aren't we just simply moving the concern to another backyard?

The Nashua Public Health Department and all their essential key silent workers fill such a vital daily role in the lives of all of us, especially for those we're talking about tonight. These health care workers truly walk the talk and embrace each of these fellow citizens every day. If the workers can't find these residents once they've been forced to move on from some of the present locations, they can't offer any help. If they can't find them, then these public health workers and each of us in this room can't advocate for them and that would be the true crime here and this would go against everything all of us in medicine and public health embrace and live every single day.

Lastly, by closing certain streets and providing no suitable alternative to reside, these same workers will struggle to not only emotionally support these friends we haven't yet met but also the individual and a collective access to medical care will eventually suffer and the cycle of ill health that we all know continues and only escalates. Thank you.

Chairman O’Brien

Thank you, Doctor. Next?

LaTonya Muccioli, Housing Services Officer

Good evening. My name is LaTonya Muccioli. I'm the Housing Services Officer for the Division of Public Health and Community Services. I'm also a Nashua resident and the Vice Chair of the Greater Nashua Continuum of Care.

I wanted to provide some insight into a conversation that Public Health, Nashua PD had with New Jersey PD. We saw that Newark, New Jersey, had a over 50% reduction in homelessness in their community. So Public Health and Nashua PD wanted to find out what did you guys do? What worked? Give us some secrets. They let us know that their approach was enforcement with resources. They let us know that they expanded the resources available that included 24-hour drop-in centers, that included extending sheltering, and that included PD walking out in plain clothes partnering with service providers, mental health providers, social workers, and other folks, people with lived experience, and peers in the community. They would go out and do outreach. They would interact with some of these individuals. They would offer them the resources. They offered harm reduction out of their drop-in centers. So folks had to go there for harm reduction supplies. They offered any donations like hats and gloves in the wintertime out of the resource center. So again, folks

were required to engage if they needed those materials. They found this approach to be very successful. They did admit that there were individuals that didn't comply and weren't abiding so enforcement was necessary but it was really a last step approach. They tracked it through an internal system and there was really great communication and coordination.

We have also gone to the Lowell Health Department to see what they're doing for their approach because oftentimes we look at Manchester but Lowell is also a sister city of ours. They also have coordinated outreach teams. Again, PD, public health, social workers, mental health. You really need this multi-disciplinary effort to address the problem because it's very complex. Again as folks have said, there's individuals experiencing substance use, mental health challenges, justice involved. Sometimes one person could have all three. So you really need to have more of just an ordinance in place to say hey you can't do this. We need to have other resources available in real time for folks.

I developed a pros and cons list for this Board and for the public to hear. For our pros: PD is more confident in enforcing no camping. I will admit we have an internal team that reviews our encampment sites monthly and we have created a checklist of when encampments become unsafe. We all recognize that the Pine Street Extension encampment is unsafe for multiple reasons. Chief Buxton spoke about it, Chief Rourke has spoken about it. We recognize it as well. We have had encampment residents also telling us that they feel unsafe. We have to do better and provide them another option. Folks should not be forced to stay in an unsafe area because it's the only area where camping is somewhat tolerated. We have needed PD to help us with enforcing the no camping in some of these sites that have been unsafe and we will still need their support with that.

Also a pro: potentially increasing the perception of public safety. Whether or not that perception is reality is a different story. It may possibly deter unsheltered people from moving from other communities to Nashua. Anecdotally, we have heard individuals saying that, you know, Nashua is more relaxed and they feel more comfortable staying here. And last for pros: it's likely that it will align with this federal administration's policies and priorities. So in terms of funding for the Greater Nashua Continuum of Care, we've already seen some documents in which the federal administration is prioritizing communities that have anti-camping policies in place because that aligns with what they're looking to do.

For cons: And many of these have already been mentioned but I'm going to repeat them. Criminalization does not end homelessness. We know that there's not enough shelter beds to accommodate the needs. I know oftentimes folks are saying If we build it, they will come. People are already here, and people are already in need, and we're not meeting the need. Again, we in Public Health, we are meeting the individuals in the encampments. We are counting them. We are tracking them. The majority of them are from Nashua. I know that folks think people are migrating from everywhere and that does happen but the larger percent is these are people from Nashua and we're not meeting the needs of our Nashua residents.

There's also the potential for encampments to move to private property. I know we haven't spoken about this but it has happened. You know last year for example, there was an encampment on Eversource property and they were responsible for the cost of that cleanup. So I think that's something that everybody needs to be aware of. If folks are pushed off of public property, they're not going to disappear. They're going to go to other places and that may be private property and those owners will be responsible for the expense of those cleanups.

It's also important to note that there's also the concern with compromised safety. So as Chief Buxton had mentioned, sometimes when folks are in areas where it's difficult for first responders to reach them, fatalities occur. We know that if folks cannot safely or feel safely that they're camping somewhere without some sort of punishment, they're going to go to other areas within the City. Again, they're not going to disappear. So they may go further into the parks where it's more difficult to access them. Again, putting outreach staff and first responders in danger when there is an emergency and we have to go through difficult terrain to reach folks.

There's also the fear of punishment that pushes folks into other hazardous environments. We know that over the past year or so folks have been staying under some buildings or breaking into abandoned buildings where they're potentially being exposed to asbestos and other environmental hazards. Folks are going to get creative and start utilizing more solutions like this.

Anti-camping policies will disrupt the support networks. Right now, we are working very closely with Public Health and St. Joseph's Hospital to offer mobile health care to folks in the encampments. We are meeting people where they're at. Folks are utilizing these services. Again, this is deterring folks from going to the emergency rooms. So simple wound care that could be addressed on the bus or the van, someone's not going to the ER for that and that's a benefit for everybody who actually needs those emergency services.

There's the increased likelihood of spreading infectious disease. So as folks may have seen in the news, there was a positive TB case in Nashua. Again, we know where the encampments are. We know where to find people so when we need to do contact tracing, we know where to go and we're able to inform people of the potential that they were exposed

to an infectious disease. If there's anti-camping policies in place, it's going to be much more difficult to do that contact tracing and find people.

And lastly, enforcement is expensive. Fines often go unpaid and this can lead to really disruptions and pathways to exiting homelessness.

I also wanted to share some costs for the Board so that you guys can understand how much we are spending on our response which is just a response. It's reactive. We're not proactively reducing homelessness in these response efforts. We're simply responding. So for FY25, we're estimating - and I'm sure this is an undercount - that the total amount spent on addressing encampments through City departments is $431,707. I'm going to break it down for you. For our Department of Public Works, we're estimating approximately $30,000 in encampment cleanup efforts. We're estimating over $9,000 for the port-a-potties that have been at the encampment sites. For Public Health, over $102,000 for emergency motel sheltering for 63 households. Over $27,000 for Public Health outreach. Over $90,000 for the warming stations. So this includes the overnight warming station and we had a daytime warming station as well. For the library, around $850 due to repairs. These are due to plumbing repairs needed for flushed needles. That number is higher this year. It's already over $2,000 as of FY26. Over $59,000 for security. The library administration is reporting 61% of their 295 security incidents were related to drug use. A large percentage of the remainder were related to homelessness, shopping cart storage, and camping.

I give these numbers to have us reflect on what this amount of money could actually do to help solve homelessness. This money could be used better and should be used better. As Chief Buxton stated, there have been a significant amount of calls related to encampments for the Fire Department. The numbers I received from January 2025 to date are 143. For the Nashua Police Department, the data I received for just from July until today is over 200 calls to Pine Street Extension alone. So again, this is a lot of manpower going to multiple places across the City and again with banning encampments, folks are going to be somewhere and we're going to have to use that manpower in multiple areas of the city. So that's all I have. Thank you.

Chairman O'Brien

Thank you.

Brian Kenney, Deputy Police Chief

Thank you, Aldermen. Brian Kenney, Nashua Police Department. I'd like to apologize to the Board that I'm off site. I'm attending a conference and oddly enough, attending some classes on this very subject. But I won't and I don't have a speech. I won't reiterate what you all heard Chief Rourke say last week. I won't reiterate what Chief Buxton said tonight. But I do spend a significant portion of my week, every week on this topic and wanted to make a couple points and I'll try to do them as quickly as possible.

As LaTonya just pointed out, since July 1st we've had about 200 responses to the Pine Street encampment. Since we had our meeting last week, we have had 19 additional calls to Pine Street Extension since this has been sent to Committee. I'm not offering an opinion on that. I want to make everyone aware of how busy this location is.

And as Chief Rourke said, this is not a safe situation. We had a very significant incident at this location two days ago. The press release went out on it this morning. Many of you may have seen it. We had a convicted felon, convicted sex offender allegedly commit a domestic violence strangulation at this location. This individual was staying in a camper that belonged to another convicted felon who is known to the Nashua Police Department for years. The problem with Pine Street Extension is not the fact that we have homeless people. It's the fact that we have 75 people suffering from substance use disorder, and suffering from mental health disorder, and along with many other things all living on top of one another. It is not a situation that we can effectively manage. The City pays us to provide public safety and I'm having a hard time doing that at Pine Street Extension and I just want everyone to be aware of that. There's too many people suffering from too many issues at one location. Fights break out, assaults happen, disagreements happen. People are walking into businesses to ask for money and people in these businesses are feeling unsafe and I hear them.

The next thing. If an ordinance were to be passed, and I'm saying if because that's obviously not my decision. It's the decision of you all. It would simply support an already existing law which says that camping on public property in the State of New Hampshire is illegal unless you have the permission of the governing body which is all of you.

So I'd like to point out that we have dealt with encampments across the City in the past year. So, many of you may know this. On the path that runs behind the library along the tracks on Temple Street, we had about 10 tents there in the spring. And we get together every few weeks as city leaders and we decide what we're going to do and how to deal with these situations. We all agreed at the time that it was not a tenable situation and we had to act. So I will say this, the officers

went out, Public Health went out. We communicated that that site was not a site where camping was going to be tolerated for all the reasons I just listed. It was unsanitary, there was trash everywhere, there were crimes associated with drug dealing, and a lot of many other things. We communicated that a couple weeks ahead of time and by the time we came through to do a cleanup, there was one person left. Everybody adhered to the warnings, and everybody moved, and we were able to do a cleanup. We wrote one single violation level ticket in that incident.

And I'll take it a step further. That person who received the ticket had a conversation with my officers and a conversation with our Prosecutor's Office which if you don't know is embedded in the Police Department. The individual said they did not want services. They said they wanted to just camp on public land and to be left alone. So at the Police Department, we have compassion, we care for these folks, and we realize you can't get blood from a stone, and we realize if you don't have a job and you are homeless, you might not be able to pay fines. But we also have the discretion to deal with that violation level offense in a way that we think is most reasonable. That individual was made an offer by the Prosecutor's Office by a Sergeant in the Legal Bureau of the Prosecutor's Office and the options were this: we can have a trial, and we can go back and forth in front of the judge, and the judge will decide whether or not you pay your fine, or you can go to Mulberry Street and you can get engage with Director Bagley and Latonya's folks, and you can come back with a letter in a month to show us that you are actively engaged in your own situation, and we will get rid of the ticket if we know you're working to better your own situation. Now in that specific incident, the person said, I'm not willing to do that and I'd like to have a trial.

But when we talk about criminalizing homelessness, okay, and I'm not making a political stance, but I think some people in the public think that we're throwing people in the Valley Street Jail for camping on public property and that couldn't be anything further from the truth. Camping on public property is a violation level offense. A violation level offense is punishable by up to $1,000. There is no jail time associated with that. No jail time at all. Nobody who gets a ticket from the Nashua Police Department for camping on public land is going to Valley Street Jail unless they have other criminal offenses they've been charged with, okay. So like I said, I'm not making any sort of political stance or anything like that. I'm trying to talk facts. I've heard Valley Street Jail be brought up in previous meetings. If we're talking about violation level camping, it's just not on the table. So I want you to all have that in mind when you make this difficult decision tonight.

I'd like to point out the fact that the Police Department, any Police Department has what we call discretion which means we can choose when appropriate to enforce any sort of offense. For example if my officers are on the way to domestic dispute and on the way there they see a vehicle speeding, going 10 miles over the limit, they might exercise discretion and not stop that car because they have a more important thing that they're on the way to and they might have to save someone who's in a domestic dispute. I can tell you, across the board, the 170 some odd officers that we have at Nashua P.D. are not looking to chase people to give them tickets for camping on public property. That is not something we're interested in doing but what an ordinance would do other than support the State law that already exists, is give us the authority to come in and act in a situation that has become unsafe like we did on Temple Street, like we would be able to do on Pine Street. The situation just isn't tenable over there.

And you know, we have conversations with the Public Health all the time. LaTonya is a pretty organized individual. That's something I've learned over the past year. LaTonya has a checklist of best practices that I reviewed it before this meeting started tonight of humane ways to break down an encampment that has become too problematic. That would involve the Police Department of course as a last resort, but we would participate on the front end. We would help give out that messaging. Hey, this is the date. This is the line drawn in the sand. This is the date where it's no longer going to be okay to stay here. Oh and by the way, there's some tables off to the left. There's Public Health employees. There's potentially people from the Continuum of Care here, other wonderful nonprofits. If you'd like help, if you'd like to have conversations, there they are. Just have them before this date comes because at that point, we're going to come through with a DPW cleanup and there would be enforcement if you're in the way of that government action.

So this isn't something where if an ordinance were to hypothetically be passed tonight, that we'd run down there and start ticketing everyone and throwing people in jail. That's not how we do things. We would message it, we would post it, we would offer services ahead of time, and then once the date that's posted comes, we would come through just to make sure people are gone, and it has worked in the past.

I would like to point out and LaTonya touched on this. It's not my decision whether we provide more services, whether we provide a resource center, whether we even allow people to camp on public property but my officers are now in the process of having conversations when we deal with some of these folks. I've asked them to hey not only deal with the situation but ask where these folks are from, and when they're from out of town, ask them why they're here. So we do that on a daily basis. I can tell you in the last few months - and I'm not suggesting this is all the all the folks - but I think it's important that you all have the information when you make this difficult decision. In the last few months, we have engaged people from Keene, from Manchester, from Lowell, multiple people from Vermont, people from northern New Hampshire that made stops in Concord and decided Nashua was a better place. When we asked them why, we usually

get two reasons. The first reason is because it is we are more accommodating, there is less enforcement for this type of behavior down in Nashua, and resources. My town just didn't have the resources so I'm here. Now I'm not making a statement on that either. I'm just pointing out that we are servicing more than just Nashua.

Before I finish up, I would like to point out that I attended a class from Sacramento, California, yesterday and it was on this very topic. One of the things we learned from Sacramento was that they tried some pilot programs. They actually had a nonprofit in their jurisdiction lease public land from the City and the idea with that lease is they would sanction an encampment on public land and see how that worked. They would know where to dispatch their resources and almost like a one stop shopping to serve this population.

To summarize this two-hour long class, it was a disaster. They had administrative rules which I know different cities across this across the country have tried this. They institute administrative rules. You have to abide by A, B, and C if you live at this spot and they just didn't work. People didn't follow the rules and then word got out that the encampment was there and more came. Then what started as a paved portion of land grew into a larger portion of land. It contaminated the soil on the dirt portion of the land. The residents of the encampment put up a fence. They locked the fence. And I'm not suggesting that all of this is going to happen here. I'm just pointing out these things have been tried. Sacramento - I think we can all agree. California is a pretty progressive State and Sacramento is a very large city with a very large surrounding county. The class ended with them deciding that this pilot program didn't work and they had to have a coordinated effort to break down the encampment.

Now I bring this up because the very things on LaTonya's checklist are what Sacramento did. They engaged community partners ahead of time. They utilized the Police Department to help with the messaging ahead of time so everyone knew the time limit when they had to vacate the premises, and by the time they came through to do enforcement, they had pages of a plan on all the things that could go wrong. And by the time they came through to do enforcement, there were four arrests. The four arrests weren't even residents of the encampment. They were community agitators. So they can't even attribute the arrest to the folks that were living there. By the time they got there, most residents had gone.

So I'm not telling you to take any sort of action or this is a difficult decision but I just wanted to relay that you have pretty good City officials, and I meet with them all the time, and there would be a plan in place if you chose to pass an ordinance, and that the situation on Pine Street is just not tenable. There's too many folks with too many problems all living on top of one another. Thank you for your time.

Chairman O'Brien

Thank you.

Alderman Klee

That's all, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman O'Brien

Okay, very good. Does anybody else from the inner panel of Directors have anything they would like to add? Speak now or forever hold your tongue. Yes. All right. Director Bagley.

Bobbie Bagley, Director of the Division of Public Health and Community Services

Bobbie Bagley, Director Division of Public Health and Community Services. I really appreciate the opportunity that we've had here to hear from so many folks this evening from our community, from our businesses, and from some of our Directors as well. I do believe that it's really important for us to consider this coordinated, collaborative approach to addressing this issue.

I appreciate LaTonya sharing all of the things that we've gone through as far as the research, and looking at other cities and towns over the past year and a half, and going through the pros and cons list that we really need to consider.

I appreciate Deputy Kenney sharing the information that he shared as well and the efforts that we've taken over the past year and a half with the encampments. What he did say was that we were able to move encampments, close encampments, move people along. We did all of that without an ordinance. It can be done and it is important for us to really consider and think about the fact of we really need to think about a plan of where people would go once the encampment is closed.

The encampment at Pine Street right now it is dangerous because there are so many people there because there are - he

just talked about an incident that occurred. I had one individual that was living at the encampment come into my office today, bandage on his face, slice on his face, hands all messed up. So something happened when he was there as well and he came in and he said, I need to get out of this State for a couple of reasons. He's tried to interact, get resources, has not had the success that he's wanted to get here in Nashua so he's looking to go out of State. There are other places where treatment facilities exist that do take individuals from New Hampshire into their programs. So we work with folks. We meet them where they are to be able to do, and to be able to address those things, and we will continue to do that. We would like to be able to do that with our City partners collaborating with us as well as we've heard from some of our nonprofit organizations agreeing to work with us as well and that's the approach that we need to take. It's a City issue, community issue. It's not just the City of Nashua municipality and all the workers and leaders here that have to do this. It's not just Public Health. It's not just Nashua P.D., and public safety, or Nashua Fire, it's all of us together. It's the community, it's our partners and stakeholders, it's everyone and we've been able to do this without an ordinance over the last year, two years and we can't continue to do it that way. Thank you.

Chairman O'Brien

Thank you, Director. Alright, thank you everybody for your comments. We'll now get back to business at hand of the Committee.

COMMUNICATIONS

From: Tim Cummings, Director of Administrative Services
Jennifer Deshaies, Risk Manager
Re: Communication Providing additional information on O-25-071 Relative to Open Hours for the Outdoor City Hall Restrooms

There being no objection, Chairman O'Brien accepted the communication and placed it on file.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS – RESOLUTIONS - None

NEW BUSNESS – ORDINANCES

O-25-071
Endorsers: Alderman-at-Large Ben Clemons
Alderman-at-Large Melbourne Moran, Jr.
Alderman Tyler Gouveia
Alderman Tim Sennott
Alderman Patricia Klee
Alderwoman-at-Large Shoshanna Kelly
REGARDING OPEN HOURS FOR THE OUTDOOR CITY HALL PUBLIC RESTROOMS

Chairman O'Brien

Okay. One second. Alderman Dowd I will recognize you properly.

I did receive a call from Alderman Clemons and he's one of the sponsors of this. So is Alderman Moran but what happened is Alderman Clemons has a personal issue that needs his attentativeness to right now. I'm gonna ask this Board to please grant the courtesy that he wants to speak on the matter. So I says we can and we can move this particular question to another meeting in time. So I'm gonna seek from Alderman Dowd a Motion to Table. By tabling means when it gets to the next meeting that Alderman Clemons can attend to, we'll bring it off the table and then it can be fairly discussed. So your vote will be if you want to extend the courtesy or not. So I'll recognize Alderman Dowd.

Alderman Dowd

I'd like to make a motion to table O-25-071 and talk to it briefly.

MOTION BY ALDERMAN DOWD TO TABLE O-25-071

Alderman Klee

You can't – it's a tabled motion.

Alderman Dowd

You can when you make the motion. It's just not debatable.

Alderman Klee

It's a nondebatable motion.

Chairman O'Brien

Yeah, tabling unfortunately is nondebatable.

Alderman Lopez

Can you even table it if I make the recommendation?

Chairman O'Brien

Okay, you heard the question. Committee members, all those in favor signify by saying aye.

MOTION CARRIED

Chairman O'Brien

Alright, I'll assign that to - I don't know exactly off the top of my head. Our next meeting is tomorrow night but it's not gonna come out then possibly but we'll get it as soon as we can, I can assure you.

O-25-078

Endorsers: Mayor Jim Donchess
Alderman-at-Large Michael B. O'Brien, Sr.
Alderman-at-Large Melbourne Moran, Jr.
Alderman Chris Thibodeau
Alderman John Sullivan
Alderman Derek Thibeault
Alderman Patricia Klee
Alderman Richard A. Dowd
Alderman-at-Large Lori Wilshire

NO PARKING ON CELINA AVENUE

MOTION BY ALDERMAN KLEE TO RECOMMEND FINAL PASSAGE

ON THE QUESTION

Chairman O'Brien

Yeah, that allows us to discuss the motion. Okay but the Committee members if you look at on your desk and probably hopefully all members, you'll see an amendment and the amendment is brought by yours truly. The amendment basically says...

Alderman Klee

Do you want me to make the motion?

Chairman O'Brien

Well, uh. Yeah. Okay, yes. Okay, why don't you.

Alderman Klee

Mr. Chairman, I'd like to make a motion to amend O-25-078 by replacing it with the hand out that was placed on the desk this

evening by imposing a 2-hour parking limit on Celina Ave.

MOTION BY ALDERMAN KLEE TO AMEND O-25-078 BY REPLACING IT WITH THE HANDOUT THAT WAS PLACED ON THE DESKS THIS EVENING BY IMPOSING A TWO HOUR PARKING LIMIT ON CELINA AVENUE

ON THE QUESTION

Chairman O'Brien

Very good. Okay if I could just speak briefly and it will be briefly. I listened to comments at the Aldermanic meeting and a lot of people brought up, I think Alderman Gouveia and rightfully so, that DeMoulas tractor trailers are using it. Also, it assists in the overflow from the Postal service. So by changing it from nothing to give something and try to work with the community in the spirit of compromise, we came up with 2 hours. That would mean DeMoulas can still park their trailers and hopefully off load them as expedient as a business can do.

Number 2, it will assist the postal workers who, because of shift change probably the lot is full, it's taking the overflow but they'll be able to move it at the end of 2 hours. So I will now - you have it before you. I'll open it up for discussion.

Alderman Gouveia

I'll speak, if you don't mind. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm okay with this amendment. I think its kind of a good happy medium. I'm willing to try it out. Obviously, hearing tonight from a resident who owns the building/property manager saying they want the parking ban, and from an employee saying they want the parking banned, I think this is a nice happy medium to see if this can work out. Should we find that it doesn't work out, I'd be fine with entertaining other options as well. But at this time, I don't see - I think a 2-hour time limit will still allow for the day to day operations and we'll kind of cut out what we're looking for at the cut out. So on its face, I don't see any issue with this.

Chairman O'Brien

Thank you.

Alderman Klee

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The issue I have in general with the parking ban on Celina Ave. and the two hour would be better than a full. So I will probably support the two hour but might not necessarily support the full. The reason for it is that we technically have a two hour ban for overnight parking that already exists. They talked about the fact that we've already moved them along and so on. I know that those businesses went through heck during all that time but my concern is that if we put a 2-hour parking ban here on Celina Avenue when do we stop? I'll be honest with you, and this is not being a nimby or anything else like this, it's just something that I actually witnessed today. At least one of the campers with a trailer on, I saw today parked on Concord Street there. So all we're doing is we're just moving them along to another place. We have a State Statute that says there's no parking on public property for camping, etc., and so on.

We have not put porta potties there. We have not put dumpsters there so we haven't given anybody an implied permission to be there. So whether we pass any of the other ordinances, I say, "we", the City, the P.D., and so on has a right to already move them along if they are camping there and so on. They don't have the right to be overnight. My fear is that we put this there and then what do we do the next time a new group shows up, we put another 2-hour parking ban? That's fine. You want to put a 2-hour parking ban on Concord Street, or West Hollis, or wherever you think that they may show up, that's fine but we're just going to put more and more pressure on our parking enforcement to have to run around and check to make sure chalking tires are doing whatever they have to do. I just don't think that this is a necessary solution. While I think it's better than completely and I will probably support the amendment, I don't think I can support the passage of it with an amendment. Thank you.

Chairman O'Brien

I will say in rebuttal to that. I don't swim against the rip tide. But the thing is, you know, if another problem in an area that does occur, I will remind you State law says an unregistered motor vehicle on the street can and will be towed in the City. That is current State law and is that correct, Ms. Stansfield? Yes. The intention of this, and I think Miss Stansfield who I worked with as the parking and with Chief Kenney, it's really not so much as the heavily handed enforcement as what Chief Kenney said before. Celina Ave. has been identified as a problem and it's affecting commerce of the city. So I thought of it and I came up with the compromise and to say 2 hours.

Now as with any amendment, or ordinance, or resolution written by any of us can be changed in the future, you know, or it

could be applied in other areas. But right now I asked at the beginning the meeting to stay centralized and focused. The question before us is only one street and that is Celina Avenue. So, you know, I remind you this has been identified as an issue and we need to look at this one singular issue.

Alderman Dowd

Yeah, I'm going to support the amendment. Last week and over the weekend, I went by Celina and I can say that everything looked fine. I did see during the week the Post Office guys must have been there the shift change, park out there for a short period of time till the people that are on shift leave. So I think the two hour will take care of the requirements. We can see how it goes but I think this is a good compromise and I think it will meet all of our requirements.

Alderman Sullivan

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Would it be possible, since Miss Stansfield is here to maybe lend some testimony to how this may impact her department as my colleague had mentioned?

Chairman O'Brien

You have read my mind. She was going to be right after Committee members I was going to open up. So without further ado, Director Stansfield, please.

Jill Stansfield, Parking Manager

Jill Stansfield, Parking Manager. I probably couldn't say it any better than what Alderman Gouveia said last week. That is I feel very strongly as well. We have USPS that's up there. We have Market Basket. We have businesses up there that were affected by the prior encampment. It is cleared up now and I do think putting in place a 2-hour ordinance would be a fair compromise. I am happy to report that we have the area is cleaned up but I do think that making it completely no parking would not be the best decision here. I think a 2-hour parking and we could always look at it down the road but I think starting here would be a good option for this area.

Chairman O'Brien

Okay. Further comment?

Alderman Jette

Thank you. So if I could through you ask Miss Stansfield. Don't we already have an ordinance that prohibits parking overnight?

Jill Stansfield, Parking Manager

Jill Stansfield, Parking Manager. Yes. This I believe would be 2-hour parking during the day as well though.

Alderman Jette

Yes. Okay. And if I could?

Chairman O'Brien

Alderman Jette, follow up.

Alderman Jette

Yes if could ask, you know, I guess this would be directed to you Mr. Chairman.

Chairman O'Brien

Oh boy.

Alderman Jette

So, you know, I thought the problem was that there were campers out there and this ordinance doesn't seem to be directed at

campers. It seems to be directed at any motor vehicle and I'm wondering, you know, if we're talking about campers, you know, parking overnight doesn't the current ordinance prohibit parking overnight and, you know, limiting parking to two hours during the day? Who are you targeting? What is the problem that you're trying to solve that isn't solved by the overnight parking ban?

Chairman O'Brien

Direct answer is who we are targeting - any motor vehicle that is taking a parking space over two hours. If it's a camper, bus, car, that's what we're looking at here. That simple.

Alderman Jette

And if I could follow up? So has there been a problem with parking or people parking on Celina Avenue during the day for more than two hours?

Chairman O'Brien

Yes. There has been in the past, yes. Director Stansfield would you like to add in on that please?

Jill Stansfield, Parking Manager

Yes, there were people parking for 24 hours or more than 24 hours, so it was day or night.

Chairman O'Brien

Okay.

Alderman Dowd

Yeah, I just wanted to say they had a discussion with DPW. One of the problems they were having with all the parking was for extended periods of time as they're having a problem plowing the snow which was affecting all the companies in the area, including the Post Office. So they would prefer that cars move so they can get the plowing done in the winter and that was one of the issues.

Alderman Gouveia

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It was my understanding of Celina Ave. - and please if there's somebody on staff who has a corrected version feel free to chime in - that this we kind of saw a spike in this area and on this road because at the time there was a gym nearby that was offering very favorable prices, and people with campers were able to get a nice shower, and shave for an affordable price. You're on a road that's off the main road but still kind of near everything and that was kind of how this area turned into more of a hot spot. That was my understanding of how we came into the situation at that location. That kind of, I think, answers maybe what my colleague from Ward 5 was asking maybe but.

Alderman Lopez

Why didn't we enforce the overnight parking ban if cars were there overnight?

Chairman O'Brien

I could directly attempt to answer to some degree but also refer to Ms. Stansfield. I think she would probably this is a wonderful opportunity for her to come up and explain how understaffed her division is. If you want to propose in next year's budget, which I strongly would encourage I'm sorry Mr. Mayor, but the thing is we don't have really around the clock protection to enforce some of the parking needs. So unfortunately, I admit this is a little bit of a Band-Aid but it's something that's gonna to help to address this. I think I'm going to turn it over to Miss Stansfield but I'm sure even at this current level of staffing of that particular division where they're understaffed, I don't think they're going to be up there every shift, unfortunately, you know, but they will put it on their radar in enforcement. Did I speak correctly Miss Stansfield and do you want to opine more on it?

Jill Stansfield, Parking Manager

Jill Stansfield Parking Manager. We do enforce overnight parking city wide. We do have one person that works the overnight shift so we can't hit the entire city so it takes time, but we do enforce Celina Ave. We have enforced Celina Ave. We worked

closely with the Police Department as far as when vehicles do get to a certain amount they end up being towed.

This did kind of escalate to a safety issue probably in the last six to nine months. So I did have my enforcement staff step back because they are not armed. They are not equipped to deal with some of these folks that do have mental health issues. So we did have to take a little bit of a step back but we have worked very closely with Deputy Chief Kenney and his team to try to resolve issues that were in place: unregistered vehicles, things that were over a certain amount in tickets. But it did take some coordination between departments because of staffing and the safety issues.

Alderman Lopez

Can I follow up to your comment, Mr. Chair? You suggested that I support the increasing department. Until we have a way for people to petition to put it on their street voluntarily, I would not support it because I think it is the people who need on street overnight parking are largely concentrated in the downtown area and their residents.

Chairman O'Brien

I am not going to rebut to that because for this Committee and the question at hand, that's apples and oranges.

Alderman Lopez

Thank you for bringing it up.

Alderman Klee

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. While I know you didn't care for the statement that I made that doing something like this is going to move them to another location, that is the point that I'm trying to make is why I feel that this does not resolve the problem. Currently, there isn't a problem there. There was a problem. It was moved. We have a State Statute that says that they can't do this. They cannot park there. They cannot camp there. Putting a 2-hour parking limit, I think, is just it's a precedent that we're setting that every single time that this is an issue and this is the issue that's there that is not an issue right now and that was the comment that I wanted to make. So thank you.

Chairman O'Brien

Okay. No, thank you. Chief Kenney, I did work with you in this proposal to some degree. Do you want to offer any comments on it?

Brian Kenney, Deputy Chief, Nashua Police Department

Thank you, Alderman. Yes, I'll share something briefly. Brian Kenney, Police Department. Alderman Gouveia brought up some of the context to this but I guess our two cents on this would be when this encampment started, it was because of the gym that is at that location. There was a, you know, you could be a member for$9.99 a month and that's why this initially started and then, of course, grew and grew and just for context, we had upwards of 5, 6, 7, campers there at any given time.

For the record, I'd like to point out that a few people have mentioned that this encampment was cleaned up and I just want to make sure everyone understands the situation. We didn't do it an encampment clean up on Celina Ave. So we basically had unregistered campers that were disabled along the side of the road because they've been there for so long. Parking Enforcement - I've talked to Jill about this numerous times. Parking Enforcement actually did ticket within their ability on overnight parking. Some of these folks were paying overnight parking tickets because the money was worth it to still stay there because they were saving on other things like rent and things like that. I'm not going to speak to, you know, individual situations because I don't know all the individual situations but I know there were some people there from out of town. I was up there with one of my guys when we issued a ticket and it was someone from Milford that decided to come here. So we didn't do a cleanup. We simply towed trailers and campers that were unregistered sitting on the roadway.

The reason why it grew so quickly is because we had to leave it there for a certain period of time. We didn't have – we have mom and pop tow companies that tow for the City. They have very small tow lots. So when we call for an RV to be towed for being unregistered, they can't fit that in their lot. So we had to come up with a city lot which we established. Risk Management worked really hard on this and a lot of other folks at City Hall to come up with a city lot, and to make sure it was fenced in and secure as we need it to be and when that went live over the summer, we simply showed up and towed unregistered campers for people that were asked to move probably 20 times already and said as soon as we have a place for these campers to go, we are going to tow you. So you might want to make arrangements now. Once that lot went open, we went up. We towed, I think, three campers that were unregistered and then everyone else that saw the tow truck show up just left. So I just don't – I don't want it to be confused with an encampment clean up because that's not what it was. We simply

towed unregistered vehicles which we all know are illegal to park on the street.

So I do think this legislation would help us do this enforcement but if I'm going to be honest with the Board of the three pieces of legislation up for discussion tonight, this is undoubtedly third in the pecking order as far as importance for the Police Department. So I guess I would just urge you not to spend so much time on this that we don't hit the others. I think the other two are super important and this although important, it would definitely be third on the pecking order. Thank you.

Chairman O'Brien

Okay, thank you.

Tim Cummings, Director of Administrative Services

Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman. For the record, Tim Cummings, Director of Administrative Services. So I want to just put some numbers to the conversation right now because as it was just referenced, the City had to create a parking lot to store the vehicles - the campers and the RVs in particular. Last year, it was around $10,000. We're planning on spending an additional $10,000 this year to bring it into compliance and that's just to make sure that we have a place to store the vehicles appropriately. As Deputy Chief Kenney pointed out, our tow companies can't store those RVs and campers on their lots and we have a requirement to keep them for a certain period of time and then try to dispose of them.

So then the other issue everyone needs to be aware of is besides the capital cost on setting up that parking lot, it costs the City about $1,000 per to - $500 each way. So we have to pay for it to go to the parking lot and then we have to go for it to be disposed of some place if we can find someone to dispose of it and we do not know what that cost would be. We have been quoted various numbers as what it would take to actually get these campers and RVs disposed of properly and that would be a cost on the City as well. So you need to keep that in mind. We don't really have an estimate for that to date. It's obviously going to be based on volume. Thank you.

Chairman O'Brien

Yeah, and I would like to add and Chief Kenney help me out if you want. I did ask the question - how does homeless people afford a camper? And it turns out, people/residents are going down there evidently and giving them the campers. It's the cheap way for a resident to dispose of a camper. Yet it's not doing us at all as a city any particular favors, you know, and I'm concerned about them. I'm concerned for the public health of the unsheltered. Yes, they're sheltered within the camper but it's the end of life that the original owner didn't want the particular camper anymore and so now, it's got to go through more probably of its life expectancy so. But again, I want to keep my own advice to stay focused on the question on just the Celina Ave. Yes, it's just this one particular street. We'll address others if they come up in the future and this ordinance can be changed if needs to be in the future as well if we find out it's no longer an issue. But this will be the potential stop gap for this particular street right for now and if it works, fine. If it doesn't work, we're going to have to put our thinking caps on again.

Alderman Dowd

So the question on the floor is the amendment? So maybe we ought to vote on the amendment and get to the final passage.

Chairman O'Brien

Yes. So any other conversations on the amendment?

MOTION CARRIED

MOTION BY ALDERMAN KLEE TO RECOMMEND FINAL PASSAGE AS AMENDED

ON THE QUESTION

Alderman Lopez

So I came to the Committee, we're doing the work but I cannot support this at the full Board because my understanding of what we're saying is: 1) this is gonna cost the city thousands of dollars per RV that's towed; 2) obviously, that was somebody's abode that we are removing. It's not breaking up a campsite, it's just taking away all the places that people who are camping were living in, and then 3) is we have existing ordinances that can be enforced. We are not sure they can be enforced safely so we would just be doing more of that. For those reasons, I don't think I can support this at the full Board.

Chairman O'Brien

Thank you.

Alderwoman Kelly

I had similar concerns that we are just picking a place where there has been camping and playing whack-a-mole. So this isn't just about parking spots or 2-hour limits. We need to look at long-term solutions and I will not be supporting this either.

Chairman O'Brien

I love that game with my grandchildren though.

Alderman Sennott

I like to play the game at Fun World too but I don't like to play it in my civic life. Yeah, I share the sentiments of the last two speakers. This is the trailer-based encampment that got media attention. It was on WMUR. There have been others of similar nature that didn't get that media attention that were addressed behind the scenes that didn't follow up with retroactive parking bans. I'll hold my comments as to why I think that is but that's the facts, that happened and for that, I won't support it at the full Board.

Chairman O'Brien

That's fine.

Alderman Thibeault

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm not on this Board either but I'm going to support Alderman Gouveia and his Ward. I talked to an officer last night that actually said that it is fine right now as it is but he fears that it is going to happen again over there and it's a more of a preventative measure. So I am supporting it or will support it.

Alderman Klee

Thank you. I'll probably be the only descending vote on this Committee. I still have the same fear that this is not an issue right now. We are trying to fix a problem that immediately doesn't exist. We already have laws on the books that if an unregistered vehicle was there, it should be towed. We have new legislation in that says if you get multiple tickets and so on, that creates tow ability whether they've been paid or not if I'm not mistaken. So for this reason, I don't feel that this is necessary. I mean one of the things that we learned up in the State House is that we're trying to fix a problem at least at the moment that doesn't exist and I just think it sets a bad precedent. We're going to have to do this to the entire City. So for that reason, I will not be supporting this.

Chairman O'Brien

Very good. Anybody else?

MOTION CARRIED

O-25-079

Endorser: Mayor Jim Donchess
Alderman-at-Large Melbourne Moran, Jr.
Alderman Tyler Gouveia
Alderman John Sullivan
Alderman-at-Large Ben Clemons
Alderman Derek Thibeault
Alderman-at-Large Lori Wilshire

PROHIBITING CAMPING ON PUBLIC PROPERTY

MOTION BY ALDERMAN KLEE TO RECOMMEND FINAL PASSAGE

ON THE QUESTION

Mayor Donchess

Well I mean there's a lot that can be said here. Our city employees to begin with have been doing a great job in addressing a

very difficult problem. I mean we have - you've heard from Ms. Muccioli and Ms. Bagley but they and their Community Health workers have been reaching out to the homeless population for a long time. They're under selling their accomplishments a little bit. I mean they've moved quite a few people into housing, and into treatment, constantly working on it. So they need to be commended for doing what they are with very limited resources.

The P.D. - we've heard from Deputy Brian Kenney, same thing. I mean they've been for years working the homeless population, getting to know people, meeting them, trying to help, trying to manage a difficult situation. We've heard from many members of the community who would, you know, certainly oppose this next ordinance based upon their compassion, and human values, and certainly we have to appreciate their thoughts. But we do have an issue that has to be dealt with right now which is the Pine Street Extension and we wouldn't be here were it not for that. I mean you just heard from Brian Kenney that since we met last time. There was a guy who strangled someone else. I mean what are we going to wait for murder, rape over there before we do anything? They need a tool to do something.

Now many members of the Board of Aldermen are looking for a plan to develop a resource center, which we are working on and we think we will have a plan in short order as to where to locate that and hopefully how to fund it. Many speakers have talked about how effective the housing first approach is and it is. There's no question about that but this is an approach that costs tens of millions of dollars. Ms. Muccioli has researched things and has given us examples in Rockford, Illinois; I think Newark, New Jersey, and Lowell, Massachusetts. Well municipalities in those States are in a totally different world than we here in New Hampshire. I don't know the specifics of Illinois and New Jersey but I can guarantee you that they get far, far, far, far more municipal aid than Nashua does.

But I knew I do know some specifics about Lowell. Lowell receives on an annual basis, $258 million of school aid and $30 million of general aid. Now Nashua, a little smaller, we get about 20% of that amount. So they're getting more than $200 million a year - more than we're getting. Now if we were getting that money, we could reduce property taxes by 80% and spend $20 or $30 million a year on homelessness but we don't get that. We get virtually nothing from the State. On the homeless issue, we get nothing from the State of New Hampshire. We get no general aid, no support, no help. All they do is complain that property taxes are too high and property taxes are high. So the problem is and too high. We do not have the resources to spend $10 or $20 million a year on any new project whether it be this or any other one. This is just my opinion.

The shelter over on Spring Street cost $9 million to build and millions of dollars a year to operate. We could spend $9 million and millions to operate a 90-person shelter but, you know, people are looking for a solution. Would that solve homelessness in Nashua? I doubt it. That shelter didn't solve homelessness in Nashua. So I think we've just got to use the resources we have to just make things as much better as we can and the resource center certainly will be a step forward and this is something that Ms. Bagley and Ms. Muccioli have worked on, and have advocated for, and I think in the end, they will be successful in seeing that get off the ground, and it will help but it won't solve homelessness, and it is not a housing solution, and it will probably cost several hundred thousand dollars a year to operate on top of the money we're spending now but it will not solve homelessness, and it won't solve Pine Street Extension. So no one who has spoken other than Brian Kenney has given us any insight into how we deal with a camp and encampment that has become so large and so disruptive that it is dangerous to the people who are there, and to the people around it, and to the officers who have to respond. So, you know, unless there's a different solution as to how to deal with a situation like that, we sort of do have to play whack-a-mole don't we? I mean we need to somehow move that along, hopefully find other places for the people to go, maybe Public Health and everybody can help some of those people find housing, some get into treatment, and improve the situation that way. But without the tools to deal with a situation like that, I mean I think we've been warned and when something worse than a strangulation occurs over there, I think the community will know who to look to.

So I believe, in my opinion, and I get everybody who's been talking about how we need to treat everybody as individuals and certainly with humanity but are we really treating the people with the Pine Street Extension with humanity when we let that situation exist? I mean how are we going to answer the next person who gets strangled? Oh well, you know, we were worried about someone else's humanity or something like that but it's dangerous and it's a short-term situation that I believe we've got to deal with. Now I know that's not going to please everyone but that's at least my opinion and you asked for it.

Chairman O'Brien

Thank you, Mr. Mayor. I'm going to ask now before I recognize people in the chamber one of our guests, Assistant Chief Kenney, do you have anything you want to add to this?

Brian Kenney, Deputy Chief Nashua Police Department

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I don't have anything at this time over and above what I said earlier. I acknowledge I have the luxury of not making this decision but I just want to make sure I provide as much real information and enough facts for you all to make the decision and to reiterate what the Mayor just said, it is just not a safe location. It's not safe for the public passing through and I would double down and say it's not safe for the folks that reside there. Thank you.

Chairman O'Brien

Stay live for a second because I do have a question of you.

Brian Kenney, Deputy Chief Nashua Police Department

Yes, Sir.

Chairman O'Brien

Do you feel by us passing this will give you more tools? Not to displace people but to assist them and direct them into proper channels, you know, as compared to muddling away in an unsafe campground. This may help out some of the people that maybe some think their we're gonna affect but it may be a little bit of tough love trying to help to get them to a solution. Do you agree? Would the police react similar to that?

Brian Kenney, Deputy Chief Nashua Police Department

Yes, Sir. I understood your question. Thank you for asking it. If you're asking for my opinion, I think it would give us the tools to move folks. As I stated before, my goal isn't to incarcerate, or penalize, or any of those things and I think if we do it the right way, I gave you a Nashua example and I also gave you an example that I learned about yesterday morning out in California of when enforcement came through there was not much enforcement to be done. But the fact that enforcement is possible was a motivating factor in some capacity for folks to engage. Some engage in services and some who aren't willing to do so to engage in vacating the premises. So I do think it would give us a tool. I would reiterate that, you know, even when we do enforcement, we do it in the form of a ticket and then there's a second layer of compassion, right?

The second layer is when you do come to the court appearance. We aren't getting blood from a stone. You're going to be asked to engage in services and engage in your own situation. I've been affiliated in some capacity with the drug court for over 10 years, right, and if anyone's familiar with the drug court model, they incentivize people to engage in their own situation, right? So this isn't an official homeless court or homeless drug court, although we do control our own Prosecutor's Office, but it would be a version of that. If you would like to avoid a fine, obviously you can have a trial if you feel you're innocent and haven't committed an offense. That's everyone's right but you do have an option. You have an option to have that trial, or to plead guilty and pay a fine, or simply go engage with Director Bagley and LaTonya Muccioli and their team and come back with a letter in a month that says, hey I'm doing my best. Here's what I'm doing and with a signature from our Public Health Department at the bottom. I've talked about this with the ladies at the Health Department in trying to make a system like that work. You don't have to take it.

The other the other option is enforcement.

Chairman O'Brien

Thank you, Chief Kenney.

Alderman Klee

Mr. Chairman if I may?

Chairman O'Brien

You may. Chief Kenney, could you come back please?

Brian Kenney, Deputy Chief Nashua Police Department

Yes, Sir.

Alderman Klee

Thank you so much. I appreciate everything that you've said and everything what everybody does here. But I guess my question would be if this were to pass tonight and then at the final at the Board of Aldermen, what time frame are you looking because you said you would notice people, you would give them a heads up, and so on, and I assume that we'd be working with Public Health too to try to assist them. What time frame are you looking because I know Public Health has been working with these people already. So what time frame are you looking to move them?

Brian Kenney, Deputy Chief Nashua Police Department

Well Alderman Klee, thank you for the question. January and February is coming quickly and I want to have that at the forefront of our mind when we're making this decision and potentially doing enforcement. So if this were to hypothetically pass the full Board, I've already had a discussion with Risk Management who helps us with providing signage, and posting, and things like that. I would want to slap a big sign on the front of our old training building at Pine Street Extension the day after passage saying this is the law, this is the ordinance, this is the State RSA. I talked to Public Health about getting a meeting in the short term so we can come up with this plan but have a date established on that wall of that building the day after passage to say this date in October or November, whatever date we choose, is the date and you're going to be seeing us between now and then. You're going to be seeing services, you're going to be seeing the nonprofits, you're going to be seeing Public Health. Whatever help you need, please come and ask them but this is the line in the sand and the P.D. is going to be coming through on this day.

There's a few pieces of legislation on for tonight but that would be to vacate the premises but it also deals with the campers. I should have mentioned this in my previous statement but if you'll allow me to say it now, I'd appreciate it. We learned the hard way on Crown Street earlier this year. We let that encampment go. We didn't have a place to put the campers, right? It was all the hard work the City did to find that lot. Director Cummings talked about how expensive that was but we didn't have a place to put them. We had campers filled with rats, filled with human waste sitting at the end of Crown Street. So we learned the hard way. Once we let these campers - and excuse me, I don't remember who mentioned it earlier in the meeting - but some of these are donated, right, with good intentions. People know that there's folks that need shelter and they will come and drop off an old camper. I pulled at least two examples of that on Crown Street and people populate the campers when they get donated but the problem is these are old, clunky trailers and campers. So if they stay stationary for any period of time, they break down. The tires go flat, the batteries go dead. You know, the rodents come in, things like that, and they're never able to move. So even when we pick up the encampment, the folks leave but the trashed campers stay behind.

So that piece of that other piece of legislation surrounding the campers would allow my officers to go and say hey listen, here's the deal. You can't have campers on public land anymore, right? We know in the back of our mind with the problem that arises when they stay for any period of time and we give them time to move them. Call a friend, call the person that's letting you use it, right, call for your own tow if you have the funds to do that. But on this date, you're going to be given tickets and if you don't pay your tickets, we're going to tow it, right? So all of this will be messaged out ahead of time.

Chairman O'Brien

Okay, thank you Chief. I'm gonna recognize now...

Alderman Klee

Mr. Chairman?

Chairman O'Brien

What?

Alderman Klee

I did have a follow up question.

Chairman O'Brien

Okay, a follow up Chief Kenney.

Alderman Klee

Thank you, thank you.

Brian Kenney, Deputy Chief Nashua Police Department

Yes, Sir.

Alderman Klee

I do have other questions, too, but. I appreciate everything you've said and I appreciate the sign, I appreciate that but, and I

know you said something about you would put October or November. I'm just curious as to what you think is – is it 2 weeks, 3 weeks, 1 week that you would be - and I know you're not the one necessarily that's gonna be making the decision but I don't know what timeframe you give those on Celina Ave. So that's I guess what I'm looking for is a guesstimated time that you think?

Brian Kenney, Deputy Chief Nashua Police Department

Sure. I want to acknowledge that this is not my unilateral decision to make but my opinion Alderman is that we give a period of time. I know LaTonya can probably speak a little better than me about best practice as far as how much time should be given but I think, you know, whether that's 30 days - and I'm sure she can give you that number - whether 30 or 45 days, whatever it may be but I think when public safety is at the forefront of this, I don't necessarily think 30 days is a reasonable amount of time. I know when I attended the class yesterday in Sacramento, they gave 15-day notice. So my opinion only, I think a 10- or 15-day notice with the public safety issues we have at hand is appropriate. If there was a situation where we needed to break up an encampment and I didn't have those public safety concerns, there could be a longer amount of time if that's what best practices call for but I think 10 to 15 days would be appropriate in this case.

Alderman Klee

May I?

Chairman O'Brien

A follow up again?

Alderman Klee

Not a follow up but I have more comment that I want to make.

Chairman O'Brien

Can you hold the comment? Okay, go ahead. Have your comment.

Alderman Klee

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know that the difference between this ordinance that we have here and the State Statute is basically written permission because to be honest with you I think when we talked at the last meeting, the fact that we put up port-a-potties and dumpsters, everything kind of gave an implied permission. So I appreciate that and so on.

I also appreciate everything that the Mayor just said. I came into this meeting today with no decision. I still have a horrible pit in my stomach about any decision I'm making. I am leading towards supporting this because of the lack of safety. I would like to see the number of days and I know that that's not necessarily what this ordinance says Mr. Chairman and I appreciate your probably chastising me in a few moments, but I would like to see what the plan is and I would love to hear from anybody what the plan is. I mean at this point, I'm probably going to support this even though it goes against all my moral compass but thank you.

Chairman O'Brien

Okay. For expedience, I'm going to hold off before I refer to members of the Committee and to Aldermen here because we have - and graciously they've shown up - Directors here. I have several Directors that want to speak and I think if they speak, that will give us the information to absorb so that we'll be able to debate and to move to the correct decision. So with that in mind, Director Cummings.

Tim Cummings, Administrative Services Director

Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman. For the record, Tim Cummings, Director of Administrative Services. Just very quickly since this was touched upon, particularly with D.C. Kenney's comments relative to the encampment breakup which will be a multi-jurisdictional approach and we will work collaboratively together. Admin. Services' role when it comes to this is really procuring the third-party group that comes in and does the cleanup. Essentially at the beginning, an evaluation will be made as to whether it can be done internally with city resources. I think it's going to be pretty fair to say with this particular encampment, that's not going to be the case. So then we will look to hire a third party to do it. We'll need to coordinate with that third party. That's something that we will work very closely with Public Health, and the Police Department, so on, and so forth but the cost estimate for this particular encampment breakdown I would say is going to fall in the range of between $30

and $50,000. So that's already budgeted. We have that monies available to us. We know from past experience that that's around what it would take for us to clean up such an encampment. So I just want you to have those details as well. Thank you.

Chairman O'Brien

Thank you, Director Cummings. Ms. Muccioli do you have something to comment please?

LaTonya Muccioli, Housing Services Officer, Public Health Department

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. LaTonya Muccioli, Housing Services Officer with Public Health. The best practices federally that have been recommended are a 30-day encampment closure based on the 19 strategies for closing encampments humanely. Typically as we've done it in the past, we've given a two-week window of time and as Deputy Chief Kenney had stated, it's usually due to safety concerns. So I believe when we closed Crown Street, I think it might have been a three-week window. We did have one in Fields Grove and just due to the lack of an access road and other safety concerns with that one, we gave it a two-week notice. So we'll post the signage but also Nashua P.D. and Public Health go out and verbally speak with folks letting them know that the encampments closing, invite them in to schedule appointments to work on housing options. We're frequently calling the shelters and seeing what's available.

As we've been discussing these ordinances and as you guys saw, there's some folks that came from the encampment to speak. They are aware of the potential closure of this site so we have already gotten someone into treatment and there are some people that are coming into the office looking for other housing options.

Chairman O'Brien

Okay, thank you. I've seen numerous hands on this so I'm going to prioritize to Committee members first, okay. After that being said, I'm going to start here and go around the horseshoe and then I will come back to get our most valued Aldermen as well, you know, but first, I think, it's the courtesy let's listen to our Committee first. So I'll start with Alderman Dowd. Thank you.

Alderman Dowd

Okay. This ordinance and the ordinances we're considering tonight are not going to solve the homeless problem. You know if we could do that one meeting, we should be doing it across the State or the country. But we were asked by the Police Department to pass these ordinances to give them a tool to help solve this problem. So, and I hesitate to pass this particular ordinance without some place for these people to go, but there are three groups of people: there's homeless, there are drug addicted, and there are criminals. I think we all know where the criminals ought to go but the homeless, I know the police have talked to them several times. They're going to be very compassionate and find places for them to go. The drug addicted is getting, as they mentioned, St. Joseph's Hospital is working with them and the Public Health is working with them to try and help them get through there. But we have to address this problem one piece at a time.

Now as mentioned earlier, it's getting cold and the encampments tend to disappear somewhat. So that's going to happen but it's my opinion that the warming shelters should already be open. It's cold out there and I know it's a staffing issue and a cost issue. That's something we can fix. The people that want to support this are some that say that the budget's too high. Well if we're going to solve this problem, we have to spend some money. It's that simple.

I think that we need short-term and long-term solutions. You know building a facility, you know, that doesn't happen overnight. That's a long-term solution and there are many questions to answer before it can be built. I've addressed with city staff, and I'm not going to mention who and I'm not going to mention where, but there are places in the City that can be used to house people, especially in the cold. It's short term, a year maybe two depending on number of other factors we haven't talked about yet, and we can get the people someplace to be, warm, sheltered. One of the issues I've heard coming back from city staff is, how do we man it? We just can't let people go in. We have to have people to staff it. So we would need a plan - a short-term plan and a long-term plan from our city staff to solve this problem and we can act on them one piece at a time.

This one piece is helping the Police Department go in and solve some of the major issues. We've heard that the trailers, which is the next piece of ordinance by the way, the trailers are where all the crime is happening. So, you know, I think the next piece of legislation should be a no brainer. We've got to get rid of that because that's where the major problem's happening. The police are going to be compassionate. I've talked to several of them and, you know, they don't want to go and throw somebody out in the cold and say, hey go away and don't come back. They're going to work with Public Health to solve this, to give them some place to go, and hopefully that can be resolved in the short term.

In the last few days, I've talked with a Pastor from a local church and another organization that operates out of Infant Jesus'

old school that are dealing with the homeless and there are a whole bunch of other agencies that deal with the homeless, Front Door Agency - I'm deeply involved with them and you should hear some of the stories that they've solved. It's a numbers issue and there aren't enough of those facilities to handle all of the people that need help.

So the homeless issue is one point and people say well, you know, it's because of rents and it's because of availability but we have several major building programs in motion. At least three active and another one that's coming with hundreds of houses that ought to lower the rent and make availability for more housing, but that doesn't happen overnight. It takes time to build a building. Trust me, I've a lot of experience in that. The short-term issue is we have to have places for them to go. Hopefully staff can resolve that and give them a place to go. I know there are issues involved with the places I've suggested but you know what if we have a long-term issue, it might not be an issue in itself. So, you know, I'm going to support this because we asked the police to help us solve the problem and they had some issues that they had that they needed a little more emphasis on the laws to help allow them to do that.

Now on the Pine Street Extension, we've heard from the Police and the Fire Department. There's major crime going on there. There's a potential of fires. Do we want the entire park burned down? With the dryness lately, although we've had a rain a couple days, but, you know, the two high schools now have banned their track teams from running in Mine Falls and many of the activities that used to go on in Mine Falls don't go on anymore. People that even walk in Mine Falls don't walk alone anymore. We have a beautiful park and we're probably going to add to it with a new development off of Veteran's Parkway. But is that going to be the next place? I mean we've got to take action and if this doesn't work out, we can always come back and change the law. We have that capability but for me, we need to support our Police Department and our agencies in the short term and the long term and the short term is now. It's getting cold and if we have places we can house these people and keep them warm and serviced, that goes a heck of a long way to fixing the issues that we have right now.

Chairman O'Brien

Okay, thank you. Keeping and following what members of the Committee next on the list is Alderman Klee. Did you have anything?

Alderman Klee

No, it was Alderman Sullivan.

Alderman Sullivan

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will save the Committee some time because what I'm going to say is going to apply to both ordinances. So I'm not going to repeat myself. I'll speak once on both questions because I feel the same about both and that I will be supporting them both. Not a decision, especially after hearing the public comment that I'm going to arrive at easily. However in the lead up to tonight and then since last week when we had the conversation and move this into committee, I went back to not ancient history but just a year ago and somebody had mentioned it about the situation at Crown Street. We were here a year ago and the issue for whatever reason apparently it's, you know, we obviously have great city staff that is trying to do good work and keep up with it but it is just obviously become unmanageable. What I see is my responsibility, I'm not going to speak for anybody else, but my responsibility, I have a fiduciary responsibility to the citizens of my Ward and the city to make legislation that is in their best interest for their public safety and to improve their quality of life for the life that they live here in Nashua.

So basically, we were we were here a year ago and now we're back and it seems to be, I don't think I ever saw the situation at Crown Street, but I see the situation at Pine Street. It seems to be worse and I don't know what happened. I don't know what changed but I think that if there's a situation that keeps recurring and in fact is getting worse, then I think we need to change course. It was mentioned tonight that successful cities have enforcement and resources. To me, these ordinances represent a catalyst. It's a catalyst for us to force ourselves to have the conversation because nobody, again, strike that please, I don't want to talk for anybody around the horseshoe. I'll talk for myself. I don't want to do this without compassion and what I heard tonight from Deputy Kenney and from all of our city Directors is that we're going to lead with compassion to solve this problem. I want to make sure that, you know, the enforcement piece of the of the formula is there and that the resources come right behind it. I realize that that's coming before us, and I understand that, and I'll be eager to see what those look like now that we have the enforcement piece in place. To me, the message was not lost by Fire and Police that this is an unsafe situation and I think we have to solve the problem as Mayor Donchess alluded to.

It was also mentioned that the dollars that we spent could be allocated in a different way and to that, I would ask a rhetorical question of why haven't we? If we have those monies that we're spending on resources, where is that plan to say, okay, now we're gonna take this and apply it to this and manage the other part of the problem.

In closing, I'll say that Nashua pretty much since Labor Day has been on the news a little too much for my liking. What I heard

tonight and the press release that I saw earlier today, that's enough. I literally go to bed, I hold my breath, and cross my fingers that there's nothing that happens horrible overnight that I'm going to see the next day from Nashua. So for that, I'm going to support both of these ordinances and I'll leave my comments there. Thanks.

Chairman O'Brien

Thank you.

Alderman Thibodeau

Thank you. My comments are going to be even more brief because Alderman Dowd, and Alderman Sullivan, and even the Mayor took most of it. From everything I've heard tonight, I think one of the things I feel was getting missed is a lot of people kept mentioning, you know, these aren't going to solve homelessness. I think that's always been what's written in here is nothing in here claimed to do that. They were to solve two immediate issues and it is a really big problem. I agree that there's going to be budgetary things that and being one that's critical of the budget, things that matter the most should not be at the mercy of things that matter least. I've expressed those concerns of what I think mattered least in the city and I would have rather see those funds pointed towards this and I could write a list but I won't. So on that I will be supporting both these and I look forward to moving towards addressing the bigger problem after.

Chairman O'Brien

All right, thank you. I'm going to start as I announced before on this side of the room and we're going to go down of our guest Aldermen and let you have your time to speak on it. But first, I do have one other Committee member that wants to say an additional thing.

Alderman Klee

And I'll make this as quickly as I'm capable of. I just wanted to share a quick story. Yesterday, I met with a nonprofit group in Pine Street Extension and when I got there, the door wasn't open and this is a community nonprofit. It's the Community, I want to make sure I have this right, Engagement Training Center and I know Director Bagley and LaTonya Muccioli also are probably aware of this program that does a lot of good things that we want it to. But when I got there, the door was locked and I had a knock on the door, and she came, and she opened the door, and I sat and I met with her and she said, can you make sure you lock the door behind you? And the reason why she did that was because she'd had a number of people just walking in to her place. She's there to give help but they weren't there to get help, they wanted to use the bathroom. They in some cases were a little bit harassing and so on. So she was feeling very concerned. For a person who tells me how much they help and they do all this and they have concern, that started making me feel that we need to put this in place.

Prior to that I was - and even when I came in here, I sat on the fence and so on and listening to everybody's comments. But hearing what has happened there over the last 24 hours, I think it's time. If this is primarily written to move that in place, then so be it. Thank you.

Chairman O'Brien

Okay.

Alderwoman Kelly

Thank you. There is a sentiment expressed that it's enough and I agree and what it's enough of is that we're sitting around here creating a false narrative that we don't know what to do because we've been told repeatedly what to do. We've heard from our Public Health Department. We've heard from organizations that work in this every single day. It's not our job as Aldermen to know everything. It's to listen and we've chosen to do smaller little pieces instead of a bigger approach to this.

I believe we were told $431,707 has been spent on reactive response and the Alderman who just spoke before me has told us that we actually tried to clean up an encampment a year ago. So since that encampment to now, we spent almost a half a million dollars on reacting. So while it feels easy to say we're going to put $60,000 towards cleaning up this encampment, let's do that. That's what the police say they need. That's what the fire say they need. It's a safety hazard. It's not going to fix the problem and until we continue to start looking at that - I was just at the Housing Conference last Thursday. We have an incredibly high cost of living here - $585,000 is the standard cost for a house right now, which means that a family needs to make $182,000 to afford a house and that is only pushing up our homelessness issue. I'm not saying it's just us, federal, State funding, all those things are pushing down on this but to stand here and say, oh we just don't know how to fix it. We do. We've been told. We've decided to put our funding elsewhere. I support our Fire. I support our Police. When do we start supporting Public Health and the people who have been telling us how to fix this?

Chairman O'Brien

We're going to go down the line. Patience is a virtue. Thank you. I wanted to the next speakers to keep in mind the question on the table, okay, which is prohibiting camping on public property. I hope you will speak to that particular portion. You're welcome to do so and that's to keep it going.

Alderman Thibeault

Thank you, Mr. President or Mr. Chair, I'm gonna...

Chairman O'Brien

Well thank you for the promotion.

Alderman Thibeault

I'm gonna speak like my peer over in Ward 9. Just gonna try to do it just once as long as people don't decide to attack me personally. So, you know, people have called me over the last couple of weeks not humane in this situation but if you look at my history the four years I've been on this Board, all my votes have been for compassion of the people of the city. All of the people of the city no matter who they were. That's in my votes. You see it. It's things I've said. First term I was here, I was irritated about this problem because I didn't feel I could solve it. I want problems that I can solve and this one was one that was more complex than anything I'd seen in any of my work anywhere else before. It was frustrating because, you know, you want to try to fix this problem. These ordinances that we have on the table today, that's not what we're trying to do. We're trying to determine whether or not we allow our police to do a job that needs to be done currently right now.

According to the police officer I talked to last night, only three of us on this Board have gone and toured the camps - Alderwoman Kelly, Alderman Sullivan, and myself. I was there last night. You were not brought up Alderman Sennott so you could talk to the Police.

Alderman Sennott

I didn't go with them.

Alderman Lopez

Yeah as a point of order, I also did too.

Alderman Thibeault

Well I'm talking so you can speak when you…

Chairman O'Brien

Excuse me. Alderman Lopez, please. Across the table you have something to say, you will be recognized as we go down through the order.

Alderman Lopez

Mr. Chair, I think I just...

Chairman O'Brien

Excuse me, are you challenging the Chair?

Alderman Lopez

I am explaining to the Chair what personal...

Chairman O'Brien

The Chair does not want to hear it right... (Interruption by Alderman Lopez – inaudible). What the Chair wants right now, please, is decorum and right now the gentleman…

Alderman Lopez

The Chair should enforce decorum.

Chairman O'Brien

…has the right to speak. You will, I guarantee it, have a chance to speak and you may address anything at that particular time but what we need now Gentlemen and Ladies is cooler heads and decorum, okay, and that's all I'm requesting.

Alderman Thibeault

What I said was true because it was what the Officer said to me. Now if you went with somebody else, the Officer wouldn't know that. So I'm not saying anything that isn't true per the Officer that told me that. So let's just keep that in mind. When you guys speak, you can say I went by myself. I went with the one of the health workers. That's fine but I'm just telling you what the Police went. I went down and I walked all of Cove Trail with the Police Officer. It is in bad shape. It is going to be a public health risk. It is. It's going to be an environmental risk according to the Police I was with.

We walked in there. I met a man, a nice man. He came out and talked to me, talked to me and the Police Officer and he explained that he was getting his feet back on the ground. He was looking for an apartment and he was having trouble finding a landlord that would rent to him and his wife. He was concerned about the safety in the camp. So do we care about him? I care about him. I want him to be safe. I want him and his wife to be safe. He literally said that piece of the camp over on the Pine Street Extension is dangerous. He said, these are his words, he heard that a woman was almost raped there the other night. Now that might be the strangulation case. I don't know. His words not mine and he was worried for the safety of his wife.

When we walked up, we were walking towards the car and we met another woman who was not from here. She was biking in. She was here because she was leaving in a domestic abuse situation. We asked her why she was here, what she was doing. She was obviously running from that situation but she was in those camps trying to help other people who were running from situations like that. Again, we want to keep these people safe.

You know after we went up to the Eversource property, somebody said Eversource is supposed to clean that up. It's not cleaned up. It's really bad. We went up all the way up to Candy Cane Lane and the Officer told me that he believes that if you went past the Candy Cane, you're gonna find people living out there. Now last week on the meeting that Ms. Muccioli ran, she said there was 10 people out there and they did not want help. If they're way out there, I think there's more people out there. We could have probably counted 100 shopping carts in those woods never mind all the trash and filth that were in there. Is that the way we want our situations to be? Again, everybody said this, Alderman Dowd said it. We do not want the Police to act without compassion. You know, I think his name was Mr. Doucette that was here last week that Ms. Johnson mentioned. No one is looking to arrest someone like this Mr. Doucette. He's living the life the way he wants to live it. He's not causing any trouble but there are crimes being committed, real crimes.

I liked how Officer Kenney had said that, you know, you give them that violation then they have to come in and when they come in, they can be offered those services. Now I know our Health Department's going down there but maybe this is someone that was slipped through the cracks, or maybe they're deeper into the woods, or whatever. They're getting a chance to get help.

And we went to a couple of other places where, again, some encampments either looked like they were active or could have been inactive. We weren't sure. When we went back to Pine Street, there was literally four cops there at that time. We didn't stop, we just we drove out after that but it's a situation and if you're not going into those woods and looking at what's going on in there and understanding, you know - Fire Chief Buxton, Deputy Chief Kenney, I don't believe either one of these men are non-compassionate at all. I believe they're very compassionate and that's why they're in the positions they are in. They are good people and they care about the city and they care about the people that are out there. So I don't see why passing this is such an inhumane situation.

And again I'll repeat before I get attacked by all the rest of the Aldermen here, I said what the Policeman said to me. You can explain what you've done, I'm explaining what I've done. The first meeting we had with the businesses a few weeks back, a month ago where some of us were at, I clearly said - and I've been consistent since that day, we need to give the Police some teeth to do their job. That does not mean arresting everyone. It just means to give them the ability to do what is right in the camp that is turning out to be very, very dangerous for the people outside and inside the camp. So let's do this. Please pass this thing. Thank you.

Chairman O'Brien

Alderman Jette. We're gonna go right around, Alderman Sennott and we've got to come up over here. So, patience please.

Alderman Jette

So, you know, this legislation I guess is, you know, I guess it starts back with the Grants Pass case where, you know, this Town called "Grants Pass" had passed a similar ordinance and, you know, the District Court and Court of Appeals found that it was unconstitutional because it was, you know, in violation of the 8th Amendment which prohibits cruel and unusual punishment. It went to the Supreme Court and the Supreme Court reversed that decision.

It was a 9, excuse me, a 6-3 decision and, you know, the judges who have been labeled conservative judges, you know, voted and said, you know, that the 8th Amendment, you know, it's not a violation of the 8th Amendment because this has not reached the punishment stage yet because, you know, you can't be punished until you're found guilty. In their ordinance if you didn't pay the fine, the penalty was a fine and if you didn't pay the fine and they accumulated above a certain amount, then you possibly could be sent to jail. They said it didn't reach cruel and unusual until you were actually sent to jail.

The three judges who dissented, you know, argued against that. I would say just because, you know, the Supreme Court - not my favorite judges, you know, just because they said that you can pass an ordinance like this, in my opinion, doesn't mean we should pass an ordinance like this. As the dissenters in that opinion said, you know, that unless you have a place for these people to go, you know, maybe it is unconstitutional to bar them from – you're basically people who have no place to sleep, no place to live, and you're banning them from public property without an alternative. You know, what are they going to do?

I heard, you know, the Deputy talk about how, you know, the Police Department they're very compassionate and they're not going to - this ordinance doesn't allow them to send anybody to jail. The only penalty is a fine. So these people are homeless. They can't afford to pay for a place to sleep. Where are they going to come up with money to pay these fines? These citations that we're authorizing the Police to issue, they're pieces of paper and it says, you know, you got to pay 100 - you know whatever the amount is. They don't have the money. They're not going to pay it. What's going to - what's the enforcement? You know we don't have any mechanism to force these people to do anything other than, you know, remove their tents, remove their campers, remove the places where they're living, and along with that, all of their possessions - their papers, their birth certificates, you know, the stuff they need to live, you know, to find jobs, to get to get beyond where they are. We're just going to hire a company and have them just clean this all up and I understand.

I mean, I'm a big fan of Mine Falls. I spent a lot of time there in spite of not my being seen by your Police Officer friend, I spent a lot of time there. I'm very familiar with it and, you know, it really breaks my heart to see the condition that it's in but, you know, we've got to come up with a plan to allow, you know, to do something with these people.

Now it's been pointed out that there are three types of people. Other people have said this. The homeless, they're addicts, and they are criminals. The Deputy pointed out this case where somebody got strangled, you know. Well I read the press release on that case. It was people known to each other. They're a couple. They were out together, I think, looking for a phone. I don't know if one of them lost the phone or whatever but they were out together and the guy attacked his partner - the woman. It was a domestic violence case. I read about domestic violence cases Deputy almost every week and they're not all happening at Pine Street Extension. They're happening in all the neighborhoods. Are we going to shut down those neighborhoods because crimes occur there? Are we punishing the homeless because there are criminals at Pine Street? Why don't we punish those criminals? Why don't we arrest those criminals? Why don't we get rid of those people, you know, and let the homeless that we've been told are not violating any laws. They're not causing anybody any problems. They're not a threat to anybody but we're going to remove their homes, the places where they're living and say, okay here's your citation. You know, go see Dr. Bagley and come back in a month and show us that you're that you found a place. Where is she going to put that person? Where's the place that she's going to find for that person after you've taken them out of Pine Street? I don't think we have a whole lot of places right now. That's the problem. If we did, we'd be able to move a lot of those people already and they are working on that problem. So, you know, I don't know.

I'm a big supporter of the Police and, you know, when the Fire Department tells me it's an unsafe situation, I'm thinking, you know, what is making it unsafe? Is it the homeless people or is it the criminals that are there? Why can't we concentrate on the criminals and deal with that problem? I don't know if we can but you know, I'm afraid I tend to want to support, you know, Dr. Cappetta, and Ms. Muccioli, and Dr. Bagley when they say, you know, we're working on this problem. We can handle this problem. You know, give us more time and the Police if you want to help, go down there arrest the criminals, get the criminals out of there. We've got laws on the books to give you all the teeth you need to get those criminals out of there. Do that. Don't remove the homeless people from the only place they have to live. Thank you.

Chairman O'Brien

Thank you.

Alderman Sennott

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Alderman Jette took a lot of my speaking points but I still have plenty more don't worry. I don't need to read my resume you can check my votes. I support the Police Department, I support our Fire Department, I support our Public Health Department. I prefer not to support any of those three departments at the detriment of one another and I feel like we're in a situation right now where we have actually been told tonight that supporting two over a third would be to the detriment of that third. We're at a crossroads here. But rather than hypothesize on this and everything, what I want to do is go to the source. You know when I was a kid and I saw a friend jump off a really risky hill on his bike and not fall down and break his neck, the evidence told me that I could do it. It wasn't always true but if I could see him land it, I could expect the same results.

This ordinance in front of us is almost word for word what was passed in Manchester a year and change ago and so when we have a neighbor that close, I want to see what they did and I want to look at the results because I really feel that we're comparable enough. They're a little bigger than us but we're comparable enough to be able to look at Manchester and say what happened there is very similar to what we can probably expect here in Nashua. In looking for those answers, the very first thing I found was an article from Manchester Ink Link that I shared today and the title of that article was “homeless popping ip in other parts of the City after being moved from public property”. Surprise. I have a couple of highlights here. Last July when City officials approved the removal of the homeless from public property, it resulted in the same problems for business owners a block or two east where they were relocated. This almost feels like the conversation that started this whole kerfuffle here. We heard from business owners that there was a problem. We compiled all this legislation to address it but we don't have the resources. So like I said last week, we're going to leaf blow it around town. So while it may not affect Mine Falls once we pass this, it's going to affect somebody else.

One of the unintended consequences of the City's decision to prevent the homeless from camping in its city parks and on sidewalks is that they're gravitating to areas that are vacant or privately-owned buildings. Now I'm going to step outside of my lane for a second here because when I hear about homeless population squatting in privately owned buildings, it brings to mind 13-14-year-old Tim who at one-point Alderman O'Brien, wanted to be a firefighter.

Chairman O’Brien

I didn't light any buildings on fire. I won’t admit to that.

Alderman Sennott

I’m not accusing you of lighting any buildings on fire but do you know what put me off that profession for the rest of my life other than the fact that I'm an inherent coward?

Chairman O’Brien

You would have made a good fireman.

Alderman Sennott

Was the Worcester cold storage fire.

Chairman O’Brien

Oh yeah.

Alderman Sennott

The Worcester 6, which is a fire in a cold storage building that had sat vacant for decades and it was started by two squatting homeless people and the firefighters in a true testament to their profession, charged in there at the reports of neighbors who said that there could be homeless people squatting in there. Just as much as I shudder at the thought of Mine Falls burning down, I shudder at Nashua being the next Worcester. We don't necessarily have a building the size of the cold storage facility that burned in Worcester but we've got enough to lose a life.

Mayor Ruais at the time said that the City has the resources to support people who choose to live on the streets. I would argue right away that Nashua does not. Nashua does not because we're all asking ourselves the question tonight where will they go? And if we can't answer that question, then we don't have the resources. I'd also argue that Manchester has more resources than Nashua because the drop-in center that we've all talked about, they have. It's funded in short bursts. They just funded it through February of ‘26 but they still have it. They have a warming station that's open in the evening hours and it

immediately converts once the evening hours are done into a drop-in station.

It goes on. Stories about these folks who have migrated 2-3 blocks from where they originally located in large masses to smaller masses, private property. Stories about three people - one with a blanket wrapped around them were congregating in rear alleys by Hanover Street, two vehicles that had been parked behind Hanover Street for months at a time, with one person sleeping in a parked van, others again squatting inside a vacant building. One business owner on Hanover Street said that he had not had a problem with the homeless in the eight years that he'd operated there until the City's policy changed because again, Manchester took out the leaf blower and moved people around.

Alderman Pat Long in Manchester has said that the problem is finding somewhere to place the people being moved. They're unhoused, so they have to sleep somewhere and they're not moving out to Chicago or Boston. Long said that one positive from the action taken by the Aldermanic Board is that more people are seeking services at the Engagement Center on Beach Street. A downside he said is that there are not enough case managers to serve the population. Again, we don't even have that robust of an engagement center yet.

In my opinion that being the repeated theme shows us that we're putting the cart before the horse. Long said that we don't have enough people to connect with them and walk them through the process of obtaining services. We need more case management. We've heard from our Department of Health that staffing is an ongoing issue. We can't open a warming center tonight when it's going to be chilly out there because we don't have the staff on hand. We're going around the merry-go-round time and time again with the same issues.

Finally, Alderman Long said that when the City first cleared the homeless from Veterans Park and Victory Park, there were numerous problems not unlike what is happening on Hanover Street. When we first moved them out of the parks, it was horrible. It was an everyday effort to clear them out. It was affecting people in the Governor Hugh Gallen Apartments, Bronstein Park, cafes, the Saigon Market. A lot of it has been taken care of but we are not where we want it to be. This is four months into Manchester's attempt to implement what we're discussing implementing tonight. If this is what we decide to implement, I don't see any reason why Nashua would be any different because we're 10,000 people shy of their population? I don't buy it.

I watched the issue in Manchester play out a lot. So much so that I find it a little ironic that we're even here discussing it tonight because when we were having our joint committee meetings last year around this time discussing these very same issues, you know, it was stated in here that Nashua shouldn't go with anything that Manchester is modeling because that's why Manchester had just made headlines and we had Aldermen in this room say we shouldn't do that but here we are.

The one thing I would do that Manchester didn't is incorporate the Section B language. Manchester's original proposal had Part A, which we have in our language tonight, and it had Part B. Forgive me Mr. Chair but I feel like this is important.

Chairman O'Brien

Okay, but others like to speak too, you know.

Alderman Sennott

And I've ceded the floor very patiently to everybody else and I would like the courtesy of finishing my thought here.

Chairman O'Brien

I will allow it, but.

Alderman Sennott

Section B dictated enforcement. Now, I'll preempt this by saying Manchester struck this and I think Manchester struck it because I think they recognize that even with the resources they have, they couldn't enforce it to these parameters. That would say that the above section shall be enforced only when an individual is on public property and there is an overnight shelter available. The term available overnight shelter shall mean that the person can at the time of citation go to a local homeless shelter. That said shelter has an available overnight space for the individual at no charge for the person, that said available overnight space will be available to that person upon their arrival, and that the person is not barred for any reason, including but not limited to bail conditions, protective orders, trespass orders, rules of the shelter, policies of the shelter, intoxication, or impairment from going to the local homeless shelter. No person shall be cited unless and until an enforcing officer receives confirmation of available overnight shelter as defined above and the person has been advised that the overnight shelter is available, warrants that they will be cited should they not go to the available overnight shelter, and continue to camp, and that they have been given a reasonable opportunity to comply with the request. Reasonableness shall be

judged based on the specific facts of each case. If during the course of reasonably attempting to comply with the request of the police officer to desist camping in a public place, the shelter bed becomes available for any reason, the person shall not be cited. An enforcing officer shall be required to conduct this inquiry each and every time prior to issuing a citation under this section.

While on this Committee, I'd move to amend this to include that. Not that I think it would pass, but because I think we couldn't pass it because we don't have those resources. I think that is the inherent flaw with this. We can't answer where people are going to go, and so we're just going to be moving folks around, and tackling smaller issues around, and interrupting the work that our Public Health Department has done to track, understand who's out there, and understand where they are, and those are my comments, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

Chairman O'Brien

Thank you.

Alderman Lopez

So Mr. Chair, I have three questions. I was holding on to them because I thought we were still having Directors answer things.

Chairman O'Brien

Yeah, you make seek. Information is valuable.

Alderman Lopez

So through the Chair to Deputy Kenney, you mentioned that there are 200 calls made as of today approximately from the encampments. In an earlier meeting, you had mentioned that a lot of those calls were coming from the residents in the encampments and that they were proactively engaging with police to keep the area safe. How many of them would you say are coming from the residents in the encampments?

Brian Kenney, Deputy Police Chief

I'm not sure of the exact comment you're referring to Alderman Lopez. I wouldn't say that the majority of the calls are coming from the residents of the encampment. We get a lot of calls for service for people visiting Mine Falls Park. We get a lot of calls for service from the businesses surrounding that area. We do get calls from the people in the encampment itself when problems arise. So I don't have the data to answer that question accurately as to exactly how many calls are from residents of the encampment.

Alderman Lopez

Okay, but you do know when something's going on in the encampment. Residents in the encampments are calling you?

Brian Kenney, Deputy Police Chief

On occasion, yes.

Alderman Lopez

Okay. I wanted to ask Attorney Bolton since he's been kind enough to stay here for this whole meeting. Have we authorized campsites in the City of Nashua anywhere?

Attorney Steve Bolton, Corporation Counsel

Not to my knowledge.

Alderman Lopez

Okay.

Attorney Steve Bolton, Corporation Counsel

I think there's been some tacit allowance. I think I'm told. I don't know thi, but when the Crown Street situation was being

cleaned up, there was some suggestion that Pine Street Extension might be a place to go. So that might have been how that got started but I can't say that for certain, but I don't think there's been any action by this Board or any official statement of “this is authorized”.

Alderman Lopez

Okay, thank you. That was my impression.

And then my last question because we were talking about breaking up the, I'm sorry, not breaking up the campsite - towing the RVs that were on Celina Ave. To I guess either Director Bagley or Ms. Muccioli, do you have any idea where any of those residents who lost their campers or RVs went?

LaTonya Muccioli, Housing Services Officer

LaTonya Muccioli, Housing Services Officer. Yes, they're in the woods behind the medical building right off of Celina Ave.

Alderman Lopez

Okay. So I mean this kind of echoes my concerns that we'll spend thousands of dollars disposing of RVs but we have not resolved the situation. We've not made it any safer for anybody. We've not made Mine Falls any cleaner and I mean, it just seems that the wheel turns.

Now earlier an Alderman spoke and was particularly upset that he was being targeted, probably because I had pointed out that the Board of Aldermen largely has not been attending the Continuum of Care meetings where there are frequent updates and that was not specifically aimed at him. But if you are following this as a person who lives around the corner from these campsites might be following it, who goes through there probably every day, you know, then you might be aware that the city has in fact been engaging with and working with people in campsites around the City all this year, all of last year, has been breaking up those campsites, has been reporting on how many of them were shut down, and being cleaned up by DPW. It's actually a budgetary issue where we it's been noted in our city budget, but we aren't necessarily solving the problem by breaking up these campsites. We're just moving it around. So for me as the Alderman of that area - because it was also mentioned earlier this meeting that, you know, one would defer to the Alderman of the Ward who might know, I think dropping 80 people in the downtown area possibly simultaneously - hopefully humanely and in a phased manner, but I don't know how exactly you say okay 15 of you have to go tonight and then the rest of you can stay. I think it's probably going to be all or nothing. When that happens, they're going to go everywhere. They're going to go all over Mine Falls. They're going to go all over the downtown because that's what's been happening all of last year and this year.

When we broke up Crown Hill, it wasn't Crown Hill that it started out. It was the railroad tracks and when they went to Crown Hill, we had the neighbors that were all, you know, unfavorable towards just providing garbages and port-a-potties. So then that became an issue. The only one who solved that issue to my knowledge was actually the Public Health Department with the Opioid Abatement Fund. That being said, all summer, all spring, we've had campsites being broken up.

Earlier, it was mentioned that the Library was done without any citations or any kind of distress. I was told by members or by participants in the Farmer’s Market there was a huge police operation right at the beginning of that and that those campsites were no longer going to be present. Then I spent the next three weeks hearing from downtown business owners about people that were basically rough sleeping right next to the vape shop. Now, I talked to them. I worked with them to try to help them connect with city services, find housing, go to emergency shelters. I don't know that I made more than 3 or 4 people’s difference but I wasn't waiting on anything.

Earlier this meeting, the Mayor asked us how long we would wait. The Board of Aldermen met a week after the meeting at the Library. So fast that we got a letter from the Downtown Improvement Committee's Chair saying we moved too quickly and didn't give them time to attend the meeting. The Board of Aldermen was not a slouch. We heard about this ordinance that's being proposed last week and there was an attempt, a pretty full on court press attempt, to just run it through in one night and not have this discussion. We had to follow upon the good grace of our fellow Aldermen and, you know, the integrity of this Board just to make sure we had a conversation.

To Mr. Chair, I appreciate you putting up with us because I know you'd rather not be doing this right now but this is what we're supposed to be doing. We can't make it about us, or we're frustrated, or we're overwhelmed, or we're feeling attacked because we have somewhere to go tonight and other people don't. We're not the ones who are actually going to go into Mine Falls to put out a fire or police a situation so we do need to listen to the police and the fire. We also need to listen to the Public Health workers who have been doing this every day, all day for years and are trying to get everybody housed. We need to listen to the people, again, who came to public comment and pointed out they're going to lose whatever few things they have and that's not going to improve the situation. It's not going to make public safety any better.

It was pointed out I was going to say, you know, that domestic violence issues do happen throughout the city and we do need to interdict, and we do need to prosecute those wherever we can. But I lost a really good friend a couple years ago who was homeless and struggling with addiction, found herself an apartment, and then was stabbed in that apartment like three days after she moved in. So tragedies do happen everywhere and assigning them all to people who are experiencing their own personal tragedy in an ongoing way doesn't seem compassionate. I've heard the arguments and I've heard the promises but we are in a position where we have ordinances in place and we have State Statutes that could be enforced.

This 80-person campsite doesn't even need to be there right now except the enforcement is selective and it's because not in favor of public safety, it's concerned about the success of prosecution. That's not something the Board of Aldermen did and I don't think we should be blamed for this. I think we're responding very, very quickly. I think I've already heard enough votes from this Committee to know which way it's going to go. I think the Board of Aldermen is responding very quickly when things are being asked of us. I would say we definitely respond to a community center because we had it presented to us in the joint meeting earlier this year and we still haven't actually seen a formal proposal.

With respect to the Mayor who's my favorite Mayor - like for many years running, I was told last Thursday night that the Public Health Department did not have a shovel ready project, didn't have anything to propose. We're not ready to propose anything at the Human Affairs Committee that I invited you all to present at last meeting, which should have happened last night. I got a voicemail last night from Director Bagley and LaTonya who were here to present something except we canceled the meeting because we were told there was nothing to present. If this is a real priority and we really want to talk about how to make sure we can enforce public safety and how to address this campsite, then we're not doing anybody any favors by passing this ordinance creating basically a blank check to start towing vehicles and dropping them off in a special lot that we created. I don't know what Aldermen committee meeting that was authorized at but racking up that particular bill and then doing nothing about it, because all of these people who lost their RVs could absolutely just get another one donated tomorrow and then I guess we're getting rid of that one too.

The only way to deal with people who are homeless is to help them find homes, help them find housing. We know this. We've done it for years, for decades. Anyone who's been on this Board for more than 20 minutes has heard me go off on it multiple times. We need to adjust our public policy and we have real solutions that could be done right now with a little bit of city leadership. Alderman Dowd brought them up. Director Bagley's brought them up. We know we have a warming station. We know we have a need for a downtown community - not downtown. I'm sorry but a community center. There's been no like request for comment about where that should be, what sites that should be. Again as the local Alderman, I have lots of ideas. I have several partners that might be interested in in hosting it if they were able to be compensated and most importantly, because we heard this at the Human Affairs Committee last year, if their staffing were augmented with better city cooperation.

Our nonprofits have spoken tonight as well and I appreciate the Fire and the Police. I cannot say that enough but I also appreciate Greater Nashua Mental Health who's running the crisis line and who has to do all the evaluations when anybody gets get checked into the emergency room for evaluation. If they're saying this isn't the way to do it, this is just going to complicate things, I believe them. If we're hearing from our faith community that this probably isn't the ethical thing to do, the right thing to do, they have that credibility too.

I don't think we're really listening here. I think this is very performative with respect to all the effort that people have been putting into chairing it, and managing public comment, and all that. If everybody came in here with their decisions already made up and if everybody's just focusing on how they're personally affected by this, we're missing the bigger picture. Because the bigger picture is we have Nashuan's out on the street tonight who need a place to stay and whether there are criminals among them, or not, or whether there are people who have mental health issues, or not, we still need to figure out who's who and we still need to make sure that we have the resources that are being put into place. Because if we just put an ordinance out saying, okay, we're going to scatter shot everybody at the same time, you are displacing a bunch of people who might need that outreach tomorrow morning or might have that safety issue that are going to be driven further into the woods.

So I mean I've made my opposition clear. I think this is going to spend a lot of taxpayer money unnecessarily. I think our results are not going to be any better than Manchester, and I'm ashamed that we're even talking about this right now, and that we've decided to go with this particular ideology. Thank you.

Chairman O'Brien

I'm glad you applauded but we are committed to a meeting, so a little courtesy please. Thank you. Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Donchess

To the Alderman from Ward 4, I didn't mean to suggest that the Board of Aldermen was procrastinating or delaying too long. I think I just was expressing that it's alarming that every time we get a report, it seems to have gotten more serious and that's this over the last month or six weeks, you know, I think the issues there have escalated and that's the point I was trying to

make.

Alderman Lopez

I appreciate the clarification. As much as I was maybe getting on my pedestal about everybody needs to not put themselves in the center, I'm definitely getting worked up about this.

Alderman Gouveia

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So how do I want to start my comments here? Definitely a very complex, emotional argument here and I truly do get both sides. But in kind of doing my research as we do for our meetings, and our prep work, I talked with members of Fire, talked with members of Police. On Friday mid-morning, I was lucky enough Deputy Kenney took me out and I said alright show me the worst of the worst. So let's see what we're working with here. I'll put on a good pair of boots. Let's truck through it, let's go, and we did, and we were back at the one story that kind of sticks out from that kind of hour and a half, two hours we spent was in the Nashua rail yard where at that time, there was supposed to be nobody. It was supposed to be cleared out by then. And we go back there and he's like, alright you want to get out and take a walk? Sure, well let's go. So we get out and we start walking. We're maybe ten feet into the woods and you can hear this lady talking and we're like okay, so there's somebody still here. Great. Let's go see what's up. Let's talk to them and we walked up to her, and she was probably a middle-aged lady who just down on her luck, battling addiction, and we said alright, why are you here? Where are you from? All the basics. We said so, and she immediately knew, she said, yeah I had people come by. I had them come talk to me. They're very courteous about it. They were nice about it. I know I need to move, and clean up my stuff, and I'm heading out. We said alright where were you going? She said I'm heading to rehab. Great. I mean from an Alderman standpoint, I mean that interaction couldn't have gone really much better. It's one of those things where I hope what they're saying is truly what they're doing and they weren't just kind of giving a right answer when, you know, a Police Officer walks up to you and another guy standing next to him. I hope that's the truth.

I mean that was kind of a really eye-opening time looking at these encampments and I do see how it could be dangerous at times. We were walking on the Pine Street Extension and we walk through a set of gates walking towards the parking lot and very audibly 10 feet in front of us, 15 feet in front of us, we hear people go "cops are coming - everybody stop". Okay. Point taken. Like I get it, okay. So from that standpoint, that kind of secured my stance on this ordinance.

Then I'm talking with a bunch of firefighters as I do most days. Our guys here in Nashua go well, have you heard about, you know, when we got a call, and we go to provide medical aid, and we got the road blocked in front of us, and had to call the Police to come in and help kind of control the situation so we could provide medical aid. I said no, please do tell, and got this full story. I'm sure the Chief's heard all about it at some time or another about how we have to kind of get the police involved in helping a medical aid call happen back at one of these encampments that could have potentially killed somebody. I don't really know the fine details of it. I didn't really want to get into it that much but it was just another thing that made me go, okay. I think we do need to take action here.

I think like it's been stated earlier, there's no right or wrong answer. I think we're all trying to get to a solution. How do we get there? We can all disagree on it. We can all agree upon it. I personally think this is a step in the right direction. I will support it.

And just one last note about when I was on that kind of ride along. I was actually really refreshed to hear when we were at the Pine Street Extension how well known our Public Health officials are. I mean their names were brought up by people at the encampments. Oh yeah, oh yeah Bobbie was down here. She talked to us. Alright, great like that's what I want to hear. You're getting out into the community and people know you by name, which is quite honestly probably better than most of us around the chamber. That's fantastic. So I like to see that we are engaging with the community at this level. I do think we do have to make some tweaks and I think this will be a tweak in the correct direction. So I will be supporting this at the full Board and I think it's something that our city should embrace. Thank you.

Alderman Moran

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I concur with my colleagues at-Large. My colleagues from Ward 3, 2, 5, 7, 9, 4, 1, 6. It is a very complicated issue and it requires enforcement and a place to go. I also agree with you, Mr. Mayor. Madam President, you haven't spoken yet. It's a very complicated issue and it does take more than just a place to go. It does take enforcement. Deputy Chief Kenney I actually teach about the Sacramento issue of what not to do. You don't give residents control of a park to rule without some government oversight basically and does the administrative rules that you discussed. But I'd also point out that just four or five days ago, Sacramento had a housing - I'm sorry - an encampment underground collapse on itself because they have to go somewhere. Just like we heard about Worcester, we have to go somewhere.

I'm not ignorant of fact that all these Public Health officials know exactly the risk of where these people will go. They will squat.

They will go into areas that are more dangerous and bigger issues will occur and our public safety will be at greater risk. Our Public Health will be at greater risk. Providing this, it's something. It's something to move people along but, again, is to where. But I think the most profound thing that is coming out of this legislation regarding camping is that we're here today. We're hearing from folks partly on both sides of the issue, more so on one side than the other tonight. We've heard the opposite prior to that. I think now after just one week of delaying it, I feel like I heard the Mayor say that there will be a plan being brought forth for this resource center. If that actually comes to fruition, then this is all have been a success at the end of the day because it's one big, big piece of the puzzle that needs to be put in place. I don't think this will be very effective in general just the way it hasn't worked in other cities but if the public safety feels that this is something that they need for the teeth even though there's existing laws on the books already give it to them. Why not. But I don't think anyone here is going to be ignorant the fact that other bigger problems could happen.

Mr. Chairman, I'm sure if you see a building smoking you don't say let's wait and see what happens, right? You want to, you know, get it under control I'm sure.

Chairman O'Brien

Yes.

Alderman Moran

And it sounds like you guys actually might get under control. I can't wait to see what the next Board does. I think the bravest thing, the most boldest thing that anyone really could do is turn to the Mayor and say, I'm going to deny you one of my votes for the two thirds majority to pass your budget if you don't put these items in. That would be the boldest thing to do, to hold them down to the fire and say, create these programming or else your other projects can't go forward. I think that'd be, you know, the atomic bomb weapon, ace in the whole type card. But you guys all I'm sure have that tenacity to do such which is great.

Alderman Lopez

Done we have enough shutdowns.

Alderman Moran

What's that?

Alderman Lopez

Don't we have enough shutdowns?

Alderman Moran

Yes, right but no in jest, of course, you guys have the ability to shut down the Mayor when he doesn't want to do something and ultimately, the buck stops with him when it comes to programs that are created in the city.

I'm very encouraged by the conversation tonight. I think it's the folks that are here I know this is not the right way to do it at all. The best way to have done it would have can come forward with those alternative options, with the warming shelter is open at this day, at this time, fully staffed from this time, to this time but that's not the way it came. But at least we delayed it a week so you folks could be heard. So there will be hopefully practical changes happening the future. Your people shaking their heads are probably right but I'm still excited to hear that folks have come to grasp that other stuff has to be done. We're spending too much money on the knee jerk reaction, cleanup method, move people along method. You're right, the Spring Street shelter is not going to solve the homelessness problem. There's so many things and there's nothing the Mayor can do that's going to solve this problem or anyone around this table. But there's an approach to take that's more than just one prong and the most dignified thing would have brought multi prongs to the full Board and implement them in phases and saying hey, you know, we got someone else coming next week. Let's vote on this this week. But that's just me, a single Alderman.

But I think the city may be going in the right direction. I didn't know we were keeping score of where we go and staff in the City. I was down with my 5-year-old daughter. I don't need a police escort to go down to an encampment on Friday morning. I didn't see you guys there you guys mid-morning. I had to get my hair cut very early so I went earlier than that. I took my daughter with me - five years old. Five years old. She wasn't scared but I understand that people are. I understand that the police and fire are going into situations that I'm not. I just want to clarify that right now. They're going in much dangerous situations. Same thing with Public Health. I can only go so far. I can only do so much, especially when I have a tag along with me but I'll be back there on Monday in other parts of the City as well. I'll try to get my police escorts when I need to.

But I think you guys are doing the right thing in at least talking about it. I am encouraged by what you guys are doing here and I look forward to the next Board and seeing what solutions you come up with. I appreciate all your work, I really do. It's a very heavy lift to do and if anyone can do it, it's a majority of this Board.

Chairman O'Brien

Thank you.

Alderman Wilshire

Thank you. So I read an article today about the progress that Manchester is making in addressing their homelessness. They do have a resource. They call it an "engagement center" on Beach Street and they've connected with hundreds of individuals. For the last 14 months, they've housed 69 individuals, helped 50 individuals get vital documents like birth certificates and identification; it helped 45 people enter detox or treatment programs and 22 people gained employment, which is very exciting. But one of the issues we have here in Nashua, I mean, Housing First is a great model. You get someone stable, you get a roof over their head, and then you can work on the issues that they're dealing with. I think that is the model of all.

The problem here in Nashua is we have a vacancy rate that is less than 1%. So how do you house people when you have no place to put them? I think the main thing that's going to help us and work for us is an engagement center or a resource center but do we know how much buy in we get from our community? I imagine Public Health probably knows who will be at the resource center and who won't be so I'm sure they have a fairly good idea about what that looks like.

But one of the things that struck me in this progress made - I got it off Ink Link or somewhere. By combining compassion with accountability, we're demonstrating that we can make measurable progress for our city and those in need. I think the ordinance before us is the accountability piece and I'm going to support it.

Mayor Donchess

Mr. Chair? I do think we can - we are developing a plan for a resource center. We just need to decide where it should be. There have been people out looking at rental space but I don't think we should get into the details of that right now. But I was struck by Alderman Gouveia mentioning that they know Bobbie's name down at the encampment. If there's one person in Nashua who should be canonized, it would be Bobbie Bagley. So we all should give her due in addressing this whole situation.

Chairman O'Brien

Okay, no, right?

Alderwoman Kelly

Yes.

Chairman O'Brien

No, I'm Chairman. Thank you.

Alderwoman Kelly

Okay.

Chairman O'Brien

Unless you want to challenge the Chair?

Alderwoman Kelly

I would like to speak when you get to...

Chairman O'Brien

Excuse me. Yes, Alderman Klee?

Alderman Klee

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One of our colleagues from Ward 7 had commented that he had an amendment but he's not part of this Committee so I'm going to ask him would you like me to move your amendment?

Alderman Sennott

Sure, I wouldn't mind seeing what people have to say.

Alderman Klee

Okay. Do you have it in writing so I can read it?

Alderman Sennott

I sure do.

Alderman Klee

Thank you.

Alderman Sennott

Would you like me to read it?

Alderman Klee

Mr. Chairman?

Chairman O'Brien

Sure.

Alderman Klee

Thank you.

Alderman Tim Sennott

Oh, I don't have it on paper. I'm sorry.

Alderman Klee

I think it's online if that's the one?

Alderman Sennott

I sent it to you, I think.

Alderman Klee

If you'll just give me a second. Okay, I'm going to read it to everybody. It says, Enforcement Section 225:6-A "shall be enforced only when an individual is...

Attorney Steve Bolton, Corporation Counsel

Your reference is to a Manchester ordinance. It's not to ours so that's going to be meaningless in those words.

Alderman Klee

Okay. I apologize.

Alderman Sennott

If I could read it as I have it written out here?

Alderman Klee

That would be good.

Alderman Sennott

If it's agreeable to the Chair?

Chairman O'Brien

Please.

Alderman Klee

Thank you.

Alderman Sennott

Alright. My motion as it's written would be to amend O-25-079 by designating the underlined language of Section 225-6, prohibition as Part A and then adding the following. "Part B: enforcement. Section 225-6-A shall be enforced only when an individual is on public property and there is an available overnight shelter. The term available overnight shelter shall mean that the person can at the time of citation go to a local homeless shelter. That said shelter has an available overnight space for the individual at no charge to the person. That said available overnight space will be available to that person upon their arrival and that the person is not barred for any reason including, but not limited to, bail conditions, protective orders, trespass orders, rules of the shelter, policies of the shelter, intoxication, or impairment from going to the local homeless shelter. No person shall be cited unless and until an enforcing officer receives confirmation of available overnight shelter as defined above and the person has been advised that the overnight shelter is available, warned that they will be cited should they not go to the available overnight shelter, and continue to camp, and they have been given a reasonable opportunity to comply with the request.

Reasonableness shall be judged based upon the specific facts of each case. If during the course of reasonably attempting to comply with the request of the officer to desist camping in a public place, the shelter bed becomes unavailable for any reason, the person shall not be cited. An enforcing officer shall be required to conduct this inquiry each and every time prior to issuing a citation under this section."

MOTION BY ALDERMAN SENNOTT TO AMEND O-25-079 BY DESIGNATING THE UNDERLINED LANGUAGE OF SECTION 225-6, PROHIBITION AS PART A AND THEN ADDING THE FOLLOWING. "PART B: ENFORCEMENT. SECTION 225-6-A SHALL BE ENFORCED ONLY WHEN AN INDIVIDUAL IS ON PUBLIC PROPERTY AND THERE IS AN AVAILABLE OVERNIGHT SHELTER. THE TERM AVAILABLE OVERNIGHT SHELTER SHALL MEAN THAT THE PERSON CAN AT THE TIME OF CITATION GO TO A LOCAL HOMELESS SHELTER. THAT SAID SHELTER HAS AN AVAILABLE OVERNIGHT SPACE FOR THE INDIVIDUAL AT NO CHARGE TO THE PERSON. THAT SAID AVAILABLE OVERNIGHT SPACE WILL BE AVAILABLE TO THAT PERSON UPON THEIR ARRIVAL AND THAT THE PERSON IS NOT BARRED FOR ANY REASON INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, BAIL CONDITIONS, PROTECTIVE ORDERS, TRESPASS ORDERS, RULES OF THE SHELTER, POLICIES OF THE SHELTER, INTOXICATION, OR IMPAIRMENT FROM GOING TO THE LOCAL HOMELESS SHELTER. NO PERSON SHALL BE CITED UNLESS AND UNTIL AN ENFORCING OFFICER RECEIVES CONFIRMATION OF AVAILABLE OVERNIGHT SHELTER AS DEFINED ABOVE AND THE PERSON HAS BEEN ADVISED THAT THE OVERNIGHT SHELTER IS AVAILABLE, WARNED THAT THEY WILL BE CITED SHOULD THEY NOT GO TO THE AVAILABLE OVERNIGHT SHELTER, AND CONTINUE TO CAMP, AND THEY HAVE BEEN GIVEN A REASONABLE OPPORTUNITY TO COMPLY WITH THE REQUEST. REASONABLENESS SHALL BE JUDGED BASED UPON THE SPECIFIC FACTS OF EACH CASE. IF DURING THE COURSE OF REASONABLY ATTEMPTING TO COMPLY WITH THE REQUEST OF THE OFFICER TO DESIST CAMPING IN A PUBLIC PLACE, THE SHELTER BED BECOMES UNAVAILABLE FOR ANY REASON, THE PERSON SHALL NOT BE CITED. AN ENFORCING OFFICER SHALL BE REQUIRED TO CONDUCT THIS INQUIRY EACH AND EVERY TIME PRIOR TO ISSUING A CITATION UNDER THIS SECTION."

Chairman O'Brien

Chief Kenney did you hear that? We have an amendment proposed. Can you give us your opinion? Is this something that

NPD could do?

Brian Kenney, Deputy Chief, Nashua Police Department

So off the top of my head, I'm jotting down notes as...

Chairman O'Brien

Can we turn up the volume please? Okay, try it now Chief Kenney.

Brian Kenney, Deputy Chief, Nashua Police Department

Can you hear me now, Mr. Chair?

Chairman O'Brien

Yeah.

Alderman Klee

Not really.

Chairman O'Brien

It could be louder. It's probably controlled by the control room.

Brian Kenney, Deputy Chief, Nashua Police Department

Okay, well I'll try to speak up.

Chairman O'Brien

There you go.

Alderman Klee

That's better.

Brian Kenney, Deputy Chief, Nashua Police Department

I have a three-part answer to that question. I'm not sure how happy that's going to make everybody but I want to hit you with honesty at the very least. I guess my first response is, and I don't want to speak for Public Health so please I hope they can speak to this, we do have a population within this population that doesn't want to go to the shelter. So for those cases, I'm not sure this accomplishes what we are looking for it to do. We're going to write them the ticket, and then we're going to go on our merry way, and that's going to play out in court however it plays out, and everyone is still at the encampment.

I guess my I guess my second part of that is I don't know that we have a low barrier shelter in the City of Nashua. I know that Spring Street - I don't want to speak for the shelter but to the best of my understanding it is not low barrier and there are rules as far as intoxication goes, as far as drug use goes, and I know not everyone but there is a large percentage of folks in this encampment that use substances. So the shelter resources that we have available to us are not open to them if they choose to use substances, which we know a lot of them do, which is why when we open up the cold weather warming station, it is low barrier.

And my third piece to this to answer is this. This amendment would put us right back to pre-Grants Pass. So I apologize because I don't remember the name of the case law off the top of my head but the law of the land pre-Grants Pass was just this and in states like California, that's why they couldn't do the enforcement that they wanted because there was a Superior Court rule that if there was nowhere to put them, then there can't be any enforcement. So it takes the teeth of the Supreme Court ruling out of it as far as enforcement goes. Now whether or not the Board decides to use my Department as use enforcement as part of this fix is up to you all of course, but it takes the teeth out of any enforcement that I would be able to provide you if you wanted me to provide that.

Chairman O'Brien

Okay. Thank you. Gonna open it up to discussion. First from Committee members.

Alderman Dowd

Yeah, I have several questions relative to it. First of all, why did Manchester not enforce it? They must have had a reason and as the Deputy was just saying, it basically negates what we're trying to pass in the first part. I don't think we know enough about the implications of what that amendment would do and where these people would go. So at this point in time, I can't support it.

Chairman O'Brien

Anybody else with a comment on the amendment?

Alderman Lopez

Just a question for Attorney Bolton. Would passing this amendment and then the ordinance constitute a clear signal that we do not endorse any campsites in Nashua?

Attorney Steve Bolton, Corporation Counsel

No, not in my opinion. I think it's impractical. I don't think the Police would have the capacity to every single time make this kind of determination that there was or was not a shelter available for this particular individual. It would be an administrative burden that would be insurmountable. So my general feeling is if you don't like it the way it is, vote against it but this amendment just negates the whole thing.

Alderman Lopez

If I could just ask a follow up?

Chairman O'Brien

Follow up.

Alderman Lopez

So if we pass the local ordinance, the police have to apply our ordinance not the State or can they default to the State regardless of ours?

Attorney Steve Bolton, Corporation Counsel

The police can enforce State law and local ordinance. They can charge under either or both. The court could probably find at some point that they were so similar that the elements didn't differentiate between them, so it was duplicitous or double jeopardy. But all that would mean is the individual accused could only be found guilty under one or the other. But to the extent they're different at all, they could be found guilty of both.

Alderman Lopez

But if they felt that if the police somehow we passed this and then the police were trying to enforce this ordinance but couldn't because say, the person was on opioids and then none of those shelters will take someone on opioids, could they just tell the person to leave because of the State Statute?

Attorney Steve Bolton, Corporation Counsel

It's not a question. Neither the State Statute nor this ordinance say they can tell a person to leave.

Alderman Lopez

Okay.

Attorney Steve Bolton, Corporation Counsel

They can say if you don't leave you'll be arrested but it doesn't give them a power to expel people. It just gives them a power

to cite people for the lawful violation.

But as I understand the reluctance to proceed under the State Statute is that there's an appearance that tacit approval has been given to that encampment on Pine Street Extension because of the services and facilities that the City has provided. So there's a concern that if they start citing people, it will be likely or possible that a lot of prosecutions will be dismissed because they can't prove the lack of permission because there's an apparent permission.

Alderman Lopez

Okay, thank you.

Alderwoman Kelly

It actually wasn't what I was gonna ask question about but I will ask it because it's follow on to that. In the ordinance, it puts the Board of Aldermen as the authorization designee if we decide to camp. Do you have advice to us as what that would look like or whether that is the right way to move forward because I think Manchester didn't do it that way?

Attorney Steve Bolton, Corporation Counsel

Correct. Manchester doesn't talk about their Board of Aldermen.
Permission could be granted under the language presently by a vote of this Board or this Board could by vote designate someone else, some responsible official to grant permission in some or all cases according to whatever criteria the Board of Aldermen determined should be taken into consideration. So it could be the Director of Public Health and Community Services. It could be the Police Chief. It could be the Director of Administrative Services. It could be the Mayor. It could be whoever you chose.

Alderwoman Kelly

Could I have one more follow up?

Chairman O'Brien

Follow up.

Alderwoman Kelly

Thank you. Through you to Police. We keep talking about, you know, it's just a ticket. What happens if someone doesn't show up for a summons or is unable to pay their ticket?

Chairman O'Brien

Chief Kenney, did you hear the question?

Brian Kenney, Deputy Chief, Nashua Police Department

Yes, Sir. I just wasn't sure that that question was for me.

Chairman O'Brien

It's for you.

Brian Kenney, Deputy Chief, Nashua Police Department

Yes, if someone doesn't show up for any court appearance no matter who they are, they have the potential to be issued a bench warrant.

Alderwoman Kelly

What does that mean? Can you just say that more plainly, please?

Brian Kenney, Deputy Chief, Nashua Police Department

That means if they fail to appear in court for a mandated court appearance, the court could issue a bench warrant for their arrest.

Alderwoman Kelly

Thank you.

Brian Kenney, Deputy Chief, Nashua Police Department

To ensure that they come to court.

Alderwoman Kelly

Thank you.

Alderman Thibeault

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just don't think the amendment is tenable. I think it changes what the original is for.

I also want to apologize to Alderman Gouveia because obviously the Officer didn't know he had gone out. I only go out with an officer so he can show me what he needs to do. I was born here unlike Alderman Moran. I'm not scared of any place in Nashua but it's important that the Police show us exactly what's going on. It's not for protection or safety. Thank you.

Alderman Sennott

The question was posed why Manchester didn't adopt this language. It was actually in front of them and they struck it before passing. I think like this Board that they recognize as I do that this amendment is impractical. We've unveiled that in the discussion pretty quickly. If the Committee member who moved to this motion on my behalf wished to withdraw it recognizing the temperature of the room, I'm personally amenable to that. I'm interested in the discussion and I felt the discussion needed to be had and needed to be put out there.

Alderman Klee

I'm willing to withdraw my motion, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman O'Brien

What's that?

Alderman Klee

The amendment.

Chairman O'Brien

Withdraw the amendment?

MOTION WITHDRAWN.

Alderman Sennott

I'm perfectly fine with that.

Chairman O'Brien

Well, I appreciate that seeing this 10:57. Thank you.

Alderman Sennott

Not in the interest of the clock, I'm here all night.

Alderwoman Kelly

Thank you very much. I'd like to request that amendment be made by someone on the Committee and I would like to speak to it. So in doing the research, there's a lot of research around what enforcement can be successful and where it's been successful and when we are able to put, you know, some sort of heads up, a 15-day heads up, as well as a piece of it to not destroy property. So if we would potentially consider a 15-day notice with we have to keep any belongings for 60 days before destroying I think that would be a compassionate way to do this.

Alderman Klee

Mr. Chairman if you will allow me to, I would like to make that motion on behalf of...

Attorney Steve Bolton, Corporation Counsel

We need the exact language.

Alderman Klee

I'm going to ask.

Attorney Steve Bolton, Corporation Counsel

This is some motion that says some amount of process. It's not going to help us.

Alderman Klee

No, I'm going to motion - and please correct me if I'm wrong Alderwoman Kelly. The motion would be that 15 days' notice be given to all residents of an encampment and that all belongings be kept for 60 days. Did I get that correct?

MOTION BY ALDERAMAN KLEE THAT 15 DAYS' NOTICE BE GIVEN TO ALL RESIDENTS OF AN ENCAMPMENT AND THAT ALL BELONGINGS TO BE KEPT FOR 60 DAYS

Alderwoman Kelly

Correct.

Alderman Klee

Did I get that correct? Is that acceptable?

Attorney Steve Bolton, Corporation Counsel

I would not sign that as being in proper form.

Alderman Klee

Okay, then I apologize.

Attorney Steve Bolton, Corporation Counsel

If you want an amendment, tell me what it is and we'll work on it, and you'll have it by the full Board of Aldermen's meeting next week. But...

Chairman O'Brien

Yeah, let's go that route. Are you satisfied with that Alderwoman Kelly?

Alderwoman Kelly

Could we just talk about it first, please? I'd love to hear the...

Chairman O'Brien

Okay, talk please.

Alderwoman Kelly

Either that or we're gonna have to talk about it at the full Board. I don't have a preference. We have the entire...

Chairman O'Brien

Well if the amendment comes in the way I see it, and Corporate Counsel correct me, if the amendment comes in at the full Board, it's really like an extenuation. Everything we do here is "recommendation". Even though we say final passage, it really isn't. It has to go through the full Board. So, therefore, going through the full Board in my understanding is everything that comes out of committees - anything - can be amended at the full Board. By going with this gives, Corporate Counsel brings up a good point - that he can work on it, make it clean, and when we get to the full Board, we have something that is, you know, to be part of the public record.

Alderwoman Kelly

I'm amenable to that. I just, you know, was trying to do the work in the Committee.

Chairman O'Brien

No, no, good. No, no...

Alderwoman Kelly

But did not contain specific language.

Chairman O'Brien

I don't fault you. I appreciate it but...

Alderwoman Kelly

And it is 11:00.

Chairman O'Brien

Could you do me the favor?

Chairman O'Brien

I'm happy to do that.

Chairman O'Brien

Could you follow up with this and work with Corporate Counsel on that?

Alderman Klee

Yes, I didn't fully make the motion but I will withdraw it.

MOTION WITHDRAWN

But if I may just make one comment? I think probably my colleagues and I know I felt the same way and I apologize to Corporate Counsel for not having everything put through them. But when we come to meetings and we do bring up amendments, we've often been kind of proverbially had our hand slapped that we should have come to the Committee meeting, do the work here, and bring the amendments forward. So I think that's probably why we're a little on edge but I'm very happy to let my colleagues just do that in the meeting so thank you.

Chairman O'Brien

Okay.

Alderman Dowd

First of all, the vast majority of the Board's here this evening.

The other thing is I just wanted to bring us back to the beginning of the race. We have a motion on the floor for final passage of 25-079.

Tim Cummings, Administrative Services Director

Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman. Tim Cummings, Director of Administrative Services. I'm just looking to seek some clarification as to what the expectations may be surrounding the particular idea of holding personal property for 60 days. If that's the intention or that's my understanding is it that we would - the City of Nashua for this conversation I'll say Administrative Services would need to secure and keep the personal property somewhere for 60 days until it can be retrieved by the individual?

Alderwoman Kelly

Do you want me to answer that? Practically, one of the things that I'm trying to address is what we had a social worker come forward and talk about. If we displace people, give them 24 hours, they're, you know, moving without a whole lot of foresight they may lose the personal documents that they need to then get the services that we want to give them. So that is why I'm asking for the ability to give them enough time and also to secure those specific things especially because telling someone they got 24 hours to leave somewhere when they're already in a pretty dark place can be chaotic at best.

Tim Cummings, Administrative Services Director

So again - and I'm just trying to think about how this would be implemented. When notice is provided for this potential encampment breakdown when that signage if you will goes up, we would also provide something that would allow an individual to potentially secure their personal property. We would then keep that piece of equipment if you will for lack of better description for up to 60 days before we try to dispose of it. I'm just - or we keep it in perpetuity. I don't know. I'm just trying to make sure we can potentially implement the amendment that is being potentially discussed right now.

Alderwoman Kelly

I am not looking for the City to become a storage unit. I think it's an ability. If you go and the person's not there and, you know, you want to come back and make sure that they get their things, there's some leeway. Maybe it's not 60 days. I'd love to hear what other people think of this but so there's some leeway that they can be able to come back and retrieve their things. That's all.

Alderman Wilshire

I, too, had some concern about storing things having worked at the Housing Authority for many years. People that would be evicted, and we'd have to hold their property, and it became a huge problem, you know, storing people's stuff, and then they didn't come back for it so we ended up having to pay to dispose of it. But the physical space it takes sometimes to keep people's stuff is needed and where we find that space.

Alderman Sullivan

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My only request would be should this amendment come forward at the next Board, I'd like to have maybe Risk Management weigh in if we're keeping people's stuff. What liability is the City under and I would appreciate that before we vote.

Alderwoman Kelly

Happy to follow up.

Chairman O'Brien

I would definitely expect that was going to happen. Risk Management does have the purse strings, you know, for this one.

Alderman Lopez

I would just actually echo President Wilshire's advice. Having managed a shelter, stuff piles up really quickly and people have different amounts of stuff. We had rules in the shelter that I was managing that you were supposed to have two bags and then whenever somebody didn't come back, there would be like eight, and then they might come back multiple times. So it could

rapidly escalate. If you're looking for documents or things that are very important and the person's not there, I mean if the police go through their stuff are they obligated to act on what they find? Can Fire or Public Health do it? So I would just ask if an amendment is presented could it be separated from giving advance notice because I'm very favorable of making sure that people have an adequate warning and I would want to maybe workshop with Director Bagley how exactly we would be saving their stuff.

Alderwoman Kelly

If I could respond?

Chairman O'Brien

Yeah, can you answer?

Alderwoman Kelly

I think that's amenable, too. Honestly for me, the documents is the biggest thing and I've seen other communities that have done like document banks with, you know, a bank that will help you to hold those documents if you'd like. So I think there may be a solution that's maybe not an - I'm never about legislating anything. Maybe Public Health has an idea on how to make sure that if we have 15-day notice we can go in and make sure that people can secure their things. So yeah, I would be open to that and I'm happy to work with Risk Management, any of the people here to figure out how to word the amendment. Thank you.

Chairman O'Brien

Okay. So that means we have a pending on this but we're back to the original.

Alderman Klee

The original...

Chairman O'Brien

Of O-25-79. All you people did speak. I haven't had the opportunity yet. So I'm going to be the last speaker. That's what you get for being the Chair.

But I just want to say I belong to a wonderful organization that basically tries to intercede into lifestyle changes and everything else like that. But I also know in some situations whether it be family or anything else and in this particular ordinance if I lack a passage of it, we become enablers. I'm very concerned with enabling in this type of situation. The Catholic kid from South Boston in me wants to follow my faith and to, you know, help out and everything else like that but what do you do when you try to apostolate to a stone wall? You gotta have teeth, unfortunately, but you need to have it in order to help motivate some people into it. By lack of action on this, I do see enabling, you know. I think we need the difficult step but to swallow and put our big boy pants on and support this because other than that, we're just spinning our wheels like in Georgia mud, you know. So we'll see what the Committee recommends and we'll see if we'll go forward in the Board of Aldermen. So with that, I'll call for the vote.

MOTION BY ALDERMAN KLEE TO RECOMMEND FINAL PASSAGE OF O-25-079
MOTION CARRIED

O-25-080

Endorser: Mayor Jim Donchess
Alderman-at-Large Melbourne Moran, Jr.
Alderman Tyler Gouveia
Alderman-at-Large Ben Clemons
Alderman Derek Thibeault
Alderman Patricia Klee
Alderman Richard A. Dowd
Alderman John Sullivan
Alderman-at-Large Lori Wilshire

REGARDING CAMPERS AND RECREATIONAL VEHICLES ON PUBLIC PROPERTY

MOTION BY ALDERMAN KLEE FOR FINAL PASSAGE

ON THE QUESTION

Chairman O'Brien

I'd just like to say as we introduce this, hopefully we can get through it rather quickly but this seems to be a hand in glove with the other ordinance. That was the more difficult. This basically in reading it is, you know, and those who haven't and those at home, but basically designates what we're talking about. Campers, recreational vehicles, and tents, and whatever else, you know, what I mean. Motorhomes, pickup, and everything else of that. So 1) if the ordinance does pass the previous ordinance, we know and we are clearly defined what we're gonna do. So with that, I'll open it up to discussion so start over here. Any discussion?

Alderman Lopez

Just going to claim like I did for last one. I feel like this is going to end up accruing a lot of money if you have to start disposing of these things.

Alderman Sullivan

Thank you. Just really a question. So the owner of said RV is it the expectation that this ordinance goes forward that they need to dispose of the RV, transport it, or is it just going to be abandoned, and then towed?

Chairman O'Brien

I thought that basically it's explaining what we're talking about to make it codified law but Director Cummings do you have anything on that?

Tim Cummings, Administrative Services Director

Yes. Tim Cummings, Director of Administrative Services. I think it's pretty fair to say that the obligation would be on the City of Nashua and as of right now the way it currently works is the City of Nashua has to pay for the tow to a particular site. In this case, we have a designated site where we park these types of RV and campers and then it remains there for a certain period of time to be compliant with law. Then if we're able to dispose of them, then we would have a second obligation to have a tow truck company pay them to then tow that to the particular space where it's disposed of. And more often than not as we've studied this issue, we will have to pay to have these types of vehicles disposed of and that could - it depends on the vehicle and the type of apparatus we're talking about. That could really range in type of price but we're talking a couple thousand dollars.

MOTION CARRIED

PETITIONS - None

TABLED IN COMMITTEE

Petition - L Deerwood Drive – Lot H-103
- Tabled at 2/28/24 meeting

GENERAL DISCUSSION - None

PUBLIC COMMENT

Bob Keating

My name is Bob Keating at 5 Coburn Woods Drive. Once again, a very long ranging and I think thoughtful discussion. Glad for, you know, all of that. I take away a number of things from this that I think are that are true which is one that case management or police action in and of itself cannot end homelessness period. If there is not a home, if there's not resources to get a person in a home, that will not happen.

Secondly, we have a long, long history, long before we talked about homelessness in the city about how people stay housed with significant mental illness, with people with substance abuse issues, and long histories of criminal imprisonment, and all in the same person. I want to highlight that these aren't separate people. There's not the

homeless, and the substance abusers, and people who are in prison. Many of us that have worked in this field have seen that in our professional life and many of us have seen it in our personal life how people stay housed despite all of these things and after years in a mental hospital, after years in imprisonment. So this isn't new. It's not complex. Does it mean that there's some people that are very, very difficult to do, and engage, and get - absolutely true, absolutely true but those are the minority.

A number of people have spoken this repeatedly. The warming station in the most immediately doesn't end homelessness but expanding that to a 24/7 as soon as possible. We've spoken about the finances. The finances are there.

In terms of health risks. The health risks for the population of our city are more vulnerable is the homeless population period. That's where it is.

And finally is that our plan 21 years ago about house for everyone is still the same thing and I take responsibility that I haven't been able to move the needle. In some ways, I sort of acquiesced as I was like…

Alderman Klee

30 seconds.

Bob Keating

Okay that it is done again and again. Hundreds if not thousands of people are in this city because of various programs that have allowed them to be able to stay in there. If we pass this ordinance without the other one coupling it, I think we have failed period. We have not done what is right and what is capable in this city given our money. Thank you.

Paula Johnson

Paula Johnson, 15 Westborn Drive. If anything came out of this tonight was a very good discussion on what's going to happen with the homeless population. I mean you just can't disrupt the camps and expect them to go someplace because there's no place for them to go. You have people like my friend, Ken, who's been in the homeless camps for years, and years, and years. Where is he going to go, you know? And he talked to me about that last week after. We had a long discussion. We have to have resources for this. You know, we're talking about a resource center or engagement center but we have to have the money put aside in order to be able to facilitate this whole project, you know.

And then there's going to be hard choices. The next Board is going to have to decide on, you know, what is our priority so we don't have uncontrolled spending here. What is going to be the priority of the city on who we're going to help up front here? And is the homeless population going to be the top of the list or we're going to kick them to the curb? Because we have a lot of issues here, you know, and I think a lot of it when you talk about it tonight, a lot of it is the addicted. Do they want help or they don't want help? And what do you do when they don't want help? Where do they go? And it's a tough situation. You can't make somebody get help if they don't want it but on the other hand, you can't have these needles around. When you go the library, I mean, we're talking about building another new library here when you see people passing white powder and if that powder gets into a library and some child touches that fentanyl, they'll die.

So I mean there's a lot of issues here surrounding the homeless and you have to take a look. You know, somebody like Ken and somebody addicted, two different type of homeless people. And so I think it was a great conversation tonight. I think it's going to go on longer. It's not just something that you can put a rubber stamp on tonight and say, we're done with it. It's going to have to be worked out completely, and make sure whatever you're going to do, you have the city Health Department and you have other agencies here working to make sure whatever you decide to do it is a good plan and we're going to help people rather than just, you know, a fly by night issue here. Thank you very much.

Susan Elberger

Thank you. I apologize for not putting my name on this. I'll just hold it. I don't want to repeat comments already made. So I will just start by saying we've talked a lot - or sorry, you have talked a lot about public safety. In general, it seemed like the term "public" referred to people who are concerned about the impact of homelessness on their businesses, or on their neighborhoods but the people who are unhoused are also the public, and we have responsibility to them, and I'm saying "we", in my role as a State Rep. We have a role in taking care of them as well. It's not just the folks who are concerned or upset.

I was watching television the other day and there was a comment about those who complain about the cost of education don't think about the cost of ignorance. If we are not thinking about the cost of care, the expense of care later on is going

to be much greater because there'll be more people who are homeless, more people who are getting ill, and I'm not sure at what point we start saying or start seeing people dying on the streets because of exposure, because of illness. That's a big cost and it's not just a cost of money. It's a cost in terms of who we see ourselves as. Is that something that we are willing to accept?

And lastly, one of the things I would encourage is something I finally figured out for myself and that is stop using the word "some". Somebody who is somebody. Something. What thing? Let's be specific and clear rather than nebulous because every time we use the word "some", it's always going to be somebody else. Thank you.

Chairman O'Brien

Okay, we're gonna go now. I think that's our last speaker to Remarks by Aldermen. We'll start to my right.

REMARKS BY THE ALDERMEN

Alderman Lopez

I could say something. I'm not a Committee member so I'll be brief. I just wanted to point out that as there are a lot of people who are very aware and caring of this issue on December 21st, it's the longest night of the year and we hold a service out front of City Hall. It is to recognize the people who passed away who are homeless. And it's also to commit ourselves as elected officials and public officials to do what we can to make sure more people don't pass away the following year. So December 21st. It's usually around 6pm. Keep your eyes out. It's called "The Longest Night Vigil".

Alderman Sullivan

Thank you. I was just going to make a comment because I think that we had good discussions tonight, and I think that just going back to my reasons for supporting this is I think it's a catalyst to a bigger discussion, which hopefully will lead to improvement. I'm not going to be naive enough to say a solution but just improvement.

However, I'm going to go to scripture for a second. There's a there's a saying. I don't know what gospel it comes from but it says, "The voice is willing but the flesh is weak." So I think we have the opportunity tonight where we said, you know, this is what we want to do. As far as the order in which we do it is to me is not as important to me as trying to move this forward, and go towards improvement, and taking a step in a better direction. So I think our voice is willing and I guess what happens after tonight, after we leave, and through the rest of this term, and into the next term, what does the flesh do? To move some something forward with as it was said in public comment - great comment, what is the specific plan that we have in front of us to say okay everybody, we need your attention. We have a piece that we want to put forward. This is the cost. This is the expected result, etc., etc., etc. and go from there. So I look forward to it. Thanks.

Alderman Thibeault

I just want to thank everybody that's in this group tonight that came out. They have a day job. They weren't elected. So they came out and I respect everybody but you guys for coming out tonight and speaking for us. Thank you.

Alderman Dowd

Also, I'd like to thank Deputy Chief Kenney who's out in Denver, at least you're an hour earlier, but you probably had a busy day and another busy day tomorrow. But also thank the people in the circle that came to provide inputs. I think the session was good. It's a difficult problem. Hopefully we can start moving forward.

Alderwoman Klee

I want to echo other thank you's but I want to add to the public who came out and spoke, as well as to my colleagues here who engaged, and shared their thoughts, and so on. I don't mean to put the Mayor or anybody else on the spot but maybe at the next BOA, which is only a week away, we can hear more about the process of the engagement center, or just kind of the progress, I should say, not the process but the progress as to where we think we are and so on. I think it would help all of us better when we have to vote on this to hear more about it. So thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman O'Brien

Thank you. I just would like to thank a couple people. Our people in the Cable TV. They have helped in putting this together, this table here - Jay Hunnewell so that we all could have ready access to do it with microphones and everything else. They did a grand job and they should be complimented.

To the staff that are here, I thank you from the bottom my heart for coming. You really assisted us in coming to the point on the decisions that we made. I do understand the 9 to 5 job changed today from 9 to 11:30pm by the time we get out of here. But I thank you so much, you know, for coming. You really helped. You really helped us a lot. It shows what good people we have here working for the city.

Chief, I hope you have a quiet night. You don't have to get out. Chief Kenney, thank you for joining us from sunny Colorado, or snowing, or whatever it does out there.

Alderman Dowd

Well, I was gonna put out the easiest motion of the evening.

Chairman O'Brien

Well, hold on for a second. But I also would like to say to all my colleagues here. If I ran the meeting as a task master, that was completely my intention. The subject matter was intense but I got to compliment you. You stayed on focus, and we were able to get it done, and I truly appreciate that. So I would like to say a personal thank you. If I offended you, get over it. No I mean but it was not my intention but was to run a square meeting and I think we did it. So compliment to all of you. So, thank you.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION BY ALDERMAN DOWD TO ADJOURN
MOTION CARRIED

The meeting was declared closed at 11:27 p.m.

Alderman Patricia Klee
Committee Clerk

OCTOBER 21, 2025 PROPOSED REVISED O-25-078

ORDINANCE

TWO HOUR PARKING TIME LIMIT ON CELINA AVENUE

CITY OF NASHUA

In the Year Two Thousand and Twenty-Five

The City of Nashua ordains that Part II "General Legislation", Chapter 320 "Vehicles and Traffic", Article X "Parking Time Limits in Non-Parking-Lot Areas", Section 320-38 "Two hour parking", subsection A of the Nashua Revised Ordinances, as amended, be hereby further amended by adding the new underlined language in the appropriate alphabetical order as follows:

"§ 320-38. Two-hour parking.

A. Parking shall be limited to two hours at all times on the following streets:

Name of Street	**Side**	**Location**
…		
<u>Celina Avenue</u>	<u>Both</u>	<u>Entire length</u>
…"		

All ordinances or parts of ordinances inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed.

This ordinance shall become effective at the time of removal and/or installation of the necessary sign(s) and/or device(s).