

HUMAN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

SEPTEMBER 15, 2025

A meeting of the Human Affairs Committee was held Monday, September 15, 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.

Let's start the meeting by taking a roll call attendance.

The roll call was taken with 4 members of the Human Affairs Committee present:

Alderman Thomas Lopez, Chairman, presided.

Members of the Committee present: Alderman Thomas Lopez, Chair
Alderman-at-Large Shoshanna Kelly, Vice Chair
Alderman Tim Sennott, Clerk
Alderman Chris Thibodeau

Members of the Committee absent: Alderman-at-Large Gloria Timmons

Also in Attendance: Matt Sullivan, Community Development Director
Kevin Rourke, Police Chief
Camille Correa, Transit Administrator

ROLL CALL

PUBLIC COMMENT- None

DISCUSSION/PRESENTATIONS - None

COMMUNICATIONS - None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS – RESOLUTIONS

R-25-201

Endorsers: Mayor Jim Donchess
Alderman-at-Large Michael B. O'Brien, Sr.
Alderman-at-Large Melbourne Moran, Jr.
Alderman Thomas Lopez
Alderman Tim Sennott
Alderman Derek Thibeault
Alderman Richard A. Dowd
Alderman-at-Large Lori Wilshire

RELATIVE TO THE ACCEPTANCE OF \$650,000 FROM THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE DEPARTMENT OF SAFETY INTO POLICE GRANT ACTIVITY "FY2026 GRANITE SHIELD SUBSTANCE ABUSE REDUCTION INITIATIVE (SARI) GRANT"

MOTION BY ALDERMAN SENNOTT TO RECOMMEND FINAL PASSAGE

ON THE QUESTION

Chairman Lopez

Can we explain why it's called the "SARI" Grant?

Unidentified Speaker

Yes. So it's typically called "Granite Shield". They just changed the Granite Shield this year. It keeps fluctuating with names.

Chairman Lopez

It sounds apologetic.

Unidentified Speaker

Yeah, definitely. One year it was Substance Abuse Reduction Initiative. The next it's Granite Shield but they always come with a new name every year.

So this for the acceptance of \$650,000. These are State funds from the Department of Safety. This is set to last for two years. Typically, it's one year that these grant funds are initiated. So that's why it looks so high - \$650,000. Typically, it's only 325 that we get is the ballpark of how much we get but this makes it easier for everybody instead of us having to come back every year and makes it easier for them as well. These are funds that we use to fight the substance related abuse, and trafficking, and these will be used in conjunction with Hudson Police as well to help out with these investigations.

Chairman Lopez

Well my two questions are typically are we the only ones getting this and then Alderman Kelly are you gonna ask if they have to match it?

Alderwoman Kelly

I don't have to but I could. I don't –

Unidentified Speaker

There's no match with this. It is just straight funds and this is statewide. I know at least for a fact Manchester gets it as well. So it is well spread out throughout the State.

Chairman Lopez

Does it cover personnel costs, equipment?

Unidentified Speaker

Just overtime cost for conducting these investigations.

Alderwoman Kelly

I have a question.

Alderman Thibodeau

I did reach out to Karen Smith. So I asked my typical question and it is a State level grant, not a pass through grant so I was informed of that. I will be voting in favor.

Alderwoman Kelly

I think you mentioned it but is this a level funded or does it change year to year?

Unidentified Speaker

No. So it does change year to year. You apply and whatever funds they do have and whoever applies for it, they separate it based on that. The ballpark we have received yearly has been around 325 to 350. So the reason this is so high is just because it is over a course of two years as opposed to one single year each time. So it looks like a large number.

Alderwoman Kelly

Great. Thank you.

Alderman Thibodeau

Do you know, other than from the State of New Hampshire, is the overall source of these like recovery funds from things seized through arrests?

Unidentified Speaker

I don't know where the actual funds from and all that. That's a great question. That's a great question. I don't know where they get the funds from. I'm sorry, Sir.

Alderman Thibodeau

That's okay.

Chairman Lopez

It's issued by the State of New Hampshire though?

Unidentified Speaker

Yes, Sir.

Chairman Lopez

Then it's their problem. Money laundering and that's a bigger problem and he'll be the one investigating.

Okay. Any productive questions from the rest of the...?

MOTION CARRIED

R-25-202

Endorsers: Mayor Jim Donchess
Alderman-at-Large Michael B. O'Brien, Sr.
Alderman-at-Large Melbourne Moran, Jr.
Alderman Thomas Lopez
Alderman-at-Large Ben Clemons
Alderman Tim Sennott
Alderman Derek Thibeault
Alderman Richard A. Dowd
Alderman-at-Large Lori Wilshire

RELATIVE TO THE ACCEPTANCE OF \$48,200 FROM THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE DEPARTMENT OF SAFETY INTO POLICE GRANT ACTIVITY "NEW HAMPSHIRE HIGHWAY SAFETY FY2026 GRANT"

MOTION BY ALDERMAN SENNOTT TO RECOMMEND FINAL PASSAGE

ON THE QUESTION

Chairman Lopez

Would you like to give us a summary of this too.

Unidentified Speaker

So this is actually a federal pass through grant funded by New Hampshire - I mean United States Department of Transportation. There is a 25% match on this. We have gotten this over the years and it fights basically, I mean, speeding, distracted driving, DUI, and many of the main causes for traffic accidents in New Hampshire. It definitely has, you know, assisted in reducing the amount of stops that we've conducted. Over the years through this grant has just been, you know, astronomical. Just to kind of put an end to all these reasons that there are

motor vehicle accidents in New Hampshire. This runs till September 30, 2026.

Chairman Lopez

Does it cover specifically highways? Is it like a turf based thing?

Unidentified Speaker

So we essentially get to choose where we patrol based on our hot spots. We look at our numbers through our crime analyst. She's able to, you know, give us numbers of where the most accidents are happening whether it be on Amherst Street, Daniel Webster Highway, or Main Street and that's where I tell the officers to focus when they do go out there. They go out in four hour shifts and I give them, hey, today you're going to be focusing on speed, and next guy, hey, you're going to be focusing on distracted driving during this, or you're going to be looking for, you know, drivers who are operating under the influence. So that basically is what it covers.

Chairman Lopez

Well I already sent my two cents into the various police officers but there was a car show happening on Friday nights.

Unidentified Speaker

Is that Target?

Chairman Lopez

Ridiculous amount of cars just blasting through Main Street on Friday night with everybody out.

Unidentified Speaker

My question is I passed by but they all have their seats pointed towards the roadway. I assume that can only be so they can see the cars racing by before they enter the parking lot. That was on my own personal time. I was headed to Nashua to go get dinner and I'm like why are they pointing towards the road when all the cars are inside the parking lot.

Chairman Lopez

Either way, I'm glad nobody got hit.

Unidentified Speaker

Yeah, exactly. They've been doing that for a while now, I think. I think at some point the property owner was for it and kind of turned against it at some point but hasn't really put anything towards it to stop it.

Chairman Lopez

Are there events that are predictable where you can be like oh, okay, this is motorcycle weekend. We should definitely be out in force so we know...

Unidentified Speaker

No and honestly, I mean, we haven't had the trouble that you would anticipate that these types of car shows. There hasn't been an uptick in accidents.

Chairman Lopez

Yeah and I wasn't singling that out. Well, I was when I was complaining about it because I was getting a lot of residents saying but in general as a policing action are there different times of year, different events that you'd be - you would identify as, you know? I mean obviously New Year's is a big night.

Unidentified Speaker

Yeah and so through this grant, they actually have certain times where they pick a high volume date where there's more likely to be intoxicated drivers out there. They give you like 10 days and then give you a specific amount of money. Hey, we want you to spend this much money. You have to work during these days to enforce whether it be DUI or whatever it may be.

Chairman Lopez

Okay.

Alderman Kelly

I'm assuming since this is a grant you get year over year that you already identified the matching funds in your budget?

Unidentified Speaker

Yes.

Alderman Kelly

Great, thank you.

Chairman Lopez

Any further questions?

MOTION CARRIED**R-25-204**

Endorsers: Mayor Jim Donchess
Alderman-at-Large Michael B. O'Brien, Sr.
Alderman-at-Large Melbourne Moran, Jr.
Alderman Thomas Lopez
Alderman Derek Thibeault
Alderman Richard A. Dowd
Alderman-at-Large Shoshanna Kelly
Alderman-at-Large Lori Wilshire

RELATIVE TO THE ACCEPTANCE OF \$68,250 FROM THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION STATE FISCAL YEAR 2026-2027 CAPITAL MATCH FUNDS INTO TRANSIT GRANT ACTIVITY "TRANSIT CAPITAL PROJECTS" AND \$534,638 FROM THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION STATE FISCAL YEAR 2026-2027 OPERATING MATCH FUNDS INTO TRANSIT GRANT ACTIVITY "FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION ("FTA") OPERATING GRANT"

MOTION BY ALDERMAN SENNOTT TO RECOMMEND FINAL PASSAGEON THE QUESTIONMatt Sullivan, Community Development Director

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Matt Sullivan, Community Development Director. I'm here on behalf of R-25-204. I apologize to Alderman Sennott for having to read the entire description of this piece of legislation but it actually captures the function quite well.

We're trying to request really two separate pots of money, both through New Hampshire Department of Transportation. I do want to make it clear that these are State of New Hampshire budget funds that are allocated as part of the bi-annual budget but they are used as match to receive our federal transportation dollars. So our

FTA monies come in, we're required to provide a match to those, we use city dollars, and then we also use the State money that's appropriated as part of the State budget. So sort of an interesting way that the NTS services are funded.

The two pots I referred to: one being the capital match funds. Specifically, the \$68,250. Those funds will be used to match vehicle purchases, seat upgrades, and some other small capital projects at NTS facilities both at the Transit Center and at our Riverside Drive location.

Then the \$534,638 is actually split into two years. Of course, \$267,000 in Fiscal Year '26 and \$267,000 in Fiscal Year '27. That operating money we use to directly match our regular operating costs for the Nashua Transit System as a sort of, I guess, high level reminder. That \$260,000 may seem like a lot of money. Our annual budget is about \$4.3 to \$4.7 million depending upon the year. So it's actually a very small portion of the NTS's total operating budget but it does give some context. Happy to answer any questions that you might have. These are regular sources of funding that come in. There have been some risks in recent years that the State money would be decreased substantially but luckily even in a very tight State budget year, we were able to maintain relatively level funding, which was really encouraging news that we didn't know at the time of the budget process here in the city. So that was great for us. Again, happy to answer any questions that folks may have. Hopeful to accept these funds and appreciate this getting on the agenda so quickly past first reading which was done at the Board of Aldermen just last week. So thank you for hearing it.

Chairman Lopez

How stable is the federal funding that this would be the match towards?

Matt Sullivan, Community Development Director

Yes. Alderman Lopez, Mr. Chair, that's a great question. It's about as stable as any federal funding can be at this time quite honestly and I mean that in a very positive way actually. What I mean by that is as opposed to perhaps our HOME funds as an example where there's direct conversation about elimination of the HOME program in coming federal budgets, there's been no indication that transportation or public transit funding will be cut in any drastic fashion. So when I say about as positive as it can be, I actually mean that. There's been no direct indication that we would lose these monies.

Chairman Lopez

Not all funding is created equal. I mean we're on this Committee is usually focusing on HUD and HOME but like Department of Defense is getting their funding. There are some programs that are being...

Matt Sullivan, Community Development Director

Yep and I would suggest this is sort of a middle ground Alderman Lopez where we feel pretty comfortable because, you know, there seems to be a recognition that public transportation is something that would be very hard to suddenly cease or halt because of the populations that it serves. So I don't feel very nervous that this number would go away or these federal funds would go away. What I do get nervous about are really two separate things. One, that there be a reduction in funds for some reason; or two, that for some reason because of the State budget these monies were not available past this bi-annual period. That's a conversation for another time.

But you have given me an opportunity to just make one statement and that is that Alderman Lopez I know you've participated in this process I think once or twice. The Governor's hearings on the statewide transportation plan, the "GACIT hearings" as they're referred to are coming up in October. They are G-A-C-I-T. It's sort of an old fashioned process but one that is absolutely critical for city of Nashua transportation projects. It's essentially a public hearing process they do across the State of New Hampshire where folks come in, individuals from municipalities, members of the Board of Aldermen, mayors, staff, and basically testify on behalf of their projects that they'd like to see included in the plan. We're hearing that there are significant funding shortfalls within the statewide transportation plan and that there may be cuts needed at a very, very significant level.

So as we approach an October GACIT hearing that will take place in Hudson, and I'm happy to share the details of that, it is possible that either myself, or Engineer Hudson, or others may be reaching out requesting that folks

attend those meetings and speak to things that maybe were not at risk of being funded in the past but maybe at risk of being funded in the future. Statewide public transportation funding is a great example of that. So we are likely to go to that meeting as we often do and say public transportation funding is critical, but we're likely going to try to build a coalition of folks to speak not only to that but to other projects like the Walnut Street Oval, or West Hollis Street, or Amherst Street corridor. We're likely going to try to really build a coalition. I'm sorry for the digression into that Alderman Lopez, but I just remember that that hearing is coming up and it's a really important one every two years.

Chairman Lopez

So when I open the door because I'm worried about funding. So any suggestions you have for making sure we sustain it.

Matt Sullivan, Community Development Director

That's a big one and it's, again, it's old fashioned but it's a really, you know, the Executive Councilor is there. They listen to testimony and it's important. And literally, I've been in calls recently and they're saying you have to go to your GACIT hearing. You have to go to your GACIT hearing. They will literally potentially eliminate, not by choice, but they'll eliminate projects if they don't hear they're a priority. Even if it's as simple as getting there, going there and saying, I'm from Nashua. I support all the transportation projects in Nashua. Like that will have value. So we probably will put a call out to the members of the Board of Aldermen. Know everyone can't be there but we may even ask you to submit a letter to support some of the stuff we're working on. So I'll save that for another time. We just wanted to make you aware.

Alderman Sennott

I hate to stay on the tangent but would that be the 10 year plan hearings?

Matt Sullivan, Community Development Director

Yes, that's correct.

Alderman Sennott

So if I'm reading this correctly, the first two were canceled and the next two are tomorrow at 6 o'clock at Manchester Community College and Thursday at 6 o'clock at the Brentwood Recreation Center in Brentwood.

Matt Sullivan, Community Development Director

That's correct. The one that we're going to be aiming for is on Tuesday, October 7th, and it will be at Lions Ave. in Hudson, New Hampshire, which I think is a community center or something to that effect over there. That's the closest one to us Alderman Sennott and our Councilor will be there.

Alderman Thibodeau

So it's like a series of these.

Matt Sullivan, Community Development Director

It is, yep.

Alderman Thibodeau

Okay.

Matt Sullivan, Community Development Director

It's a series State wide. They go to each section of the State to hear about local transportation priorities and the Hudson one is the closest one to us.

Chairman Lopez

With regards to the funding sources, I note that capital funds are going into one account and then...

Matt Sullivan, Community Development Director

Yes.

Chairman Lopez

...obviously personnel costs are being kept in a separate one as well. Are there any capital investments that are being planned?

Matt Sullivan, Community Development Director

Yes, there are Alderman Lopez. There are really three projects specifically that we identified and they're gonna sound familiar because these projects have come to you and to Finance in different pieces I guess I would say. So there are three projects. One being some circuit breaker work over at the Transit Center. We have some upgrades to make over there in our electrical system, although the Transit Center was redone. Our electrical system actually needs some additional enhancements to support some of the technology that we're working to implement over there. We're also going to do some rework to the sidewalks and repaint the crosswalks that are out here because that work needs to be redone even just a few years removed from that renovation. So that's project one.

Project two is we're going to be making some upgrades to bus stop signage in some areas. We have some signs that are deficient and we just need to make some changes. We're also moving some stops around in a few locations and we'll be doing a whole public outreach notification for that so that won't happen by surprise.

And then finally, the one you've definitely heard about is we're trying to purchase three ADA cutaway vans for paratransit service. They're 16 passenger vehicles that are part of the CERF but we're now kind of working to find the match funding to match what's in the CERF right now. Three individual projects.

Chairman Lopez

With regards to the sidewalk repainting, there's nothing we can do about lining the busses up that better with the sizes of the sidewalk?

Matt Sullivan, Community Development Director

Alderman Lopez, I don't want to say there's nothing we can do but you'll see that sometimes they are aligned and sometimes they aren't. Unfortunately, we have several length vehicles that as you know well, it literally depends on the Lego pieces that are out there and whether or not they actually line up with the sidewalk and quite often they don't. One of the issues is that if you park a larger bus too far forward, Alderman Lopez, to keep that sidewalk clear, you then actually lose ADA access on the front unload area. So I will openly admit, and I haven't done this in public and I don't think that we have made the priority decision to put the ADA to put it in a position where the ADA ramp can extend from the bus. But to your point, the crosswalk does get obstructed. So we aren't planning any changes to that. I know it's not the perfect alignment but.

Chairman Lopez

I would have been impressed if you figured out a solution because like you said, I was there. I could clearly see the front of the bus. If you put another bus behind it, it blocks it. I think, unfortunately, the only solution is for people to either wait for the busses to leave and then use it, which is the safer way to go, or plan their attendance on the bus so they're not trying to get across it when busses are coming in. Easier said than done for many people because they have to be different places at different times.

Matt Sullivan, Community Development Director

We had a day out there where we literally sat with the bus and kind of tried every configuration possible to get both the crosswalk obstruction issue addressed, and get the ramp issue, and it was very, very difficult. So I don't

say we've accepted defeat there but it's very challenging to make that work when the busses are loading on the 30s and on the hour. So not ideal.

Alderman Thibodeau

Is that at the bus station right here?

Matt Sullivan, Community Development Director

Yeah, that's correct.

Chairman Lopez

The busses line up in such a way that they block the ramp. So if somebody's in a - well specifically, there was one resident who for a while was driving around in his motorized wheelchair like below eye level for drivers. It was worrying people and it was the thought at the time that he was trying to get up onto the curb but he was, in fact, just looping around for fun and has found a different place to go drive around. So there's that.

Other questions?

Alderman Thibodeau

For 100% clarity purposes, these are both...

Matt Sullivan, Community Development Director

State.

Alderman Thibodeau

State. For the (inaudible) fund of a but these are State funds?

Matt Sullivan, Community Development Director

Yeah. Alderman Thibodeau I was actually, I was listening to the prior conversation and I knew you would ask. I just looked through the grant agreements and I am - I don't want to give myself an out here but I'm 100% sure these are State funds. It is odd though because even the State identifies that they will be used or they have to be used to match FTA monies. I'm gonna say for the record, I'm 100% sure these are not federal monies that are passing through. They wouldn't be able to be used as match against other federal...

Alderman Thibodeau

Because they're (inaudible)

Matt Sullivan, Community Development Director

Yeah. I do get confused though I have to admit on this sometimes but I'm certain that these are. I'll say this. If I find out tomorrow morning that they aren't, I will go to the Board of Aldermen next week, seriously, and I'll clarify this but I'm certain.

Chairman Lopez

All right. Seeing no further discussion.

MOTION CARRIED

Matt Sullivan, Community Development Director

Thank you very much.

NEW BUSINESS – ORDINANCES - None

TABLED IN COMMITTEE - None

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Alderman Thibodeau

Thank you. I'm actually hoping somebody can answer a question for me. I have a constituent concerned about crossing guards. I know it's not Human Affairs Committee related, but maybe one of you has...

Chairman Lopez

Board of Education.

Alderman Thibodeau

I reached out to Director Cummings and he pointed me towards Crystal at the School Department.

Alderwoman Kelly

Is that during school – crossing guards?

Alderman Thibodeau

But he wasn't 100 percent sure. He said I'm pretty sure.

Chairman Lopez

She's the one who does all the finance stuff. Ultimately, I think the buck really stops at Superintendent Andrade but hypothetically it stops the Board of Education but really maybe Superintendent Andrade.

Alderman Thibodeau

All right. And specifically for hiring a replacement for one that is leaving on Wednesday and the constituents are concerned that there's nobody to replace that position immediately. So I'm trying to find out. But there might be that there will be an adult human individual at that crosswalk come Wednesday.

Alderwoman Kelly

You busy Wednesday?

Alderman Thibodeau

Huh?

Alderwoman Kelly

You busy Wednesday?

Chairman Lopez

They take volunteers. The greatest campaign opportunity ever. I thought about doing it.

Alderman Thibodeau

I do it dashing in one of those bright orange jump vests.

Chairman Lopez

I've been told they don't want blind crossing guards so I'm out.

Alderman Thibodeau

You're out. I appreciate it. Thank you.

Chairman Lopez

Yep.

Just as a note as Chair, I intended to have support from the recovery housing to present on the different programs not because there's any ordinance pending or anything like that, because I think it's important for the Committee to kind of remain abreast of situations before we suddenly start seeing grants go by and concerns raised by citizens about X, Y, or Z. So I was planning to do recovery programs. I will be reaching out to them for October and then I think we're overdue for our tenant rights briefing where generally, we'll have different city departments come in and talk about, you know, what does the city do to document concerns that are raised about where people are staying, and then what are the resources that are available for them.

Alderman Thibodeau

I do have one more item that is Human Affairs related if I may. Last meeting, we had a Director Bagley and they gave us a rundown and we asked if a list could be made available sooner rather than later of potential needs, wants, desires and they said they would get that to us immediately. I don't know if anybody else got it but Chris Thibodeau did not get it. Just curious if anyone else got one?

Chairman Lopez

I didn't receive a weekly request to follow up. I also did notice that in the meeting where we had them and were asking about possibilities of when the warming station could start, they also announced that they would be doing it on the same date that they planned to. So it doesn't look like they have an intention of trying to open it before Thanksgiving break.

Alderman Kelly

Alderman Lopez, just clarifying. You just said a list of...

Alderman Thibodeau

We were asking about (inaudible), or sugar, or coffee – supplies for the warming center.

Alderman Kelly

The supplies for them. Thank you. Trying to think back.

Alderman Thibodeau

Sorry. That definitely was not a very clear statement but yes, that's what I intended.

Chairman Lopez

No, I mean I remembered it but like only because I happened to be involved in it last year we had a mop that was tied to a broom. So yes, it would be good if the city was running programs like that could take advantage of people who are willing to just donate to it. You know, everything we have doesn't have to cost money or necessarily go through an RFP if it's like a mop or coffee.

Alderman Kelly

Sugar. I remember sugar.

Alderman Sennott

Yes, lots of sugar.

Slightly Human Affairs adjacent. We're all aware at this point but just for anybody who may be at home listening. Greater Nashua Interfaith Housing Justice and Granite State Organizing Project are hosting their housing forum with the candidates for the Board of Aldermen Wednesday, September 17th, at 7pm at the Main Street United Methodist Church. I encourage everybody to go whether you're a candidate or not. It was a very good conversation two years ago. I'm looking forward to see how the needles moved since then.

PUBLIC COMMENT - None

REMARKS BY THE ALDERMEN

Alderman Sennott

Not an announcement but I just want to send out wishes for healing energy for our colleague at-Large Gloria Timmons. I know she's been down and out a little bit lately. I won't go further than that.

Chairman Lopez

Okay. It was a good sentiment.

My phrasing was just because I've noticed in committees that the discussion part versus the comments part seems to be muddy. So discussion is somebody brings a topic up and we all discuss. The comments are hey everybody don't forget the crop walk coming up in October.

Any other comments?

ADJOURNMENT

**MOTION BY ALDERWOMAN KELLY TO ADJOURN
MOTION CARRIED**

The meeting was declared adjourned at 7:27 p.m.

Alderman Tim Sennott
Committee Clerk