

CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION RE: FOOD TRUCKS

MUNICIPAL COMPLEX
DATE: MONDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2016

PORTSMOUTH, NH
TIME: 6:00PM

City Council Present: Mayor Blalock, Assistant Mayor Splaine, Councilors Perkins, Dwyer, Lown, Pearson, Spear, Cyr and Denton

Staff Present: John P. Bohenko, City Manager; Nancy Colbert Puff, Deputy City Manager; Kim McNamara, Health Inspector; Robert P. Sullivan, City Attorney and Kelli L. Barnaby, City Clerk

Mayor Blalock called the work session to order at 6:00 p.m.

City Manager Bohenko said we will be speaking on food trucks in the City.

Deputy City Manager Colbert Puff walked the City Council through her memorandum of November 30, 2016. She spoke to regulations and requirements and said this memorandum would be about how we would go about attracting food trucks in the City.

Health Inspector McNamara spoke to the food services permits which are registered currently in the City. She reported that there are 315 food permits and 173 are restaurants licensed to sit down at. She said there are 172 facilities that provide take out. She stated local merchants were very concerned about the food trucks. She said the rents are high downtown and there are 5 food trucks that are currently licensed in the City. Health Inspector McNamara said if we are going to have more food trucks we need to look at adding environmental sustainability to the regulations.

Deputy Colbert Puff spoke to where we may like food trucks. She said two parking spaces are designated currently in the downtown and there is a vacant space on Hanover Street. She said we could look at the Library lot on Sunday's or the current lower lot of City Hall on Sunday's.

Councilor Spear said we are not successful with food trucks in the City. He feels Hanover Street is a bad location and would like to see 5 food trucks on Maplewood Avenue and to close it to one lane of traffic which would be a pilot program for the summer with not much investment.

Councilor Dwyer said she would like to see people drive to a location. She suggested the Masonic lot or the new parking garage lot.

Mayor Blalock suggested the Prescott Park parking lot could handle 2-3 food trucks. He said people could walk to the location but you want them in a place where they are not directly near a brick and mortar restaurant.

Councilor Pearson suggested the tennis courts at South Mill Pond or Parrott Avenue lot.

Councilor Perkins said these are great ideas and suggested lunchtime at Pease Tradeport.

Councilor Cyr said we could come up with 3 locations to fit trucks. He said he supports the new parking garage location. He said first we need to find out if there is interest by any food trucks before moving forward with the pilot program.

Councilor Lown said we need to assess ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 7, ARTICLE II – TAXIS, SECTION 7.201 – 7.217 the demand for food trucks. He said this could generate revenue but does not want to lose any parking spaces downtown.

Health Inspector McNamara said requirements stop people from coming to the City. She said there is cost involved in the business and they're high costs. She said there needs to be access to bathrooms. She indicated that some nursing homes are looking to offer food trucks to their employees as another means of getting lunch. She also said microbreweries would like to have food trucks and there is some local demand for this. She explained the process for locating food trucks on private property.

Councilor Denton said we should look at the hours of operations to allow for late night.

Assistant Mayor Splaine suggested getting the Chamber of Commerce involved for their creativity and invest the input from the vendors on this matter for locations. He would like to see a survey done by the public on this matter and proceed forward after that and move slowly on the matter because it is not needed until next summer.

City Manager Bohenko suggested looking at the hours of operation to be from 10:00 p.m. to 1:00 a.m. for food trucks.

Mayor Blalock said most restaurants feel the more the merrier.

Councilor Cyr asked if \$5,000.00 goes for the parking spaces. City Manager Bohenko said it is for the parking space.

Councilor Dwyer suggested allowing food trucks in loading zones during the hours of 10:00 p.m. to 1:00 a.m. She said we need to make sure food trucks do not get junky in their appearance.

City Manager Bohenko said we will take the ideas and proceed with a report back to the City Council. He said we will reach out to the food trucks. He said a restaurant may want to have their own food truck.

Assistant Mayor Splaine said he likes the City Manager's approach.

At 6:40 p.m., Mayor Blalock closed the work session.

Respectfully submitted:

Kelli L. Barnaby, MMC, CMC, CNHMC
City Clerk