

GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday, March 24, 2020 – 7:00 p.m.

REMOTE PARTICIPATION

-MINUTES-

Present: Chair, Councilor Steven LeBlanc, Jr.; Vice Chair, Councilor Valerie Gilman; Councilor Melissa Cox; Councilor John McCarthy; Councilor Scott Memhard; Councilor Sean Nolan; Councilor James O’Hara; Councilor Barry Pett

Absent: None

Also Present: Mayor Sefatia Romeo Theken; Joanne Senos; Kenny Costa; John Dunn; Vanessa Krawczyk; Chip Payson; Jim Destino

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. The Council President announced that this meeting is recorded by video and audio in accordance with state Open Meeting Law. Consistent with the Governor’s orders suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law and banning gatherings of more than 25 people, this meeting will be conducted by remote participation.

Additionally, all votes taken by the City Council during this and future remote meetings will be by roll call vote.

Also, Council President stated that “if you are calling in on a phone you can press *9 to request to speak and if you are watching on a computer or device there is a raise hand button that you can tap or press to request to speak. Please use either of these options during oral communications and I recognize you to speak.”

The Roll was called by the City Clerk and Councilor Nolan joined the meeting at 7:12 p.m.

Oral Communications:

Joel Favazza, 28 Middle Street, conveyed “First off, thank you, and second off, good luck with this tonight. Third off as the City of Gloucester continues to adapt its procedures relative to the order from the governor, one issue that is coming up with submitting permanent applications is that in order to submit a permit application for the zoning board to get it inspected by the building department, time-stamped by the clerk’s department is sent back to the Building Department. And this was cumbersome before all of this started. But now, given the difficulties in getting things to and from these buildings, it would really be helpful if the city thought about eliminating the city clerk stop and gave some sort of time stamp capability to the building department to allow them to intake stamp it and not require the applicant to go back and forth twice. Thank you.”

Linda McCarriston had technical difficulty in joining the meeting.

Presentations/Commendations:

None

Consent Agenda:

- ***MAYOR’S REPORT***

1. Memorandum from CFO re: loan authorization request in the amount of \$2,500,000 for downtown paving and parking meters **(Refer B&F)**
2. City of Gloucester State of Emergency Declaration **(Info Only)**
3. Printable poster for raising awareness about stopping the spread of germs
4. Memorandum from Fire Chief re: two grant applications for FEMA Assistance to Firefighter Grant Program FFY2019: one for the purchase of a replacement pumper in the amount of approx. \$800,000 and one for training of officers and acting officers in the amount of approx. \$600,000 **(Info Only)**

- ***COMMUNICATIONS/INVITATIONS***

- ***INFORMATION ONLY***

- ***APPLICATIONS/PETITIONS***

- **COUNCILLORS ORDERS**
- **APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS COUNCIL AND STANDING COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

1. City Council Meeting: 3/10/2020 (Approve/File)
2. Special B&F Meeting: 3/24/2020 (under separate cover) (Approve/File)
3. Standing Committee Meetings: B&F 3/19/2020 (cancelled), O&A 3/16/2020 (cancelled), P&D 3/18/2020 (cancelled) (Approve/File)

Items to be added/deleted from the Consent Agenda:

NONE

By Roll Call of the Council, the Consent Agenda and Unanimous Consent Calendar was accepted.

Committee Reports:

Budge & Finance – March 19 – no meeting cancelled.

Special Budget & Finance: March 24th

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On a motion by Councilor Cox, seconded by Councilor Memhard, the Budget & Finance Committee voted by Roll Call 3 in favor, 0 opposed, to recommend that the City Council approve a Construction Manager at Risk (CMAR) under MGL c.149A as a public construction alternative to the Design-Bid-Build method under MGL c. 149A for the East Gloucester/Veterans Memorial Consolidated Elementary School.

Councilor Cox turned over the narrative to CFO, John Dunn to explain:

Mr. Dunn conveyed “So essentially, there are two different ways to procure construction services for what they call vertical construction, which is building design. Bid build is the classic way of doing it. You go out and design the building, you put it out the bid and then you put it put out the bid and you get bids in and awarded to the lowest competent firm. Another way to do it, which has been increasing in popularity, has been available for about the past 10 years. Its construction manager at risk. The benefits for a construction manager at risk is that you tend to get the construction firm involved at the very early stages of the design and therefore you avoid questions that might come up in the future through what they call requests for information or if FI’s are AFI’s often result in delays in the project, as well as change orders that increase the cost of the project. We used this construction manager at risk approach for the West Parish School. It worked out very well. The school came in both under budget and on time, and it was relatively little controversy between the design firm and the construction manager as well as that. That construction managers, subcontractors. So this is a situation where the school building committee had considered it had a fair amount of debate over it, decided to go with this recommendation. It’s agreed to this recommendation, and now it’s being presented to you. Very strong recommendation, unanimous by the school building committee.”

DISCUSSION: NONE

MOTION: On a motion by Councilor Cox, recommended by Councilor Memhard, the City Council voted by Roll Call 9 in favor, 0 opposed, to recommend that the City Council approve a Construction Manager at Risk (CMAR) under MGL c.149A as a public construction alternative to the Design-Bid-Build method under MGL c. 149A for the East Gloucester/Veterans Memorial Consolidated Elementary School.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION MOTION: On motion by Councilor Cox, seconded by Councilor Memhard, the Budget & Finance Committee voted by ROLL CALL 3 in favor, 0 opposed, to recommend that the City Council approve Supplemental Appropriation 2020-SA-28 in the amount of \$6,050 (Six Thousand Fifty Dollars) from General Fund – Undesignated Fund Balance Account #0001-359000, Transfers to the General Fund to Health Dept. Supplies, Account #0151052-54000 for the purpose of purchasing COVID-19 supplies and provide funding for PR outreach) .

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On motion by Councilor Cox, seconded by Councilor Memhard, the Budget & Finance Committee voted by ROLL CALL 3 in favor, 0 opposed, to recommend that the City Council approve Supplemental Appropriation 2020-SA-29 in the amount of \$11,250 (Eleven Thousand Two Hundred Fifty Dollars) from General Fund – Undesignated Fund Balance Account #0001-359000, Transfers to the General Fund to Health Dept. Hourly Wages, Account #0151051-511300 to cover COVID-19 temporary nursing coverage if needed.

Councilor Cox turned over the narrative to CFO, John Dunn to explain:

Mr. Dunn conveyed “So both these 2020-SA-28 and the one to follow 2020-SA-29 are resulting from meetings that were held now almost three weeks ago where Karin Carroll, Director of the Health Department, was in the initial stages of trying to figure out what was needed or what might possibly be needed to confront the COVID-19 issue. So at this point, this is a relatively modest SA, resulting in about seventeen thousand dollars of additional funding that will go into the health department. The first one is dealing with supplies. The second one #2020-SA-29 nine is going to fund some additional nursing services. These, frankly, at this point are a drop in the bucket. You have a much larger requests coming down the pike that was submitted tonight. But at this point, we wanted to move this one forward because we think it's better to fund these things as they come along than to wait. So we would ask your discretion and your approval of this particular one tonight, even though it is relatively small. And then you will see over the next week and a half, two weeks. The next one coming forward, which is going to be much larger and much more expansive in terms of putting us in a position to be able to deal with this pandemic.”

DISCUSSION: None.

MOTION: On motion by Councilor Cox, seconded by Councilor Memhard, the City Council voted by ROLL CALL 9 in favor, 0 opposed, to approve Supplemental Appropriation 2020-SA-28 in the amount of \$6,050 (Six Thousand Fifty Dollars) from General Fund – Undesignated Fund Balance Account #0001-359000, Transfers to the General Fund to Health Dept. Supplies, Account #0151052-54000 for the purpose of purchasing COVID-19 supplies and provide funding for PR outreach.

MOTION: On motion by Councilor Cox, seconded by Councilor Memhard, the City Council voted by ROLL CALL 9 in favor, 0 opposed, to approve Supplemental Appropriation 2020-SA-29 in the amount of \$11,250 (Eleven Thousand Two Hundred Fifty Dollars) from General Fund – Undesignated Fund Balance Account #0001-359000, Transfers to the General Fund to Health Dept. Hourly Wages, Account #0151051-511300 to cover COVID-19 temporary nursing coverage if needed.

Ordinances & Administration: March 16- no meeting - cancelled.

Planning & Development: March 18 – no meeting – cancelled

Scheduled Public Hearings:

1. PH2020-009: SCP2020-001: Wingersheek Road #105, Map 261, Lot 31, GZO Sec. 3.1.6(b) "Building Heights in excess of 35 Feet" in the R-20 Low/Medium Density Residential District (TBC 4/14/20)

Council President LeBlanc opened the public hearing and announced that this matter is continued to the April 14, 2020 City Council Meeting.

2. PH2020-010: SCP2020-002: Essex Avenue #99A, Map 216, Lot 126, GZO Sec. 3.1.6(b) "Building Heights in excess of 35 Feet;" Sec. 2.3.4(13) "Marine related service, storage or repair, limited primarily in the MI District to commercial fishing vessels;" Sec. 5.5"Lowland Requirements;" Sec. 5.5.2 and Sec. 5.5.3 in the EB District (TBC 04/14/20)

Council President LeBlanc opened the public hearing and announced that this matter is continued to the May 12, 2020 City Council Meeting.

FOR COUNCIL VOTE: None

Unfinished Business: None

Individual Councilor's Discussion including Reports by Appointed Councilors to Committees: None

Councilors Requests to the Mayor:

Councilor Pett conveyed he would just like to thank the Mayor and the Administration, as well as the Board of Health and all of the employees in the city for the phenomenal work they are doing, trying to deal with this virus, and keeping us all informed and all the constituents of the city informed as well. He thanked all of the fellow city councilors for their work communicating and, keeping everyone up to date as well.

Councilor Cox conveyed she wanted to proclaim this the national James Pope day. He managed to pull get this meeting ready for them. This was phenomenal and thanked him for getting them up and running.

Councilor Gilman echoed what everyone said. She couldn't thank the administration enough for all the work that they've done to communicate proactively, and said James Pope was awesome. She conveyed that Council President LeBlanc and Councilor Cox did a great job trying this out for the first time. She thought overall it went pretty well. She listened to the Budget & Finance meeting as well. She said she just went in as a normal person, and will give some feedback off line. She thought it was a good first opportunity and thanked everyone for working together. Let's get us through this some social distancing challenge right now so we get back to normal as soon as possible. Thank you.

Councilor Holmgren echoed everything that had been said, and was especially grateful. Number one again for James Pope and, you know, city business such as it is. I mean, we're certainly not at full tilt right now, understandably, but the fact that everything didn't have to come to a screeching halt is something that she is profoundly grateful for. She was happy to see all of everyone's faces, and happy that members of the public were able to tune in. She especially want to give a shout out to all the health care workers and grocery store workers, janitors and other essential personnel who keep going out into public every single day, braving this unseen threat to keep our society going and to keep us fed and safe. Thank you.

Councilor McCarthy echoed what had been said by everyone, especially our own city employees. From the top to the bottom, from the administration to everybody that's got boots on the ground and is still doing a great job running this city. And it's with great appreciation from him, and I'm sure from the rest of the city council. And to echo what Councilor Holmgren just said, the health care people in this city to the kids at Market Basket and Stop and Shop and that are going in and bagging our groceries and making sure we're able to still maintain somewhat a comfortable lifestyle. Thank you.

Councilor Memhard joined the rest of the Council in their appreciation for the administration, how it was handled to date and how we're stepping up to the challenges that are going to be coming towards us. Fast and furious now and in next couple of weeks. He said we really needed to express first our appreciation for our Health Director, Karin Carroll. We have our own Dr. Tony Fauci here in our city, and we should be very thankful for that and the contributions she can make to helping us manage this in an honest and fair way.

Councilor Nolan conveyed everything that had been said before is much appreciated. He thanked the public for working with each other. He asked that everybody check on their neighbors, and not to be selfish. If you have something that someone needs, offer it. If it looks like you can help, give it.

Council O'Hara thanked everyone and echoed everything that had been said. He acknowledged James Pope, and he did a great job. The administration, the Mayor is working tremendously, and he asked to continue getting the word out that social distancing is so important. Hopefully, they can overcome this in a shorter time by keeping people away from each other. And as the experts say, spreading this. He thanked the first responders, the men and women of fire and police department who still have to answer the call of duty. Thanked all the Councilors for answering the calls of the constituents. This is a stressful time for all of us, including myself. And the public knowledge is so important to get that word out, to let them know what is going on in our city and state. Thank you to everyone.

Council President LeBlanc echoed what everyone else said. He called James Pope a rock star today. He acknowledged the Mayor, Jim Destino, Vanessa Krawczyk, Chip Payson and John Dunn for doing a great job to try to keep a handle on everyone and keeping them in form.

Council President had a request to the Councilors and with the will of the council, he said that Linda McCarriston was still on the line and was waiting patiently. He wanted ask if they were in agreement for her to speak before they adjourned the meeting. With the consent of the Council, Ms. McCarriston was allowed to try to reconnect and failed. **IT Director, James Pope**, said that they will update the City's website with further instructions on how to troubleshoot connection. He also conveyed that there is a feature through Zoom platform that anyone can do a test meeting to make sure your audio and video is working ahead of time. He suggested anyone who plans to speak at a meeting in the future to give that a try. **Councilor Gilman** said that Ms. McCarriston had her number and could put her on via her phone but didn't know if that was the right protocol, but it was a way to at least allow her to be heard. **Councilor Cox** suggested that Councilor Gilman reach to Ms. McCarriston and try to work out something to where she could call in for the next meeting. **Councilor Cox** thanked the Council President for a doing a great job tonight. **Council President LeBlanc** thanked her and said this might be the future, so we should get used to it.

Council President LeBlanc conveyed to the Councilors that this was Jim Destino's last meeting and thanked him. Jim Destino thanked the councilors.

A motion was made, seconded and voted by roll call to adjourn the meeting at 7:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joanne M. Senos
City Clerk