

GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL MEETING
Tuesday, June 9, 2020 – 6:00 p.m.
REMOTE MEETING
-Minutes-

Present: Council President, Councilor Steve LeBlanc; Council Vice President, Councilor Val Gilman; Councilor Melissa Cox; Councilor Jen Holmgren; 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 M. Senos; Kenny Costa; Vanessa Krawczyk; Jill Cahill; Sal DeStefano; Tim Good; Gary Johnstone

*This meeting was conducted remotely through Zoom
All votes were ROLL CALL votes*

Meeting called to order at 6:00 p.m.

Councilor LeBlanc announced, “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 10 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. If you are calling in on a phone you can press Star 9 (*9) to request to speak. 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 to be recognized to speak.”

Moment of Silence:

Councilor LeBlanc led a moment of silence for Ray Lamont, former editor of the Gloucester Daily Times, who passed away recently.

Oral Communications:

No one spoke under oral communications.

Presentations/Commendations:

1. Scheduling update re: temporary amendment to GZO pursuant to MGL Ch. 40A, Sec. 5, and GZO

Sec. 1.11.2(e) to amend GZO by ADDING a new section 5.33 “Temporary Zoning Relief to Businesses During COVID-19 Pandemic” (Referred to P&D & Planning Bd. On 6/3/20)

Councilor LeBlanc read the following statement: “The COVID pandemic has had a big impact on small businesses throughout the country. Businesses in Gloucester are suffering. As you know, the City’s process for outdoor seating approval requires a special permit and can take several weeks if not a couple of months. This will not work for those businesses who need to get up and running quickly so they can survive. In order to help them, the Mayor has put forward this zoning amendment to help streamline the process for those small businesses that wish to allow outdoor seating this summer. As you know, reviews are conducted in the following order when zoning amendments are referred from the City Council:

- Planning Board holds a public hearing
- P&D holds a public meeting
- City Council holds final PH and enacts or rejects proposal

Unlike amendments to the general code of ordinances which only go into effect 30 days after they are passed, amendments to the zoning code are governed by Mass General Laws chapter 40A and may take effect upon the 1st notice of a public hearing for that proposed amendment. So with the notice on June 5th, the City could begin reviewing and approving temporary outdoor use permits immediately without requiring special permitting. The rest of the timeline for review and possible approval of the temporary zoning ordinance is fluid and just needs to run its standard course. It is still important that P&D and the Planning Board prepare recommendations prior to the City Council public hearing. The following is the proposed outline:

- 1) June 3, 2020 - Special CCM - above matter was referred to the Planning Board & P&D
- 2) June 5, 2020 - legal notice appeared in the GDT for a city council public hearing on June 23, 2020
- 3) June 17, 2020 - P&D will reference this matter on the agenda and continue until July 8th
- 4) June 23 2020 - City Council will continue the public hearing July 14th
- 5) June 24, 2020 - Planning Board will have a public hearing and make their recommendation to CC
- 6) July 8, 2020 - Planning & Development will vote
- 7) July 14, 2020 - City Council Public hearing and council vote

I would also like to note that the Governor did issue an Executive Order on June 1 allowing for a relaxation of the process for allowing outdoor seating. Nevertheless, the City Solicitor recommends that we continue to enact our own temporary zoning amendment in the form of the one before us. I hope this clears up any questions that you may have. If you have any questions, please contact the City Solicitor directly.”

Confirmation of New Appointments

Assessor (from Assistant Assessor)

Tim Good

TTE 2/14/2023

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On a motion by Councilor LeBlanc, seconded by Councilor Nolan, the Ordinances & Administration Committee voted by ROLL CALL 3 in favor, 0 opposed, to recommend that the City Council appoint Tim Good to Assessor TTE 2/14/23.

MOTION: On a motion by Councilor LeBlanc, seconded by Councilor Nolan, the City Council voted by ROLL CALL 9 in favor, 0 opposed, to recommend that the City Council appoint Tim Good to Assessor TTE 2/14/23.

Consent Agenda

- **CONFIRMATION OF REAPPOINTMENTS**
 - **MAYOR'S REPORT**
1. Memorandum from the EMS Coordinator re: proposed update to the City of Gloucester Fire Department Ambulance Service Billing and Collection Policy, and recommendation to write off \$520,625.06 of uncollectable debt (Refer B&F)
 - **COMMUNICATIONS/INVITATIONS**
 - **INFORMATION ONLY**
 - **APPLICATIONS/PETITIONS**
 1. Special Events Application: request to hold Concert on the Boulevard on September 5, 2020 (Refer P&D)
 2. Special Events Application: request to hold the Fish Box Derby on September 20, 2020 (Refer P&D)
 - **COUNCILLORS ORDERS**
 - **APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS COUNCIL AND STANDING COMMITTEE MEETINGS**
1. City Council Meeting: 5/26/2020 (Approve/File)

2. Standing Committee Meetings: B&F 6/4/2020 (under separate cover), O&A 6/1/2020, P&D 6/3/2020

(Approve/File)

Committee Reports:

Budget & Finance – June 4

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 accept under MGL c. 44, §53A, a cash donation in the amount of \$1,000 from the Minogue Family Foundation to be used to benefit the on-going efforts of the Fire Department.

Summary of Council Discussion: the Fire Department plans on applying this donation to the training account.

MOTION: On a motion by Councilor Cox, seconded by Councilor Memhard, the City Council voted by ROLL CALL 9 in favor, 0 opposed, to accept under MGL c. 44, §53A, a cash donation in the amount of \$1,000 from the Minogue Family Foundation to be used to benefit the on-going efforts of the Fire Department.

Ordinances & Administration – June 1

There were no items to be reported.

Planning & Development – June 3

There were no items to be reported.

Scheduled Public Hearings:

- 1. PH2020-017: Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Agreement between the City of Gloucester Cometeer, Inc.**

Public Hearing Opened: 6:18 p.m.

Public Hearing Closed: 6:40 p.m.

Those Speaking in Favor:

Jill Cahill: acknowledged the TIF Committee, the B&F Committee and the city's partners at the state level for their work in bringing the TIF to this point, and asked that the Council support this agreement.

Sal DiStefano: tax increment financing is an economic incentive that the city is able to offer businesses; it is an incentive that does not discount any tax revenue that the city gets currently, but after the investment that Cometeer, Inc. makes, which will be over \$24,000,000 and include 150 jobs over seven years. Property tax increase is expected due to the investment. The proposal is for a seven year TIF that will discount the increment on an average of 50% of the increment. Much of the benefit will start in early years and will taper off. He asked for the Council's approval

Matt Robertson, CEO Cometeer, Inc.: Cometeer Inc. is a technology company in the coffee space. Cometeer, Inc. produces a new, first generation coffee capsule and works with roasters around the country by grinding beans, extracting the flavors and then cryogenically processing the coffee and flash freezing the coffee in an all-aluminum capsule. Capsules are shipped to customers on dry ice. The capsules are recyclable. Cometeer, Inc. is currently located in New Bedford.

The TIF is necessary because the company is looking to scale the technology, which can be very costly, and in order to grow, will have to spend money rather than make money at first. The company is looking to bring high paying, executive jobs to the Gloucester area, and anticipates bringing 100-150 jobs to Gloucester in the next 2-3 years.

Dylan Maki, employee of Cometeer, Inc.: spoke in favor of the Cometeer, Inc.

Vanessa Krawczyk: Economic Development is a major priority for the city. The investment of Cometeer, Inc. would be great for the city. She asked for the Council's support.

Those Speaking in Opposition: None.
Communications:

Carl Gustin, 22 Leonard Street: written communication in support (on file).

R.B. Bramble, 1 Cedar Lane, co-chair Gloucester EDIC: written communication in support (on file).

Councilor Questions:

Q. 1. This will be a seven year duration; how did you come up with that format in terms of how many years the TIF will be part of this?

A. 1. (Gary Johnstone) The TIF Committee determines the duration. The TIF Committee has done 5 year, 7 year, and longer terms. The Committee wanted to give the biggest break at the start of the TIF.

Q. 2. What type of jobs are you looking to create, how many employees do you have now and what other industries in Gloucester might Cometeer, Inc. utilize?

A. 2. (Matt Robertson) Currently have 14 employees. Anticipates between 8 and 40 new jobs in the first year. Jobs will be opening in the area of manufacturing, technical, automation engineering, supply chain, marketing, and general operations. Looking to hire right away. Cometeer, Inc. will potentially utilize flash freezing and cold chain logistic experts in the industries in Gloucester.

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 Tax Increment Financing exemption between the City of Gloucester and Cometeer, Inc., in accordance with the Massachusetts Economic Development Incentive Program (EDIP) and Chapters 23A, 40 and 59 of the Massachusetts General Laws to be located at 21 Great Republic Drive, for a term of seven (7) years ending in Fiscal Year 2028.

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 the following:

- 1) Adopt the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Agreement between the City of Gloucester and Cometeer, Inc., for property located at 21 Great Republic Drive;
- 2) Approve the project application and find that it meets the requirements of MGL c. 23A, §3F in that it provides a reasonable opportunity to create jobs within the City of Gloucester as indicated in the TIF Agreement; and,
- 3) Authorize the Mayor to execute the TIF Agreement and submit the TIF Agreement and the Certified Project Application and all other necessary documents to the Economic Assistance Coordinating Council of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts (EACC), and take any other actions as necessary and appropriate to implement the provisions of those documents.

MOTION: On a motion by Councilor Cox, seconded by Councilor Memhard, the City Council voted by ROLL CALL 9 in favor, 0 opposed, to approve a Tax Increment Financing exemption between the City of Gloucester and Cometeer, Inc., in accordance with the Massachusetts Economic Development Incentive Program (EDIP) and Chapters 23A, 40 and 59 of the Massachusetts General Laws to be located at 21 Great Republic Drive, for a term of seven (7) years ending in Fiscal Year 2028.

MOTION: On a motion by Councilor Cox, seconded by Councilor Memhard, the City Council voted by ROLL CALL 9 in favor, 0 opposed, to approve the following:

- 1) Adopt the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Agreement between the City of Gloucester and Cometeer, Inc., for property located at 21 Great Republic Drive;**
 - 2) Approve the project application and find that it meets the requirements of MGL c. 23A, §3F in that it provides a reasonable opportunity to create jobs within the City of Gloucester as indicated in the TIF Agreement; and,**
 - 3) Authorize the Mayor to execute the TIF Agreement and submit the TIF Agreement and the Certified Project Application and all other necessary documents to the Economic Assistance Coordinating Council of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts (EACC), and take any other actions as necessary and appropriate to implement the provisions of those documents.**
- 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 MID District to commercial fishing vessels;” Sec. 5.5 “Lowland Requirements;” Sec. 5.5.2 and Sec. 5.5.3 in the EB District (Cont. from 5/12/2020) (TBC)**

Councilor LeBlanc continued this public hearing to July 14, 2020.

- 3. PH2020-009: SCP2020-001: Wingsheek 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 (Cont. from 5/26/2020) (TBC)**

Councilor LeBlanc continued this public hearing to June 23, 2020.

- 4. PH2020-011: SCP2020-003: Atlantic Road #163 (formerly part of #171), Map 73, Lot 41 (a portion of former Map 73, Lot 26), GZO Secs. 1.8.3 “Standard to be Applied,” 3.1.6(b) “Building Heights in Excess of 35 Feet,” 3.2.2 fn.(e) “Dimensional Requirements for Multi-family Dwellings and Their Accessory Uses (other than signs) – reduction in distance between buildings,” 2.3.1(8) “Conversion to or new multi-family or apartment dwelling, seven or more dwelling units,” 5.7.5 “Special Permit Criteria” for Major Project and 10.1.1(a)(1)(2) “Jurisdiction of the City Council” in the R-20 Low/Medium Density Residential District (Cont. from 5/26/2020) (TBC)**

Councilor LeBlanc continued this public hearing to July 14, 2020.

Individual Councilor’s Discussion including Reports by Appointed Councilors to Committees: Update on the Stage Fort Park Advisory Committee by City Council Representative, Councilor John McCarthy

Councilor McCarthy informed the Council that Stage Fort Park has been busy and people are very spread out. He has been informed by Mike Hale that the visitors' center renovation will be ready at the end of next week; about 20 new trees have been planted; cannon restoration/repair are on schedule; the DPW will be bringing forward CPA fund proposal during the next round of applications. There have been no meetings of the committee.

Councilors' Requests to the Mayor:

Councilor Cox: Request that the Treasurer's Office review the parking kiosk at the Rogers Street Lot (I4C2) – the kiosk does not allow people to pay prior to the meter enforcement hour of 9:00 a.m. Fishing charters go out of that location at 3 a.m. – 4:00 a.m. and they all come back with tickets on their vehicles because they are unable to pay. Request that the DPW request to the contractors for the Trask Street area to remove the orange barrels telling people that they cannot park from 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. while work is not being done. The barrels have been there for over two weeks. The barrels should be moved back to Burnham's Field until the work can continue. Request that the website archive module for Budget and Finance be fixed – it currently shows the most recent as the first meeting in January.

Councilor Gilman: Request that the City Clerk's office notify the applicant for SCP2020-001 be notified that their public hearing will not be held on June 23, 2020.

Members of the Council gave the following thanks and acknowledgements:

- **(O'Hara, Pett):** Thanks to the Mayor for working to bring back a semblance of normalcy to the city, and the DPW, first responders, Board of Health, Harbormaster and everyone for all their work during this time.
- **(Holmgren):** Thanks to the Mayor, Administration, Chief Conley and residents of the city for the way in which they spoke out to create more understanding of the Black Lives Matter movement.
- **(Nolan):** Thanks to the city for conducting peaceful demonstrations during the past couple of weeks, and for their support of city officials.
- **(Gilman):** Thanks to the Police Chief and Assistant Police Chief for the work they've done in increasing police presence at the quarries.
- **(McCarthy):** Wished Jim Destino well in his retirement.

Councilor Cox gave a brief update on the Budget & Finance schedule for voting the FY21 budget.

Mayor Theken thanked the Council for all their work during this time. She also informed the Council that Vanessa Krawczyk will get a 90 day appointment as interim Chief Administrative Officer.

MOTION: on a motion by Councilor LeBlanc, seconded by Councilor Cox, the City Council voted by ROLL CALL 9 in favor, 0 opposed to adjourn the meeting at 7:07 p.m.

Submitted by Grace E. Poirier, Assistant City Clerk