

**Special Budget & Finance Committee Meeting**

Wednesday, July 29, 2020

**REMOTE PARTICIPATION****-Minutes-**

**Present:** Chair, Councilor Melissa Cox; Vice Chair, Councilor Scott Memhard; Councilor John McCarthy

**Absent:** None

**Also Present:** Mayor Theken; Vanessa Krawczyk; John Dunn; Joanne M. Senos; Councilor Steve LeBlanc; Councilor Val Gilman; Councilor James O'Hara; Former City Councilor Paul Lundberg; Superintendent Ben Lummis; Dr. Richard Safier; School Committee Chair Jonathan Pope; School Committee Member, Kathy Clancy; School Committee Member Melissa Prince

Councilor Cox called the meeting of the Budget & Finance Committee for Wednesday, July 29, 2020 to order at 6:00 p.m.

**There was a quorum of the City Council.**

Councilor Cox announced that this meeting is recorded by video and audio in accordance with state open meeting law, consistent with the governor's order suspending certain provisions of the open meeting law and banning gatherings of 25 or more people. This meeting is connected by remote participation. If you are calling in on a phone, you can press Star 9 to request to speak. If you are watching on a computer or device, there is a raise hand and a button that you can tap or press to request to speak.

**1. Approval of recommended draft ballot question for the November 3, 2020 election regarding the debt exclusion for the construction of a new East Gloucester/Veterans Memorial Elementary School**

**Summary of Discussion:** Councilor Cox clarified that this was a Public Meeting, not a Public Hearing, and that the Special City Council meeting being held on July 30, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. would be one as well. She stated people were allowed to speak if they had things to say in regards to the making and technicalities behind the ballot question, and that if they raised their hand, the public could ask questions if they had them, and she would try to get to them. She encouraged members of the public to contact a city councilor, or all of the city councilors to address questions or concerns regarding this ballot question before the July 30<sup>th</sup> meeting. She advised that everyone check the Zoom link on the city website for the exact meeting information.

- **Acting CAO Vanessa Krawczyk** explained that what the committee had before them was a procedural matter that needed to be agreed on in order for the draft ballot question to make it on the November ballot. The question must be submitted to the Secretary of State's office for certification by August 5, 2020. She stated that on July 30, 2020 there will be a full Council vote to meet that deadline.
- **CFO John Dunn** stated that the ballot question is actually very simple. It follows both the outline from the Department of Revenue as well as the Massachusetts School Building Authority, and has been blessed by MSBA Legal, who said that it follows the ballot question that is used in most communities for an override vote.

- **Councilor Cox** asked the Mayor if she had any questions regarding the technicality of the motion, and the Mayor thanked her, and responded that Mrs. Krawczyk and Mr. Dunn had covered everything.
- **Councilor McCarthy** pointed out the fact that this measure will get the question on the general election ballot, so that a special election can be avoided. He stated that he has been a proponent of that since day one, and that it should be decided by the general election voters.
- **Councilor Cox** fully agreed, and explained that holding a special election costs the city over \$25,000, so she appreciated the administration putting this forward in a timely manner to avoid that, and getting it in on this general election ballot. She stated that she hopes the November 3, 2020 election will draw large crowds, because anything less than that would be a disservice to the city and its residents.

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 placement of a ballot question on the November 3, 2020 Election Ballot, and the ballot shall read: "Shall the City of Gloucester be allowed to exempt from the provisions of Proposition two-and-one-half, so called, the amounts required to pay for bonds issued in order to provide the necessary funding for the design, site work, construction and outfitting of a new East Gloucester/Veterans Memorial Elementary School."

**MOTION: on a motion by Councilor Memhard, seconded by Councilor McCarthy, the Budget and Finance Committee voted by ROLL CALL 3 in favor, 0 opposed to adjourn the meeting at 6:09 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Brianna Komi  
Administrative Support  
City Clerk's Office