

GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL MEETING
Tuesday, August 11, 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 James O’Hara; Councilor Barry Pett

Also Present: Mayor, Sefatia Romeo Theken; Acting CAO, Vanessa Krawczyk; City Clerk, Joanne M. Senos; City Auditor Kenny Costa; Community Development Director, Jill Cahill; Cape Ann Chamber of Commerce Representative Susan Coviello

Absent: Councilor Sean Nolan

*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 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. 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.”

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:

Craig Hamilton, 46 Grove Street

He informed the Council that the requests for a street sweeper and to have the potholes fixed have been fulfilled, but stated that the street is still a mess. He questioned why the city is not making the sewer repair an utmost priority, especially in the middle of a pandemic, there are overflowing manholes. He explained that the sewer needs to be fixed before the sidewalks can be, they are not ADA compliant or stroller accessible, and people with motorized wheelchairs are riding down the middle of the street as a result. He expressed concern for the health and safety of all neighbors, especially the new babies in the neighborhood.

Councilor LeBlanc notified Mr. Hamilton that he has spoken to the DPW Director, and that the Acting CAO was present at the meeting, is working on resolutions to his requests, and will provide him with an update as soon as possible. He also informed Mr. Hamilton that the requested speed radar will be on the street by next week at the latest.

Marianne Peterson, 3 Brier Neck Avenue

She expressed continued frustration with the current situation at Long Beach, and explained that there are continuous lines of traffic even on weekdays. She repeatedly expressed concern that there is constantly so much traffic on the road that emergency service vehicles would be unable to get through if necessary. She stated that she has reached out to Gloucester and Rockport, and thanked **Councilor O’Hara** for his assistance.

She is also concerned that the Governor has reduced the number of people allowed to participate in outdoor events from 100 to 50, and the fact that at high tide, there is not enough room to accommodate all of the

people on the beach. She reported a lack of social distance, and people not wearing masks on the street and the beach. She also does not believe that cars should be allowed to start lining up at 40 Rockport Road.

PRESENTATIONS/COMMENDATIONS:

None.

CONFIRMATION OF NEW APPOINTMENTS:

None.

CONSENT AGENDA:

• **CONFIRMATION OF REAPPOINTMENTS**

• **MAYOR'S REPORT**

1. Memorandum from Police Chief re: request acceptance of a computer donation from Dell with an estimated value of \$1308.99 (Refer B&F)
2. Memorandum from Police Chief re: request acceptance of an additional \$3,500 for the FY20 Traffic Enforcement Grant (Refer B&F)
3. Memorandum from Mayor re: request acceptance of a \$10,000 donation from SeniorCare to be used for kitchen renovations at the Rose Baker Senior Center (Refer B&F)
4. Information about the Massachusetts travel order that went into effect August 1, 2020 (Info Only)

• **COMMUNICATIONS/INVITATIONS**

1. City Council Resolution re: authorization of the City of Gloucester to participate in the Massachusetts Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy Program (PACE Massachusetts) (FCV 8/25/20)

• **INFORMATION ONLY**

• **APPLICATIONS/PETITIONS**

• **COUNCILLORS ORDERS**

• **APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS COUNCIL AND STANDING COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

1. City Council Meeting: 7/28/20 (Approve/File)
2. Special City Council Meeting: 7/30/2020 (Approve/File)
3. Special P&D Meeting: 8/10/2020 (under separate cover) (Approve/File)
4. Standing Committee Meetings: B&F 8/6/2020 (under separate cover), O&A 8/3/2020 (no meeting), P&D 8/5/2020 (under separate cover) (Approve/File)

Items to be added/removed from the Consent Agenda: Councilor Cox requested that the following item listed under Communications be pulled from the Consent Agenda 1. *City Council Resolution re. authorization of the City of Gloucester to participate in the Massachusetts Commercial Property Assesses Clean Energy Program (PACE Massachusetts).*

Summary of Discussion: Councilor Cox informed the Council that this is a program offered by the state that needs to be accepted by the city within the next two weeks in order to participate. The state would like to conduct a Zoom meeting to present the program information to the Council, and she would like to schedule it for the afternoon of Wednesday, August 19, 2020 prior to the already-scheduled Building and Finance Committee meeting that evening. She will email the presentation slides and important information, along with the time of the meeting, to all City Councilors in advance.

MOTION: on a motion by Councilor Cox, seconded by Councilor Gilman, the City Council voted by ROLL CALL 8 in favor, 1 absent, 0 opposed to accept the Consent Agenda.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

• **Budget & Finance – August 6**

MOTION: on a motion by Councilor Cox, seconded by Councilor Gilman, the City Council voted by ROLL CALL 8 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 absent to accept the Unanimous Consent Agenda for the August 6, 2020 Budget and Finance meeting.

MOTION: on a motion by Councilor Cox, seconded by Councilor Memhard, the City Council voted by ROLL CALL 8 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 absent to accept the Budget & Finance Committee Report of August 6, 2020.

1. Memorandum, Grant Application & Checklist from the Public Health Director re: request acceptance of Healthy Summer Youth Jobs Grant in the amount of \$2,692.80”

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 accept under MGL c. 44, §53A, a state grant from the Massachusetts Office of the Attorney General, a 2020 Healthy Summer Youth Jobs Grant Program for a total of \$2,692.80 for the purpose of providing additional healthy summer jobs to local youth. There is no local match for this grant.

MOTION: on a motion by Councilor Cox, seconded by Councilor Gilman, the City Council voted by ROLL CALL 8 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 absent to accept under MGL c. 44, §53A, a state grant from the Massachusetts Office of the Attorney General, a 2020 Healthy Summer Youth Jobs Grant Program for a total of \$2,692.80 for the purpose of providing additional healthy summer jobs to local youth. There is no local match for this grant.

2. Memorandum, Grant Application & Checklist from the Public Health Director re: request Approval of a 5-year grant from Massachusetts Community Health and Healthy Aging Funds in the amount of \$343,631.20

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 accept a state grant under MGL c. 44, §53A, a MA Healthy Aging Grant from the Massachusetts Community Health and Healthy Aging Funds (“The Funds”) passed through the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) and the fiscal agent is the Health Resources in Action (HRIA) for a total grant amount of \$343,631.20 over a five year period for the project of Cape Ann Seniors on the GO. The grant period is from July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2025 with no local matching funds. The grant award is detailed below for the grant period of July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2025.

Summary of Discussion: Councilor Cox requested being able to waive the reading of the dates and the breakdown, and the City Auditor agreed. They are as follows:

Year 1: \$107,940.80 – July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021
Year 2: \$107,940.80 – July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022
Year 3: \$42,583.20 – July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023
Year 4: \$42,583.20 – July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024
Year 5: \$42,583.20 – July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025

MOTION: on a motion by Councilor Cox, seconded by Councilor Gilman, the City Council voted by ROLL CALL 8 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 absent to accept a state grant under MGL c. 44, §53A, a MA Healthy Aging Grant from the Massachusetts Community Health and Healthy Aging Funds (“The Funds”) passed through the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) and the fiscal agent is the Health Resources in Action (HRIA) for a total grant amount of \$343,631.20 over a five year period for the project of Cape Ann Seniors on the GO. The grant period is from July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2025 with no local matching funds. The grant award is detailed below for the grant period of July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2025.

3. Memoranda from the Veterans’ Services Director re: request acceptance of donations totaling \$403

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 accept various cash donations under MGL c. 44, §53A, to support Cape Ann Veterans Services in the amount of \$403 from the following members and business partners within our community:

H.A. & Diane Patrican	\$200.00
Linda and Edward Comeau	100.00
American Postal Workers Union	50.00
Dorothy Mulcahy	50.00
Stop & Shop Tag Giving Program	3.00
Total	\$403.00

MOTION: on a motion by Councilor Cox, seconded by Councilor Gilman, the City Council voted by ROLL CALL 8 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 absent to accept various cash donations under MGL c. 44, §53A, to support Cape Ann Veterans Services in the amount of \$403 from the following members and business partners within our community:

H.A. & Diane Patrican	\$200.00
Linda and Edward Comeau	100.00
American Postal Workers Union	50.00
Dorothy Mulcahy	50.00
Stop & Shop Tag Giving Program	3.00
Total	\$403.00

4. Memorandum from Police Chief re: request acceptance of donations to the Community Impact Unit in the amount of \$5,000

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 accept donations under MGL c. 44, §53A, to support the Gloucester Police Dept. Community Impact Unit in the amount of \$5,000 from the following members and business partners within our community:

Nocella Paving	\$3,000.00
Richard J. Caturano	1,000.00
Bank Gloucester	500.00
Harsheel Inc.	500.00
Total	\$5,000.00

MOTION: on a motion by Councilor Cox, seconded by Councilor Gilman, the City Council voted by ROLL CALL 8 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 absent to accept donations under MGL c. 44, §53A, to support the Gloucester Police Dept. Community Impact Unit in the amount of \$5,000 from the following members and business partners within our community:

Nocella Paving	\$3,000.00
Richard J. Caturano	1,000.00
Bank Gloucester	500.00
Harsheel Inc.	500.00
Total	\$5,000.00

5. Memorandum from Community Development Director re: request authorization to negotiate a TIF with Hefring Engineering

Summary of Discussion: Councilor Cox announced that the TIF Negotiation Request would not be taken up at tonight's meeting. It is the Budget and Finance Committee's purview to allow the city to do that, so it will be on the agenda for the next B & F Committee meeting to hear what the city has negotiated, and then will return to the City Council for Full Council Vote.

• **Ordinances & Administration – June 15 (continued from 7/28/2020)**

1. Application of Sarah Valencik for a Permit of Scientific Research in the Coastal Waters and Tidal Flats in the City of Gloucester pursuant to GCO Ch. 20, Sec. 20-27 "Permits for Scientific Works in coastal waters and flats of city.

Summary of Discussion: Councilor LeBlanc notified the Council that Sarah Valencik has not yet received her sign-off from the Conservation Committee.

Councilor LeBlanc continued this matter until August 25, 2020.

• **Ordinances & Administration – August 3 (no meeting)**

• **Planning & Development – August 5 (no items under this heading)**

Summary of Discussion: Councilor Gilman stated that she has no official items to report, however, she wanted the public to know that the Planning and Development Committee had begun scheduling socially distanced site visits, and has created a safe formula to allow a maximum of 10 people per site visit to attend. She explained that the total number was provided by the Board of Health, that there will be a sign-in sheet, and that strict social distancing (a minimum of six feet apart) will be enforced, as well as use of the masks and hand sanitizer provided.

• **Special Planning & Development – August 10**

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: on a motion by Councilor Gilman, seconded by Councilor Holmgren, the Planning & Development Committee voted by ROLL CALL 2 in favor, 1 opposed to recommend that the City Council approve the Special Events Permit to the Cape Ann Chamber of Commerce to hold the Shop, Stroll and Dine event on Saturday, August 15, 2020 and September 5, 2020 between the hours of 5:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. and street closures between the hours 5:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m., with closures of Main Street from Pleasant Street to the West end, and side street closures including Hancock, Short, Center, and Porter Streets, with the following conditions:

1. No merchant set ups on the sidewalk blocking entrance ways to retail or residential units, hydrants, crosswalks or handicap ramps.
2. No outside vendors; this includes other Gloucester-based businesses and non-profits.
3. No live music or other form of entertainment.
4. The organizers shall allow the Fire Department drive-through access with the fire engine at the convenience of the Fire Department.
5. That all of the side streets – Short, Porter, Center and Hancock Streets – shall not be blocked by food establishments, tables, chairs, enclosures equipment, or vehicles, so emergency vehicles may enter and exit Main Street as needed.
6. Merchants shall be responsible for their own trash removal.
7. Plumbing Codes and regulations shall be adhered to regarding the use of restaurant bathroom facilities.
8. Special lighting and electrical requirements necessitate approval of the Inspector of Buildings and the Electrical Inspector.
9. The closure of the street at the intersection of Main and Short, Porter, Center and Hancock Streets must be by means of sawhorses or the like, as directed by the Gloucester Police Department.

10. It is the responsibility of the Shop, Dine and Stroll Committee to procure any other necessary Federal, State, and local permits and approvals associated with this event.
11. That the Committee makes reasonable notification to all residents and merchants along the route that will be affected by the closure.
12. All other applicable laws, City ordinances and/or regulations are in full force including Ordinances regarding blocking of sidewalks. The Police Department will enforce these requirements in the interest of public safety.
13. The Shop, Dine and Stroll Committee shall also adhere to any requirements expressed by the Special Event Advisory Committee including that:
 - (a) That a letter from the office of the Mayor be provided assuring that the event is covered under the City of Gloucester Liability Insurance, and
 - (b) That this approval is based on the Shop, Dine and Stroll 2020 Street Plan submitted to the City Clerk's Office
 - (c) Must follow the guidelines of the CDC and the local board of health for social distancing. Masks are required inside any business and strongly encouraged for people walking on Main Street.

Summary of Discussion: **Councilor Gilman** explained that this was a single-item Special Planning and Development Committee meeting.

Councilor LeBlanc asked how involved the other non-restaurant Main Street businesses are in this event, to which **Cape Ann Chamber of Commerce representative Susan Coviello** responded that all of the shops from Pleasant Street and Main Street are invited to participate, whether or not they do so is up to them. While she did not have an exact number, she stated that the majority of Main Street shops did participate, either by coming out onto the sidewalk, or remaining in their stores that were open to the public until 9:00 p.m.

He asked if the event was heavily attended by restaurant patrons, and **Ms. Coviello** responded that it is hard to know for sure, however, she solicited information and feedback from all of the businesses, and they all expressed a desire to hold another event.

Councilor Gilman asked **Community Development Director Jill Cahill** to summarize the recent conversation held between Public Health Director Karin Carroll and MA Department of Labor Standards Interim Director Michael Flanagan after Governor Baker enacted more stringent social distancing guidelines. She stated that it was helpful knowledge provided at the August 10, 2020 Special Planning and Development Committee meeting, and she believes it is applicable to the matter at hand.

Ms. Cahill stated that she has talked mostly about the idea of continuing to hold an event with some type of Main Street closure to encourage restaurants and other businesses to come out and allow for additional social distancing on the street as part of the larger economic strategy to try to help Main Street in any way possible to help them get through the pandemic. She mentioned that she believes the last event was a success, everybody was wearing masks on the street, and the feedback received was very positive.

With the knowledge and understanding that this is a sensitive and potentially divisive issue, Ms. Carroll sought clarification from the State Department of Public Health and the MA Division of Labor Standards. **Ms. Cahill** shared the response from those organizations, that the Governor recently changed the outdoor event guidance from 100 to 50 people maximum. If the event organizers only close the street down to make it easier to access restaurants and retail shops, and the businesses are within their existing footprint (currently everyone who sets up outside has already received approval), that is acceptable. There will be no additional vendors on the streets, no live entertainment or other attractions, and **Councilor Gilman** has already read all the conditions into record.

Ms. Cahill stressed that the number one priority for the administration and the Council is the health and safety of Gloucester's residents and visitors. She stated that she would love to be able to hold this event, however, she understands that it is a complicated time and decision to make.

Councilor LeBlanc clarified with **Ms. Cahill** and **Ms. Coviello** that there are two events left to consider, the Shop, Dine, and Stroll events scheduled for August 15th, and September 5th.

Ms. Cahill stated that every Special Permit Application that has been tentatively approved by the Special Event Advisory Committee is issued with the caveat that anything can be cancelled 24 hours in advance based on the Governor's guidance and the current COVID-19 standings.

Councilor LeBlanc echoed the concerns that **Councilor Holmgren** expressed during the Planning and Development Committee meeting on August 10, 2020. The city is currently trying to prevent crowds and gatherings, especially at the beaches and boat ramps, and this would be one more event in which congregating would need to be averted. There is always the chance that an asymptomatic or person unaware that they have COVID could be in attendance, which would create the need for contact tracing. **Councilor Cox** expressed ambivalence regarding the decision as well, and concern that even with event coordinators and volunteers present, the attendance could exceed 50 people.

Ms. Coviello informed the Council that she heeded **Councilor LeBlanc's** advice provided at the previous evening's meeting, and has pulled back the press releases to minimize advertising. She will however address the followers on the event Facebook page to share the event plan and expectations.

Councilor McCarthy stated that on weekend nights when the event is not being held, restaurants appear to be utilized to capacity, and as far as he knows, nothing precludes the stores from remaining open until 9:00 p.m. He thinks that shutting down the streets would allow people more space to social distance, and that anything helping businesses get through the pandemic is a good thing.

Councilor Gilman shared the fact that she worked at the last event passing out masks, answering questions, and providing directions. She went into several stores during her break, and was impressed with the organization of the shops and how they adhered to social distancing and face covering protocol. She stated that she is quite conservative about social distancing, yet she did not feel unsafe for herself or others at any point during the event. She only noticed three people who were walking around without masks because they had just come from swimming at the beach, and they immediately expressed gratitude and placed the masks on that were provided to them. She agreed that advertising should be kept to a minimum.

Councilor Pett shared the fact that he attended the first event, and believes the city has done a tremendous job supporting businesses during the pandemic. He repeated his previous statement that he wished more businesses had participated, and that even though the event was not well attended in terms of large crowds, the safety guidelines were adhered to, so he wanted to vote in favor of providing that opportunity to Main Street businesses again. He also expressed appreciation for the fact that **Ms. Cahill** and **Ms. Carroll** sought clarification from the state regarding the guidelines for holding this event.

Councilor O'Hara stated that he believes that the Governor has been extremely attentive to the virus, speaking and making changes daily, and he is currently allowing the event to go on with the understanding that it can be cancelled if need be. He believes that the **Mayor** and her administration have done their best to maintain some sense of normalcy. He thinks the city owes it to the downtown businesses, and the mental health of the people cooped up without any events to attend, to hold this event, and allow individuals to decide whether or not they will participate.

Councilor Holmgren reiterated her statement from the previous evening's meeting as to why she would not be supporting this Planning and Development Committee recommendation, and praised **Councilor McCarthy's** excellent point regarding Main Street businesses. She stated that the city has done many business-friendly activities over the last few months, and she wants to continue doing those, however, she cannot support this event right now.

Councilor Memhard thanked his fellow city councilors for the great discussion regarding this matter. He believes that the city is trying to honor the health and safety of the community and the economic viability of businesses. He thinks the judgement of the Main Street businesses needs to be respected, and that they need to be provided with safe guidelines. He has discussed the matter with Chamber of Commerce Director Ken Riehl and **Ms. Coviello**, and has decided to support this event.

MOTION: on a motion by Councilor Gilman, seconded by Councilor Holmgren, the City Council voted by ROLL CALL 7 in favor, 1 opposed, 1 absent to approve the Special Events Permit to the Cape Ann Chamber of Commerce to hold the Shop, Stroll and Dine event on Saturday, August 15, 2020 and September 5, 2020 between the hours of 5:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. and street closures between the hours 5:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m., with closures of Main Street from Pleasant Street to the West end, and side street closures including Hancock, Short, Center and Porter Streets, with the following conditions:

1. No merchant set ups on the sidewalk blocking entrance ways to retail or residential units, hydrants, crosswalks or handicap ramps.
2. No outside vendors; this includes other Gloucester-based businesses and non-profits.
3. No live music or other form of entertainment.
4. The organizers shall allow the Fire Department drive-through access with the fire engine at the convenience of the Fire Department.
5. That all of the side streets – Short, Porter, Center and Hancock Streets – shall not be blocked by food establishments, tables, chairs, enclosures equipment, or vehicles, so emergency vehicles may enter and exit Main Street as needed.
6. Merchants shall be responsible for their own trash removal.
7. Plumbing Codes and regulations shall be adhered to regarding the use of restaurant bathroom facilities.
8. Special lighting and electrical requirements necessitate approval of the Inspector of Buildings and the Electrical Inspector.
9. The closure of the street at the intersection of Main and Short, Porter, Center and Hancock Streets must be by means of sawhorses or the like, as directed by the Gloucester Police Department.
10. It is the responsibility of the Shop, Dine and Stroll Committee to procure any other necessary Federal, State, and local permits and approvals associated with this event.
11. That the Committee makes reasonable notification to all residents and merchants along the route that will be affected by the closure.
12. All other applicable laws, City ordinances and/or regulations are in full force including Ordinances regarding blocking of sidewalks. The Police Department will enforce these requirements in the interest of public safety.
13. The Shop, Dine and Stroll Committee shall also adhere to any requirements expressed by the Special Event Advisory Committee including that:
 - (a) That a letter from the office of the Mayor be provided assuring that the event is covered under the City of Gloucester Liability Insurance, and
 - (b) That this approval is based on the Shop, Dine and Stroll 2020 Street Plan submitted to the City Clerk's Office

- (c) **Must follow the guidelines of the CDC and the local board of health for social distancing. Masks are required inside any business and strongly encouraged for people walking on Main Street.**

SCHEDULED PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. PH2020-009: SCP2020-001: Wingersheek Road #105, Map 261, Lot 31, GZO Secs. 1.8.3 “Standard to be Applied” and 3.1.6(b) “Building Heights in Excess of 35 Feet” in the R-20 Low/Medium Density Residential District

At the Applicant’s Request, **Councilor LeBlanc** opened and continued this matter until September 22, 2020.

Summary of Discussion: **Councilor LeBlanc** notified the public that if they would like to attend the Public Hearing, it is scheduled for September 22, 2020. Letters in opposition or support can be submitted to the City Clerk’s office or to one of the City Councilors to be filed and read into record that evening.

2. PH2020-023: AMEND GCO Chapter 22 “Traffic and Motor Vehicles,” Sec. 22-270 “Parking Prohibited at All Times” by ADDING: Traverse Street, northerly side from its intersection with Beach Road in a westerly direction for a distance of 390.’ (Pole # 1273); AMEND Sec. 22-290 “Tow Away Zone” by ADDING: Traverse Street, northerly side from its intersection with Beach Road in a westerly direction for a distance of 390.’ (Pole #1273).

The public hearing opened at 6:46 p.m.

Those Speaking in Favor: None.

Those Speaking in Opposition: None.

Communications: None

Councilor Questions: None

The public hearing closed at 6:50 p.m.

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 AMEND the GCO Chapter 22 “Traffic and Motor Vehicles, Sec. 22-270. “Parking Prohibited at All Times by ADDING: Traverse Street, northerly side from its intersection with Beach Road in a westerly direction for a distance of 390.’ (Pole # 1273); and AMEND Sec. 22-290. Tow Away Zone by ADDING: Traverse Street, northerly side from its intersection with Beach Road in a westerly direction for a distance of 390.’ (Pole #1273)

Summary of Discussion: **Councilors Pett** and **McCarthy** are in agreement that Traffic and Motor Vehicle matters should go before the Traffic Commission before they are brought before the City Council, however, they understand that the commission is currently not meeting due to the current circumstances. **Councilor Pett** shared that he will be supporting the motion.

Councilor Memhard wanted to follow up on **Councilor Pett’s** observation, and to thank Traffic Commission Chair Bob Ryan for his input and guidance in amending this ordinance. He explained that this matter involves beach parking violations in a private residential neighborhood along the bottom of Bass Rocks Golf Club located on Beach Road that intersects on Traverse Street, and that people have been parking in the bushes and blocking egress and access from the parking lot and resident driveways. He stated that it can certainly be reviewed at a later date when the Traffic Commission resumes meetings, but this is at the request of the neighbors.

MOTION: on a motion by Councilor LeBlanc, seconded by Councilor Holmgren, the City Council voted by ROLL CALL 8 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 absent to AMEND the GCO Chapter 22 “Traffic and Motor Vehicles, Sec. 22-270. “Parking Prohibited at All Times by ADDING: Traverse Street, northerly side from its intersection with Beach Road in a westerly direction for a distance of 390.’ (Pole # 1273); and AMEND Sec. 22-290. Tow Away Zone by ADDING: Traverse Street, northerly side from its intersection with Beach Road in a westerly direction for a distance of 390.’ (Pole #1273)

3. 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 1.10.1(a)(1)(2) “Jurisdiction of the City Council” in the R-20 Low/Medium Density Residential district

Councilor LeBlanc opened and continued this matter to September 8, 2020.

FOR COUNCIL VOTE:

1. Warrant for September 1, 2020 State Primary

MOTION: on a motion by Councilor Cox, seconded by Councilor Holmgren, the City Council voted by ROLL CALL 8 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 absent to adopt the warrant for the September 1, 2020 State Primary.

2. City Council decision on the reinstatement of the plastic bag ban

Summary of Discussion: **Councilor LeBlanc** explained that on July 10, 2020, Governor Baker rescinded the executive order he had issued in March that had temporarily suspended both the use of reusable bags in stores, and a local ban on single-use plastic bags. The City Council will need to vote to reinstate the plastic bag ban.

Councilor Cox stated that she wholeheartedly supports this measure, and thought that allowing plastic bags to be used during the pandemic was a bad choice. Although she understands the science behind it, and the uncertainty created by the pandemic, it has created pushback and confusion. It was passed once, and she appreciated the support of fellow city councilors to pass this again and get them out of the ecosystem.

Councilor Gilman moved to amend the motion to include an effective date of November 1, 2020 to allow business owners the chance to use up their inventory. It was seconded by **Councilor Cox**.

Councilor Pett questioned if that length of time was necessary, to which **Councilors LeBlanc** and **Cox** spoke up in favor of the November 1, 2020 effective date due to the fact that plastic bags come in boxes of 500, so they believed that would be an adequate deadline.

Councilor O’Hara stated that he previously voted in favor, however, he now believes that it is premature for the Council to be considering the ban reinstatement in the midst of a pandemic, since it was instituted for the health and safety of all involved.

Councilor Cox stated that the thought process behind allowing use of plastic bags during the pandemic has been refuted, so if the Governor is allowing the ban to be reinstated, she is comfortable having it put to the Council for a vote.

MOTION: on a motion by Councilor Gilman, seconded by Councilor Cox, the City Council voted by ROLL CALL 7 in favor, 1 opposed, 1 absent to amend the reinstatement of the plastic bag ban to include an effective date of November 1, 2020.

Councilor LeBlanc directed the Council back to the original motion. He echoed the concerns of Councilor O'Hara, and stated that he will also be voting in opposition to the reinstatement since he believes the plastic bags are effective until further notice.

MOTION: on a motion by Councilor Cox, seconded by Councilor Holmgren, the City Council voted by ROLL CALL 6 in favor, 2 opposed (LeBlanc & O'Hara), 1 absent (Nolan) to reinstate GCO Chapter 9, Article II "Plastic Bags" Sec. 9-12 through 9-15 effective on November 1, 2020.

MOTION TO RECONSIDER: on a motion by Councilor Holmgren, seconded by Councilor Cox, the City Council voted by ROLL CALL 0 in favor, 8 opposed, 1 absent to reconsider the vote.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

None.

OTHER BUSINESS:

1. O&A minutes 3/2/2020 and City Council minutes 3/10/2020: Council action to amend minutes and motion re: committee appointment

Summary of Discussion: The City Clerk explained that the request to amend the minutes and motion was due to a scrivener's error.

MOTION: on a motion by Councilor LeBlanc, seconded by Councilor O'Hara, the City Council voted by ROLL CALL 8 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 absent to amend the Ordinance and Administration Committee meeting minutes of March 2, 2020 and the City Council meeting minutes of March 10, 2020 to correct a scrivener's error in regards to the reappointment of Robert K. Whitmarsh by striking Historical Commission where referenced, and inserting Community Preservation Committee.

INDIVIDUAL COUNCILLOR'S DISCUSSION INCLUDING REPORTS BY APPOINTED COUNCILLORS TO COMMITTEES: None.

COUNCILORS' REQUESTS TO THE MAYOR:

Councilor Cox stated that she is currently in a holding pattern with the Traffic Commission on several issues, and since the City Council is now able to move forward with Special Council Permits, it would be nice if the committees that have actual business or are currently unable to process requests such as the Traffic Commission returned to volunteering their time via Zoom meetings if at all possible. She mentioned that she currently has two ADA parking spots that needs to be removed in a neighborhood that is desperate for parking, and is unable to resolve the issue until the Traffic Commission resumes meetings. **Councilor McCarthy** agreed with **Councilor Cox's** suggestion, and added that clarification from the General Counsel would be helpful in determining whether it would be an allowable action based on what the Governor currently has in place for guidelines. **Councilor LeBlanc** also expressed a desire to resume board and commission meetings as soon as possible.

Councilor LeBlanc suggested creating a council order to address her request before the Ordinance and Administration Committee, and **Councilor Cox** agreed.

Councilor McCarthy stated that he and **Councilor Memhard** had worked on adding some streets to the Good Harbor Beach area, and suggested if the signs are available, that the **Mayor** assist with getting the rest of those neighborhoods covered since he believes it has had a positive effect at Good Harbor Beach.

Councilor O'Hara requested that the **Mayor** possibly fund and direct the DPW to inspect the drainage underneath the Magnolia Avenue railroad underpass that floods on a regular basis. He recalled an incident last winter in which it flooded at the same time that a tree dropped across Western Avenue at Buswell Pond, and during that time period, no emergency vehicles had access to Magnolia unless they traveled into Manchester. He suggested that the MBTA may be willing to assist as well.

He thanked the administration for working so hard to accommodate and make the best of the situations created by the pandemic. He stated that there are four more weekends until Labor Day, and he acknowledged that this has been an extremely stressful time for all involved, especially with people being homebound with nowhere to go.

Councilor O'Hara also reinforced what Governor Baker had stated pertaining to schools, that he sees no reason why they can't open in the fall. He elaborated that the children are the ones who are affected most by this decision, that 10 school days have already been reduced this year from the usual total of 180 to 170. He also expressed concern for the students who have no supervision at home, or who don't have computer or internet access.

Councilor Gilman requested permanent signage through the DPW that states "No Parking, Tow-Away Zone May 1st-September 15th" be placed at 22 River Road across from the Annisquam Yacht Club Tennis Courts. She explained that sign is fully provisioned under Gloucester City Ordinances Chapter 22 Section 22-271 and Section 22-291.

Councilor LeBlanc requested on behalf of **Councilor Pett** that a "No Parking" sign be placed at the top of Chestnut Street 20 feet from the corner since there is a car that parks there every day. **Councilor Pett** explained that 20 feet from an intersection is part of statute.

COUNCILORS' THANKS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

Councilor Pett thanked the administration and all of the first responders for their hard work during the pandemic, and included a special thanks to the Fire Department that has handled some recent fires for their quick and efficient response. He expressed hope that everyone stays safe and healthy.

Councilor Memhard thanked Kim Smith and the other members of the Piping Plover Ambassador Group for their conscientious attention to the plover family that lived at Good Harbor Beach, and have now headed south. This has resulted in the protective enclosure being removed, and the beach being opened up largely for residents and beachgoers. He shared that Kim and the rest of the group were also recognized recently at a meeting of the MA Department of Fishing, Wildlife, and Coastal Water Bird Conservation for Gloucester's model effort to protect these birds.

Councilor Holmgren thanked **Councilor O'Hara** for mentioning the schools. She shared that as a mother, she and her family have been closely monitoring the developing situation and chatter on social media. She thanked the school administration, School Committee, teachers, and parents, as well as the **Mayor**. She stressed that it has been a very difficult journey for everyone, and will continue to be that way indefinitely. She asked that we all be compassionate with each other and attempt to be as non-judgmental as possible since every family is facing a unique situation, and teachers are as well. She stated that she agrees that school is the best situation for kids in an ideal world, but that is not the case at the moment, and every family must be considered to try to find an adequate fit for everyone.

Councilor Gilman shared that she and **Councilor O'Hara** attended the Gloucester High School Graduation held at Stage Fort Park, along with the **Mayor**, Senator Bruce Tarr, State Representative Ann-Margaret Ferrante. She expressed pride that Principal Cook, the School Committee, and the administration were able to create a special event for this graduating class.

Councilor O'Hara thanked the Gloucester Police Department for the work that they do on a daily basis.

COUNCILORS' WARD UPDATES AND COMMUNITY NEWS:

Councilor O'Hara shared the fact that Saturday, August 15, 2020 at the Magnolia Library, the American Red Cross will be holding a blood drive from 9:00 am-2:00 p.m. He encouraged everyone to contact 1-800-REDCROSS to donate money, or to schedule an appointment to donate blood.

MOTION: on a motion by Councilor Pett, seconded by Councilor Gilman, the City Council voted by ROLL CALL 8 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 absent to adjourn the meeting at 7:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Brianna Komi
Administrative Support
City Clerk's Office