

GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL MEETING
Tuesday, September 15, 2021 – 6:00 p.m.
REMOTE MEETING
-Minutes-

Present: Council President, Councilor Steve LeBlanc; Council Vice President, Councilor Val Gilman; Councilor Jen Holmgren; Councilor John McCarthy; Councilor Scott Memhard; Councilor Sean Nolan; Councilor James O’Hara; Councilor Barry Pett

Absent: Councilor Melissa Cox

Also Present: City Clerk, Joanne Senos; Auditor, Kenny Costa; Assistant Fire Chief, Robert Rivas

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

Meeting called to order at 6:01 p.m.

Councilor LeBlanc announced in the interest of government transparency with regards to deliberations and decisions made by the City Council and according to open meeting law, since this meeting was posted as a Zoom meeting, this meeting is recorded by video and audio and 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 “raised hand” button that you can tap or press to request to speak. Please use either of these options during oral communications or the public hearing to be recognized to speak.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS: None.

PRESENTATIONS/COMMENDATIONS: None.

CONFIRMATION OF NEW APPOINTMENTS: None.

CONSENT AGENDA:

- **CONFIRMATION OF REAPPOINTMENTS**
- **MAYOR’S REPORT**

1. New Appointments

Clean City Commission	(TTE 2/14/22)	Matt DiGiovanni (<i>fulfilling an unexpired term</i>)	(Refer O&A)
Magnolia Pier Advisory Committee	(TTE 2/14/22)	Stephen H. Doe (<i>fulfilling an unexpired term</i>)	(Refer O&A)
2. Memorandum from CFO re: loan authorization request in the amount of \$260,000 for the Squam Rock Lane, Squam Rock Road and Walnut Street paving betterment (Refer B&F)
3. Memorandum from IT Director requesting acceptance of funding from the FCC E-Rate program towards the purchase of a Sophos XGS5500 Firewall in the amount of \$8,844 (Refer B&F)
4. Memorandum, Grant Application and Checklist from Fire Chief requesting acceptance of a FEMA AFG 2020 grant in the amount of \$92,727.27 (Refer B&F)
5. Memorandum from Veterans Services Director requesting acceptance of donations in the amount of \$239 (Refer B&F)
6. Memorandum from Community Development Director requesting acceptance of FY21/FY22 CDBG Entitlement allocation in the amount of \$707,711, and HOME allocations in the amount of \$107,608 (Refer B&F)
 - **COMMUNICATIONS/INVITATIONS**
 - **INFORMATION ONLY**
 - **APPLICATIONS/PETITIONS**
1. Special Event Permit Application: Request for street closures for the Magtober Harvest Festival on October 10, 2021 (Refer P&D)
 - **COUNCILLORS ORDERS**
 - **APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS COUNCIL AND STANDING COMMITTEE MEETINGS**
1. City Council Meeting: 8/24/2021 (Approve/File)
2. Standing Committee Meetings: B&F 9/9/2021 (under separate cover), O&A 9/6/2021 (no meeting), P&D 9/8/2021 (under separate cover) (Approve/File)

ITEMS TO BE ADDED/REMOVED FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA: None.

Summary of Discussion: Councilor Pett stated, as a point of information, that the public hearing, PH2021-026, on this evening's agenda regarding Prospect Square would be continued until October 12, 2021.

Councilor Gilman stated, as a point of information, that after a discussion with the City Clerk on September 9, 2021 [the morning after the P&D meeting] a notation had been added to the top of the September 8, 2021, P&D meeting minutes regarding SCP2021-004 showing that the matter would be taken up at P&D on October 6, 2021, instead of October 20, 2021 (as discussed during the meeting and as stated in the minutes) in order to comply with the City's 65-day maximum between City Clerk's receipt of application and public hearing. She added that the Public Hearing for this matter was scheduled for October 12, 2021.

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

COMMITTEE REPORTS**• Budget & Finance – September 9, 2021**

MOTION: On a motion by Councilor McCarthy, seconded by Councilor Nolan, the City Council voted by ROLL CALL 8 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 (Cox) absent to accept the Budget and Finance Unanimous Consent Agenda.

1. Memorandum from CFO and Supplemental Appropriation-Budgetary Request (#2022-SA-4) in the amount of \$120,000

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On a motion by Councilor Memhard, seconded by Councilor McCarthy, the Budget & Finance Committee voted by ROLL CALL 3 in favor, 0 opposed, to recommend that the City Council approve Supplemental Appropriation 2022-SA-4 in the amount of \$120,000 (One Hundred Twenty Thousand Dollars) from the Capital Projects Stabilization Fund – Undesignated Fund Balance, Account #7600-359000 to the Capital Projects Stabilization Fund - Fire Vehicles, Account #760030-585001 to fund the cost of a command vehicle, a departmental pickup truck and including costs incidental or related thereto.

Summary of Discussion: Councilor Memhard stated this request was for the purchase of two 2022 Chevrolet vehicles for the Fire Department.

MOTION: On a motion by Councilor McCarthy, seconded by Councilor Nolan, the City Council voted by ROLL CALL 8 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 (Cox) absent, to approve Supplemental Appropriation 2022-SA-4 in the amount of \$120,000 (One Hundred Twenty Thousand Dollars) from the Capital Projects Stabilization Fund – Undesignated Fund Balance, Account #7600-359000 to the Capital Projects Stabilization Fund - Fire Vehicles, Account #760030-585001 to fund the cost of a command vehicle, a departmental pickup truck and including costs incidental or related thereto.

2. Memorandum from Economic Development Director requesting acceptance of Gloucester's Essex National Heritage Commission Grant for the Stage Fort Park Welcoming Center in the amount of \$2,500

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On a motion by Councilor Memhard, seconded by Councilor McCarthy, 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 federal grant from the National Park Service passed through the Essex National Heritage Commission, a 2021 Essex Heritage Visitor Center Grant for a total of \$2,500 for

the purpose of supporting activities of the City’s Visitor Welcome Center at Stage Fort Park. The grant period is from July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022. There is no local match for this grant.

MOTION: On a motion by Councilor McCarthy, seconded by Councilor Nolan, the City Council voted by ROLL CALL 8 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 (Cox) absent, to accept under MGL c.44, §53A, a federal grant from the National Park Service passed through the Essex National Heritage Commission, a 2021 Essex Heritage Visitor Center Grant for a total of \$2,500 for the purpose of supporting activities of the City’s Visitor Welcome Center at Stage Fort Park. The grant period is from July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022. There is no local match for this grant.

3. Memorandum from Director of Elder Services requesting acceptance of donations in the amount of \$361

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On a motion by Councilor Memhard, seconded by Councilor McCarthy, the Budget & Finance Committee voted by ROLL CALL 3 in favor, 0 opposed, to accept various cash donations under MGL c.44, §53A, to support the Council on Aging/ Rose Baker Senior Center in the amount of \$361 from the following members and business partners within our community:

Grace V. Simpson & Vincie Woodhams	\$20
Norma C. Silva	\$20
Marilynn Grant	\$10
Frederick A. Cowan	\$50
Valerie Hanson Gilman & Paul E. Gilman	\$50
Andrea M. Burnham	\$30
Jolene A. Erickson & Emily G. Erickson	\$25
Mary J. Contri	\$15
Christopher Clark	\$15
Doris F. Cole	\$10
Marilyn Grant	\$20
Cash (various donors)	\$96

 Total: \$361

MOTION: On a motion by Councilor McCarthy, seconded by Councilor Nolan, the City Council voted by ROLL CALL 8 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 (Cox) absent, to accept various cash donations under MGL c.44, §53A, to support the Council on Aging/ Rose Baker Senior Center in the amount of \$361 from the following members and business partners within our community:

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Christopher Clark	\$15
Doris F. Cole	\$10
Marilyn Grant	\$20
Cash (various donors)	\$96

 Total: \$361

- **Ordinances & Administration – September 6, 2021 (no meeting)**
- **Planning & Development – September 8, 2021 (no items under this heading)**

Summary of Discussion: Councilor Gilman wished to let the Members of the City Council know that there would be two site visits on September 29, 2021, at 5:00 p.m. and 5:45 p.m. for SCP2021-004 at #65-73 Essex Avenue. She added that SCP2021-004 was regarding a Marijuana Establishment and Lowland Requirements exception, and asked that she be contacted to reserve a spot as each group would be limited to 15 attendees.

SCHEDULED PUBLIC HEARINGS:

1. **PH2021-026: Amend GCO Ch. 22, Sec. 22-270 “Parking prohibited at all times” and Sec. 22-291 “Tow-away zones” re: Prospect Square (cont. from 8/24/21)**

The public hearing opened at 6:11 p.m.

This matter is being continued until the October 12, 2021, City Council meeting.

FOR COUNCIL VOTE: None.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Discussion Only: City Council discussion regarding resuming in-person meetings (Cont. from 8/24/2021)

Summary of Discussion: Councilor LeBlanc stated the decision to resume in-person meetings was, as Council President, his decision, but stated he wished the decision to be collective of the full City Council. Councilor Nolan stated at this time, for everyone’s safety, he wished to continue remote meetings until a complete assessment of the meeting space regarding a hybrid model was completed. Councilor O’Hara stated he agreed with Councilor Nolan’s thoughts. Councilor McCarthy agreed with Councilors Nolan and O’Hara and added that other City meetings were happening in locations that had hybrid capabilities (as stated by the IT Director at a previous City Council meeting) and stated those meetings should be held using a hybrid model so the public could attend. He then gave the example of a recent Waterways Board meeting that was held in-person at the Harbormaster’s Conference Room and stated the meeting did not utilize the hybrid capabilities of that meeting space. Councilor Memhard agreed with the remarks made thus far and stated a request had been previously sent to the Administration on behalf of the City Council regarding moving forward with the planning phase of what needed to be done in terms of upgrading and funding the technology needed to conduct hybrid meetings from City Hall. Councilor Gilman stated she agreed with Councilor Memhard and added that the City Council needed to keep the momentum with moving forward as constituents had clearly voiced the need for the hybrid model for meetings. Councilor Holmgren stated she agreed with the sentiments of the rest of the City Council members. Councilor Pett stated he agreed with the rest of the City Council members and added that all meetings involving City business should have the hybrid model moving forward. Councilor LeBlanc added that the City Council would probably stay remote until the end of the year.

This matter was continued until the November 9, 2021, City Council meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Councilor LeBlanc stated that on September 14, 2021, an email exchange between himself and Councilor Cox was posted on social media. He stated, and then reiterated, that he did not have an issue with the exchange, that the email exchange was a nonissue for him, and further stated that they had worked tirelessly and successfully together over the past ten years. Councilor LeBlanc added that Councilor Cox was one of the best, if not the best, councilors that he had worked with during his time on City Council and further added

that every councilor took their job seriously and each councilor put forth full effort when performing their duties as a city councilor.

COUNCILORS' REQUESTS TO THE MAYOR:

- **Councilors McCarthy, Memhard, Nolan, O'Hara, Pett, Holmgren, Gilman and LeBlanc** requested to the Mayor that if Administration has ordered Boards, Committees and Commissions to hold in-person meetings in meetings spaces with hybrid capability, then the meetings should be held utilizing the hybrid model.
- **Councilor O'Hara** requested through the Mayor that the City implement a cashless payment system.
- **Councilor Pett** requested to the Mayor a meeting with Administration regarding possible traffic studies throughout areas of Ward 2, including parts of Ward 1 and Ward 3; Route 128 and Kent Circle.

COUNCILORS' THANKS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

- **Councilor Nolan** thanked the Department of Public Works for their work on Kondelin Road and for the installation of a sign on Hesperus Avenue to direct the public towards the Magnolia businesses, and also for the work being done on Concord Street.
- **Councilor Pett** thanked the DPW, Police Department and Fire Department for their support and work on the two fireworks displays held this year.
- **Councilor Pett** thanked Fire Lieutenant Sayess for his help with facilitating the firing of the Parrot Rifle Cannon that was fired from Stage Fort Park during the Schooner Festival.
- **Councilors Gilman and LeBlanc** thanked the City Clerk's office for running another successful election.

COUNCILORS' WARD UPDATES AND COMMUNITY NEWS:

- **Councilor O'Hara** stated that on October 3, 2021, Dana Farber was hosting a blood drive at the Magnolia Library from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. He added that information on how to sign up was available on his Facebook page. He also stated that the Magnolia Community Farmer's Market would be happening as well on October 3, 2021.
- **Councilor Holmgren** stated the following statistics: 1 in 500 Americans had died of COVID; by comparison, she stated that there were 11 fatalities for every 100,000 Americans due to motor vehicle crashes. She encouraged the use of masks and encouraged vaccinations.

MOTION: On a motion by Councilor Pett, seconded by Councilor O'Hara, the City Council voted by ROLL CALL 8 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 (Cox) absent to adjourn the meeting at 6:31 p.m.

Submitted by: Sherry Karvelas, Clerk of Committees

Items submitted at the meeting: None.