

GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL  
**SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING**  
Monday, October 1, 2012 – 5:40 p.m.  
1<sup>st</sup> Fl. Council Committee Room – City Hall  
**-MINUTES-**

**Present:** Chair, Councilor Jacqueline Hardy; Vice Chair, Councilor Sefatia Theken; Councilor Joseph Ciolino; Councilor Melissa Cox; Councilor Steve LeBlanc, Jr.; Councilor Paul McGeary; Councilor Robert Whynott

**Absent:** Councilors Tobey and Verga

**Also Present:** Linda T. Lowe; Jim Duggan; Noreen Burke; Max Schenk; Mark Nestor; Lucy Sheehan

**The meeting was called to order at 5:50 p.m.**

**1. CC2012-055 (Cox) Change polling location for Ward 2, Precinct 2**

**Council President Hardy** called for the Committee Report from the Ordinances & Administration Committee meeting of the same date on this matter.

**MOTION:** On motion by Councilor LeBlanc, seconded by Councilor Whynott, the Ordinances & Administration Committee voted 3 in favor, 0 opposed to recommend to the City Council pursuant to MGL c. 54, §24 and City Charter Sec. 8-6 to relocate the polling place for Ward 2, Precinct 2, from McPherson Park Building at 31 Prospect Street to Our Lady of Good Voyage Church Youth Center at 140 Prospect Street so that Ward 2 polling places shall be consolidated to one location beginning with the November 6, 2012 election.

**DISCUSSION:**

**Councilor Theken** noted that Mr. Ryan at this meeting, and that their concerns were mostly addressed. The ward councilor will have meetings and they will work with the City Clerk to make this a smooth process. **Councilor Ciolino** asked that his same concerns as that of O&A be placed into the record which was: That the Councilor had received calls concerning this issue. The perception among seniors is that the Council is taking away their opportunity to vote, especially for those who are immobilized. There are 99 people in McPherson Park, and many in Sheedy Park who are handicapped. They feel that their right is to vote at a nearby polling place is being taken away. He reiterated that this is the perception; that the Council is not taking away their right to vote in person. Many of these people can't get around, especially if the weather is poor on Election Day. He had informed these seniors they would make arrangements for transportation; but they expressed concern that they would be forgotten in the future, and feel abandoned. He would not support the consolidation. **Councilor Theken** advised the Council that Lucy Sheehan and Mark Nestor, both members of the Board of Registrars expressed their support of the consolidation, as did Judy Peterson, also a Board of Registrars member, who had submitted her support via email (on file). **Council President Hardy** explained she had attended the meeting at McPherson Park. She thanked Councilor Cox for conducting the meeting and expressed she was impressed with the Councilor's handling of the situation.

**MOTION:** On motion by Councilor Theken, seconded by Councilor Whynott, the City Council voted **BY ROLL CALL 6 in favor, 1 (Ciolino) opposed, 2 (Verga, Tobey) absent, pursuant to MGL c. 54, §24 and City Charter Sec. 8-6 to relocate the polling place for Ward 2, Precinct 2, from McPherson Park Building at 31 Prospect Street to Our Lady of Good Voyage Church Youth Center at 140 Prospect Street so that Ward 2 polling places shall be consolidated to one location beginning with the November 6, 2012 election.**

**2. Unanimous Consent Calendar**

1. Brief presentation and update by Jim Duggan, CAO concerning increased threat of EEE (Refer City Council)

**By unanimous vote of the Council the Unanimous Consent Calendar was accepted as amended.**

**Jim Duggan**, CAO introduced to Noreen Burke, Health Department Director, Max Schenk-Manager, Environmental Services of the Health Department and Claudia Schweitzer, Chair of the Board of Health, and noted

there are precautionary steps that will be taken moving forward. He expressed his appreciation to the Council of hearing this matter under short notice.

**Noreen Burke**, Health Department Director reviewed the following:

Code Red Alert for City of Gloucester: Thursday afternoon the Health Department received a call from the health agent in Essex that they had a preliminary positive Triple E test on a horse. Massachusetts does confirmation testing which they expect to receive any day. The Essex Board of Health met Thursday night and banned all outdoor activities from 5 p.m. to 8 a.m. The threat of the mosquito, despite the cooler temperatures, continues to 28F for more than two hours (first hard frost). In collaboration with the Mayor's office, Superintendent Safire, and the Mayor issued a Code Red on Friday afternoon. The City is mandating restrictions or rescheduling of all youth activities and City sponsored activities. Rockport followed as did Manchester. They have put up educational signage around the City (an example was shown to the Council). They have put informational items in the newspaper. The Superintendent of Schools issued an all-sports bulletin as to scheduling practices early in the day with no practices taking place after 5 p.m. On inquiry by **Councilor Theken**, **Ms. Burke** assured the Little League coaches were informed. **Claudia Schweitzer**, Board of Health also confirmed they had. **Councilor Theken** asked as a courtesy that the police when traveling through the City should they see teams practicing after 5 p.m. on City playing fields to inform those who might not be aware of the ban. **Mr. Duggan** stated the contacts are the coaches. The notification does not go to the entire team. They were doing the outreach efforts to the coaches on Friday afternoon. **Ms. Burke** stated they are continuing public education.

Mosquito Control by means of Spraying: They are engaging in conversations with Northeast Mosquito Control (NEMC) and Wetlands Management District, a division of the Mass. Dept. of Agricultural Resources, Jack Card, Director. The spraying program is \$80,000 per year with a mandatory contract of years. There is no grant money available for this State service. On inquiry by **Council President Hardy**, **Max Schenk** stated they can't repurpose any of their grants at the Health Department. **Ms. Burke** added to the best of her knowledge there are not grants. There is a Cherry Sheet formula and that number is determined by the State. **Ms. Schweitzer** stated that for mosquito sprays that have 30% DEET is appropriate and safe. **Councilor Whynott** suggested that they ask their state legislative delegation to see if funds were available at a State level to assist the City. **Catherine Ryan**, 17 High Rock Road commented that the Superintendent sent out an all school alert Monday night. **Ms. Burke** stated should a case of Triple E be found in the community it would be a reason to raise the City's status to Critical Alert from High Alert once a case is confirmed. **Ms. Schweitzer** added this was the impetus for their urging the Code Red to ban outdoor activities in Gloucester to protect the health of the community and look to prevent cases from occurring. **Council President Hardy** asked once a funding source could be found, how long it would take to join the NEMC. **Mr. Schenk** explained it is too late to join now for this year. That would take place in the spring, and once contracted, it is a mandatory three-year contract at \$80,000 per year. **Council President Hardy** asked if they can join with other communities and go in as a coalition. **Mr. Duggan** reminded the Council that this is a formula driven dollar amount from the State. It will be different for each community. Regionalization would not be applicable. **Ms. Schweitzer** noted that there will be controversy regarding spraying as not all citizens believe that spraying is a good thing. **Councilor LeBlanc** wished to receive more information. The City has much land that is populated but just as much that is unpopulated. Spraying is more preventative and that the community needs to be educated about the spraying. It should be pointed out that it would be spot spraying, not a City-wide coverage. **Councilor Cox** expressed agreement with Councilor LeBlanc; that education and personal responsibility is important rather than a sense of comfort that spraying is the panacea. She asked about studies on the effects of what is being sprayed. She knew many people who were not for the spraying; again emphasizing education was important to prevention. **Councilor Whynott** stated that if a study comes back saying spraying makes it just one percent is better; it is worth the \$80,000 per year. He expressed he would be more comfortable if they were spraying City-wide; \$80,000 doesn't seem too much to protect the community. **Councilor Theken** suggested that they need to be sure that if there is spraying that the community is notified in advance of the days and time that it will occur. **Councilor Cox** asked about how often they would have to spray. **Mr. Schenk** stated that this NEMC does testing and that unless they find Triple E, then there is no spraying. **Ms. Burke** commented some towns want surveillance only; some contract for helicopter spraying, some for spot spraying by trucks. The community has to make strategic, careful choices from the menu of options should they contract with NEMC. Mr. Schenk commented the insecticide is only effective if it comes into contact with the mosquito. Dumping standing water is important preventative action homeowners and businesses can take. **Councilor McGearry** asked for information regarding the NEMC contract and costs, and that at Budget time they can look at funding. **Ms. Burke** noted that the chemical used for spraying is adjusted according to what mosquito issue is in play. **Council President Hardy** would like the Administration to consider joining NEMC and that funds could be set aside. **Mr. Duggan** responded it would come through the budget process in the Health Department's budget. **Council President Hardy** asked what they would

do if someone came down with Triple E in Gloucester now. **Mr. Schenk** stated Triple E is very difficult and lethal. **Ms. Schweitzer** stated that they call in the Cape Ann Emergency Team and bring in the health experts; and the Health Department would continue to their public education. **Ms. Burke** pointed out this is not a communicable disease; rather one is infected by being bitten by a mosquito. **Council President Hardy** asked for a report to the Council on what would be done in an emergency such as this. **Mr. Duggan** stated they would convene the appropriate City staff and experts to have the proper plan in place for notification, for future prevention going forward. **Council President Hardy** requested that a member of the City Council be a part of any meeting that may be convened moving forward on this issue especially if plans are to be made in case of a public health emergency. **Councilor LeBlanc** did not know how effective the spraying is, as it appears to be spot spraying. He would like to find out how the City's eco-systems would be protected as a result of the spraying and asked if prevention tactics are going to be more effective. **Councilor Whynott** asked if someone from the State could come to speak to the Council and what is being done in other communities. **Ms. Burke** could ask the Director from NENC to speak to them. She commented these were all thoughtful questions. She will get a thorough report to the Council upon exploring all the options and gather all information they can. In closing she stated she would bring experts to the Council with the Board of Health to give them their information. She also explained that if there was a human case of Triple E discovered in Rockport, say, the City would go to the next level, Critical Alert. They would ban all outdoor activities in the City and close the woods. **Councilor Ciolino** expressed the Council should have an action plan for the City from the Health Department at least for next year, a "play book"; and to think about where the funds will come from to put this action plan in place, and be able to assure the citizens there is in fact an action plan. **Councilor Theken** asked if Triple E was contagious. **Mr. Schenk** stated, "No." **Councilor Theken** asked that the School send out another recorded message to the community which includes the Council so that they can know that all families have been informed.

**A motion was made, seconded and voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 6:25 p.m.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Dana C. Jorgensson**  
**Clerk of Committees**

**DOCUMENTS/ITEMS SUBMITTED AT MEETING: None.**