

**GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL MEETING**

Tuesday, June 10, 2014 – 7:00 p.m.

Kyrouz Auditorium – City Hall

**-MINUTES-**

**Present: Vice Chair, Councilor Sefatia Theken; Councilor Melissa Cox; Councilor Robert Whycott; Councilor Steve LeBlanc, Jr.; Councilor Greg Verga; Councilor Paul Lundberg; Councilor William Fonvielle**  
**Absent: Councilors McGeary and Hardy;**

**Also Present: Acting Mayor Paul McGeary; Linda T. Lowe; Kenny Costa; John Dunn; Suzanne Egan; Fire Chief Eric Smith; Police Chief Leonard Campanello; Nancy Papows; Mike Hale; Donna Compton; Jim Caulkett; Noreen Burke; James Pope; Tom Daniel; Dr. Richard Safier; Hans Baumhauer; Bill Sanborn; Jonathan Pope; Tony Gross; Kathy Clancy; Melissa Teixeira; Greg Bach**

**The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. Councilor Whycott left the meeting at 8:21 p.m.**

**Flag Salute & Moment of Silence.****Oral Communications:**

**Christian Fisher** 47-1/2 Prospect Street, building owner, said that the small four unit building he owns at that address has no off-street parking and his tenants depend upon street parking. He noted that two weeks ago parking was eliminated in front of Ben's Paint and other business entities in that immediate location at the corner of Railroad Avenue and Prospect Street where parking is already scarce. He noted the change was instituted at the Council's April 22 meeting. He said a neighbor is circulating a petition to repeal the change of the ordinance due to the concern for lack of on-street parking. He urged the Council to reconsider the parking issue in that particular area. **Acting Council President Theken** said that this matter had been addressed through the Ward Councilor, the Traffic Commission and the City Council Standing Committee, Ordinances & Administration, was duly advertised for public hearing and then was voted on by the Council. She suggested that if there was an on-going issue that Mr. Fisher contact the Ward Councilor.

**Lauren Asaro**, 35 Fuller Street, representing the Magnolia Historical Society for an annual event which closes Lexington Avenue in mid-July asked for and received clarification from **Linda T. Lowe**, City Clerk, on the process for that organization's application for a Special Events Permit.

**Mike Foley**, 376 Essex Avenue, noted the Board of Health (BOH) has been requested to speak to the Council on fluoridation of the city's water supply and requested that questions be put forth to the Board to be taken up at that Council presentation as follows:

1. What scientific studies support the original decision to fluoridate Gloucester drinking water, and which support the current BOH recommendations?
2. WHO, CDC and NIDR data all conclude that cavities have been declining for 6 decades in both areas and with and without fluoridation. What scientific studies support any correlation whatsoever between drinking water fluoridation and the decline in the rate of cavities in children?
3. What scientific studies support the individual or group endorsements made in the current BOH recommendation, if any?
4. How does drinking water fluoridation support the individual's freedom from forced mass medication?
5. In 2011, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Agency proposed a drinking water fluoride level of 0.7 ppm as opposed to the 1962 standard of 0.7 to 1.2 ppm\*. This was based upon studies of fluoridated towns in the U.S. and Canada where fluorosis rates were found to reach as high as 70 to 80% of adolescents\*\*. What scientific studies indicate that 0.7 is the correct number?
6. For formula fed infants the CDC recommends alternating fluoridated water with un-fluoridated water to reconstitute powdered formula to prevent dental fluorosis. What studies indicate that this is a sufficient reduction in fluoride use for infants? Were all drinking water customers warned about this?

\*Federal Register, January 13, 2011 \*\*Marshall 2004; Locker 199; Luke 1997

Mr. Foley submitted packets of information on fluoridation to the Council through the Clerk of Committees.

**Presentations/Commendations:** None.

**Consent Agenda:**

- *MAYOR'S REPORT*

1. Memorandum from Fire Chief, Eric Smith, grant Application & Checklist for a Emergency Management Performance Grant in the (EMPG) in the amount of \$12,435 (Info Only)
2. Memorandum & supporting materials form Planning Director re: City Council acceptance of a Coastal Community Resilience Grant In the amount of \$50,000 (Refer B&F)
3. Memorandum from Chief Financial Officer re: proposed Capital Expenditure Loan Orders (1) \$890,000 for School Building Improvements; \$485,000 for DPW Building/Yard Improvements; (3) \$170,000 for Fire Station Improvements (Refer B&F)
4. Memorandum from Community Development Director re: grant opportunity through the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) for lead-based paint removal (Refer B&F)
5. Memorandum from Planning Director re: review & approval of proposed conservation restrictions for the Essex County Greenbelt Association Norcross & Tompson Street Gateway projects (Refer P&D)
6. Memorandum from Police Chief requesting that the Personnel Ordinance be amended to add the position of Assistant Police Chief/ Executive Officer (Refer O&A)
  - **COMMUNICATIONS/INVITATIONS**
    1. Communication from Joseph Grace to City Council re: public trail access to Fernwood Loop Trail & Lilly Pond (Refer Com. Dev. Dir.)
    2. Communication from Waterways Board Chairman re: withdrawal of Recreational Fishing Pier proposal (Info Only)
    3. Communication from Superintendent of Schools of City Council's request re: GHS Vocational Program Status (Info Only)
      - **APPLICATIONS/PETITIONS**
        1. Special Events Application: request to hold Gloucester Schooner Festival-Lobster Bake on August 30, 2014 at Maritime Gloucester & Fitz Henry Lane Park (Refer P&D)
          - **COUNCILORS ORDERS**
            1. CC2014-024 (Cox) Amend GCO Chapter 22, Sec. 22-270 "Parking prohibited at all times" and Sec. 22-291 "Tow-away zones": Re: Pleasant Street from its intersection with Smith Street (Refer O&A & TC)
            2. CC2014-025 (Theken/Cox) Amend GCO Chapter 9 "Trash, Recycling and Litter" Sec. 9-3 re: trash dumpsters (Refer O&A & BOH)
            3. CC02314-026 (Verga) Request City Council files a Special Act w/State Legislators re: waiver from age restriction of MGL Chapter 31, §58A (FCV 06/24/14)
              - **APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS COUNCIL AND STANDING COMMITTEE MEETINGS**
                1. City Council Meeting: 05/27/14 (Approve/File)
                2. Standing Committee Meetings: B&F 06/05/14 (under separate cover), O&A 06/02/14 (under separate cover), P&D 06/04/14 (Approve/File)

#### **Items to be added/deleted from the Consent Agenda:**

**Councilor Verga** asked to remove Items #2 under Communications and under Council Order #3. He highlighted that there is a communications from the Waterways Board officially withdrawing the request to create a fishing pier at Stacy Boulevard. He also highlighted #3 under Council Orders CC2014-026 slated for Council Vote June 24 asking that a phrase be removed from the Council Order in the last sentence after "Civil Service exam for Municipal Police Officer." The words, "and in order to be appointed as a City of Gloucester Reserve Police Officer" should be struck.

**By unanimous consent of the Council the phrase requested by Councilor Verga to be struck from the Council Order 2014-026 was accepted.**

**By unanimous consent the Consent Agenda was accepted as amended.**

*At the request of Councilor Whynott who entered the meeting at 7:12 p.m., through Acting Council President Theken, and with the full assent of the Council, the following public hearing was taken out of order:*

#### **Scheduled Public Hearing:**

2. **PH2014-041: Whether the City Council shall vote to transfer up to 100 percent of the water debt service charge onto the tax levy under MGL c. 59, §21C (n)**

**This public hearing is opened at 7:13 p.m.**

**Those speaking in favor:**

**Acting Mayor Paul McGeary** said he was speaking on behalf of the Administration expressing his support, and noted previously as a Councilor he supported the shift of the water debt. He said the high water rates inhibit economic growth and that in order to promote real growth in the city's economy that the debt shift to alleviate the high cost of water usage for commercial entities in the city will encourage business development.

He said that even with the reduction of water rates due to a debt shift, water rates will still be high. If water rates are cut for the heaviest users, it rewards overuse. Varian, Americold, Gorton's will still have a significant incentive to cut back on their water usage, he pointed out.

**Acting Mayor McGeary** said what swayed him to support the water debt shift was that on balance when subtract the lowered water rate from the increase in the real estate tax rate occasioned by shifting the water debt onto

the General Fund, the average homeowner will do better dollar for dollar. He pointed out the homeowner will pay less money in water rates and real estate taxes if it is an average home valued at \$453,632. The more debt shifted onto the General Fund the better it is for them. He also pointed out that because real estate taxes are deductible, and water rate payments are not, there is essentially a federal subsidy on the money the homeowner is paying to support the borrowing to improve the city's water infrastructure.

**Acting Mayor McGeary** said not everyone will make out – some people will pay more and there is no way around it. He observed that the entire city is paying for years of letting the city's water system decay. He expressed the wish that back in the 1970s when the water infrastructure system was only 70 years old that the city had taken the federal government's offer on 70 cents on the dollar to rebuild it – but the city didn't take that offer. The system is now 100 years old in dire need of repair and has to be done and paid for. He said in his view this is more fair way to do it – an investment in the infrastructure that supports all the residents of the city and properly borne by all the city. He reiterated his support of the Council shifting the water service charge debt onto the tax levy.

**Meredith Fine**, Attorney, 85 Eastern Avenue, a resident and representing Cape Pond Ice, and member of the Cape Ann Chamber of Commerce Government Affairs Committee read a brief letter from the President of Cape Pond Ice, said that it is sometimes cheaper for Gloucester fishermen to buy their ice in Boston than it is in Gloucester:

“As I am sure you can appreciate, your vote to approve the proposed shift in Water Debt Service costs to the Tax Roles would be extremely helpful both practically and in general principal, to Cape Pond Ice Company and to supporting and sustaining the Gloucester harborfront fishing industry and core Hub infrastructure.

As the ice company, in the face of terrible fishing industry declines, we are trying to keep our remaining vessels in Gloucester, rather than losing them to Boston or New Bedford. As you have heard, we have finally been able to gain some breathing room, by refinancing our mortgage debt out over a longer time frame, and through relief from the MA Department of Environmental Protection loosening the strict DPA limits on our potential sue of our harborfront real estate while we maintain commercial ice service here.

Support now from the Mayor and Gloucester City Council to provide relief to large industrial water users, like Cape Pond Ice Company and other harborfront and fish processing businesses, would be a very helpful, supportive step in terms of the making costs more competitive on ongoing industrial business activity in Gloucester, and improving our competitive position relative to other ports and industrial communities which offer substantially lower water rates.

Fortunately, while our infrastructure costs are high, Gloucester does enjoy ample water resources, in part due to the historic ice industry and a number of man-made reservoirs and ponds that are a part of our water system. Thank you for your consideration, Scott Memhard, President & General Manager, Cape Pond Ice.”

**Ms. Fine** pointed out while they were in the process of renegotiating his loans that the water rates were noted by a banker as anti-competitive. As a Chamber member, the city has paid so much attention to tourism, but that the manufacturing base needs help too. She urged the Council to shift as much as of the water debt as possible.

**Peter Webber**, Senior Vice President, Cape Ann Chamber of Commerce, 83 High Street, Rockport, noted his family also owns property in Gloucester, said he was speaking as a representative of the Chamber, and was expressing the sentiments of Ken Riel, the Chamber's CEO, and the Board of the Directors in supporting the proposal to shift the water debt to the property tax. He said he concurred with the points made by the Acting Mayor. Noting that he and Mr. Riel met with all of the large employers in Gloucester, who are typically the largest water users, without exception, they all raised the issue of the burden of water rates as a cost of doing business in the city. He said he was pleased that the Administration was supporting this action and said he hoped that the Council would support the water debt shift. He pointed out this action will make doing business in Gloucester more attractive and support already established businesses.

**Those speaking in opposition: None.**

**Communications:**

**Ms. Lowe** noted three communications were received, a letter from Scott Memhard read earlier in the public hearing by Attorney Meredith; **Jean and Rick Grobe**, 17 Lincoln Street, Ward 5 residents with a septic system and well, said the proposed water debt shift will be borne by people on wells who receive no benefit from city water or reduced water rates. Additionally they pointed out that it would be an “intolerable” burden on the elderly on fixed incomes; and therefore were against the water debt shift. **Jann and Ed Greenburg**, 230R Gloucester Avenue, wrote they were against the water service debt shift citing already high property taxes saying they failed to see the fairness in what the Mayor was proposing, living on a fixed income. Should the debt shift be voted in, they expressed hope for a way for low income property owners to waive their responsibility for the increase in property taxes especially for those over 65 years old, on well water, septic systems and Social Security.

**Councilor Questions:**

**Councilor Cox** said that if 100 percent of the water debt is not shifted, but instead 50 percent was shifted would all subsequent years be the same percentage. **John Dunn**, CFO, said, "Yes." He added that the vote the Council will take on the matter, the options are to shift all or a portion of the debt which can be a percentage or a fixed dollar amount which is a vote that will remain in effect until the Council takes a vote in the future. He said it would affect both the debt that exists and any debt to be issued in the future. **Councilor Cox** asked if all future debt would shift automatically onto the real estate tax unless the Council votes otherwise, to which **Mr. Dunn** responded, "Yes." **Councilor Cox** asked how long the debt will be on the tax roles. **Mr. Dunn** said he expected there would be water and sewer and General Fund debt existing forever as there is always capital investments to be made by the city and it is unlikely the city will be able to pay for those projects in cash. He pointed out that once a 100 year old water line is replaced, then the line that is 90 years old will need to be replaced which is the same for sewer infrastructure and buildings.

**Councilor Whynott** asked how many well water users were there in the city. **Mr. Dunn** said it appears there are fewer than 500 wells permitted for potable or water used in the domestic setting. Of that 500 or less, there are a number that have a well and a tie to the municipal water system; using water from the municipal water system and not necessarily using the well for drinking purposes, or using the well for irrigation purposes. He noted that there are 10,600 water bills sent out each quarter by the city. **Councilor Whynott** said if a \$450,000 home has a well, how much would they than what they would prior to a water debt shift. **Mr. Dunn** said it is about \$90 dollars a year more in property taxes if the entire debt burden is shifted annually. **Councilor Whynott** said he presumed most of the well users were in wards 4 and 5 and will be hardest hit, and asked if it was possible if those folks be exempted who are on wells, or can they be given a break on their taxes. **Mr. Dunn** said they really can't as it is an all or nothing proposition. If the debt shift is voted forward, it will affect all property owners in the same way whether using city water or not. He said relatively speaking it is a small number of people on wells. He reiterated some of the well users are also connected to the city's municipal water system. There will be some people who will be disadvantaged, he said, but there are many more who would be advantaged by this action who own homes of more modest means that would see the larger benefit. **Councilor Whynott** clarified that the Council would just be taking the debt and moving it to the tax rolls, not the water bills. **Mr. Dunn** confirmed it is just the water debt that would be moved which it is allowed by law but not moving any operational costs. **Councilor Whynott** confirmed with **Mr. Dunn** that the Council still has to set a water rate. **Mr. Dunn** said by choosing the percentage or dollar amount to be shifted onto the property tax, it essentially sets the water rate. Calculations, he explained, have been done as to what the water rate would be to support operational costs depending on various levels of water debt shift (calculations on file). **Councilor Whynott** asked if people would pay more for water by the Council assenting to a water debt shift. **Mr. Dunn** said, "No." The water rate will go down significantly, he pointed out.

**Councilor Verga** asked about the perpetual aspect of the water debt shift, saying he didn't recall the CSO being perpetual as rather being one lump sum paid over time. **Mr. Dunn** said the CSO was a different vote to shift just the existing CSO debt. When that debt goes away, so does the debt shift, he said. The water debt shift is a bit different, he noted, and is dependent on whether all or some of the water debt is shifted, either a percentage or fixed dollar amount, he said. **Mr. Dunn** reiterated that a future Council can always vote to not shift anything or perhaps as an option to decide to shift only the debt outstanding or the debt that's associated with projects already approved by the Council. He explained that there is a level of debt currently outstanding, and that there be some additional outstanding debt issued over the next 1-½ to 2 years because of already approved loan orders for water infrastructure work. He suggested that the Council could draw a line and say that they are only going to agree to shift that amount and should additional debt be issued in the future by a loan order, at that time, the Council could make a decision whether to shift that debt onto the property tax roll. **Councilor Verga** observed that the Council's hands are not tied by what is in front of them to which **Mr. Dunn** indicated the Council had quite a bit of flexibility. **Councilor Verga** said he didn't like the idea of putting this tax bill out forever. He then noted the potential of rebates, to which he said he understood the official answer is no, there are not rebates.

**Acting Mayor McGeary**, answering an earlier question by Councilor Whynott said that the \$90 a year that the hypothetical person with a \$453,000 home would pay, \$30 would in effect be "paid" by the federal government if the person itemizes their taxes. As to Councilor Verga's question of borrowing in perpetuity, he said while that is true in one sense, the Administration is trying with the DPW to get ahead of the curve at some point it becomes more of the maintenance of the system rather than replacement of it, but he said it would be a while.

**Councilor Verga** asked if there are any other alternatives for the elderly or those on fixed income to seek some relief. **Nancy Papows**, Principal Assessor spoke to the exemptions in place for elderly for water and sewer by explaining the following: It is an annual application. It becomes available automatically upon the Council's adoption of that section of Mass. General Law. A person must be 65 years or older, own and occupy their dwelling. There are income and asset requirements. Each year an application would have to be filled out. As to the amount it

is up to \$200 exemption but depends on a calculation of the Assessors Department processes and it would be what the tax bill would have been if the water debt had not been shifted. The DPW or Water Department would also then calculate how much higher water bill would have been if it had been left on the rate payers. The exemption then becomes the difference between the two items up to \$200 exempted for the individual.

**Councilor Lundberg** asked when the Administration did their calculations for the Council comparing the different gradation of shifting the debt to real estate taxes and its impact the real estate tax of an average single family home, he asked had the Chamber or their individual members calculated the impact of the commercial members' real estate taxes from this water debt shift. He also asked in the Chamber's view did it make the city more competitive by enacting this water debt shift. **Mr. Webber** said they hadn't, adding that the numbers they have seen are the same as what the Council has seen. For major water users the net impact of the shift of the water rate reductions versus the real estate taxes increases is a benefit for businesses. He said the Chamber hasn't made that analysis. There is a net benefit to businesses, he agreed. It makes the city more competitive for attracting businesses especially for large industrial water users and overall is making the city more competitive and attractive.

**Acting Mayor McGeary** said that the analysis shows the top 20 users net out. Addison Gilbert Hospital, an entity that pays no taxes would also benefit tremendously overall and a significant benefit of the water debt shift.

**Councilor Fonvielle** said in terms of the increase in real estate taxes, according to the calculations in the previously distributed documentation to the Council (on file) the maximum shift, the increase in real estate tax on an average single family tax bill for a home valued at \$454,000 would be \$248.65 and asked how this reconciles this with the \$90 dollars the CFO was previously touting to the Council. **Mr. Dunn** said he was referring to the net benefit to the tax payer. **Councilor Fonvielle** contended that the net doesn't apply to people who are not on city water. **Mr. Dunn** agreed with Councilor Fonvielle and stood corrected. For those folks, **Councilor Fonvielle** said, their hit would be just under \$250 a year on average given the price of an average single family home. And if a house is worth more than that, he said, and then the hit would increase. **Mr. Dunn** said if it was less than that it would decrease

**Councilor Fonvielle** said the Principal Assessor went through a complicated scenario on how one might obtain an exemption and has to deal with the water rate now and asked how this would affect those who are not on city water. **Ms. Papows** said those homeowners would see a tax bill increase and the water bill they don't receive. She said she believed they would receive the \$200 but would have to confirm that fact and reconfirm it with the Councilor as she had not investigated that scenario. She noted that this is an offset for people who pay both as when there is a shift there is an offsetting from one to the other, but if they're not paying for water there is not a benefit of a reduced water rate. **Councilor Fonvielle** asked about those without sufficient income who can't itemize their tax returns would they benefit from the increase on real estate taxes. **Ms. Papows** said she was unable to respond to issues related to income tax.

Responding to an inquiry by **Councilor LeBlanc** on exemptions and what happens to recoup the funds paid out, **Ms. Papows** explained that: the taxes are already assessed for the year and the tax rate is set. An individual is slated to pay a certain amount of taxes which will not change. When they apply for an exemption the Assessors would review the application, work in conjunction with the Water Department and determine if they are eligible for up to a \$200 exemption. Once that is completed, it is a credit towards their tax bill. If they receive the \$200, it will be deducted from their taxes that are due. The city will also submit to the state for reimbursement which is allowed on the exemptions subject to appropriation of the legislature.

**Acting Council President Theken** asked about the percentages of the shift based on previously presented scenarios. She said she was concerned about the debt shift being made to the maximum amount as there is no cap when talking about the maximum. She said she was more comfortable to put forward a dollar amount. She indicated that if the Council votes the maximum amount they don't have to do this again next year to vote another shift. **Mr. Dunn** said the maximum amount says that is all that can be shifted at this point. He reiterated the Council's option is to shift all debt, not only for this year and future years if the vote is unaltered, or the Council can shift some of the amount of the existing debt by either a percentage or fixed amount. He said the maximum is to say that that is all that exists right now in total debt service in FY15 debt service in the water fund. He noted that the current debt is about \$2.85 million. Whatever amount is voted to be shifted, that is the amount that will be shifted each year unless a different vote is taken.

**Acting Council President Theken** asked had the city compared its rates with a debt shift in place against other local communities, noting that the water rate for FY14 is \$9.17 per thousand gallons. **Mr. Dunn** said Manchester, Rockport are higher; Ipswich and Salem are lower. Beverly's rate is \$11.00 he said. He pointed out that those communities don't have the infrastructure work as Gloucester does. **Acting Council President Theken** said that if the Council votes a \$1 million shift the rate would go down to \$8.86 and at a \$2 million shift, the rate would be way below other communities at \$5.97 and by 2020 would be \$7.20 with the maximum. She asked if any household has

their own well and has no sewer and no water service. **Mr. Dunn** said there are some homes who have well water and septic, with a maximum of 500 with wells and some portion of those 500 are connected to the city water system but could not answer specifically. He suggested that all those 500 on wells would have to have septic. **Councilor Fonvielle** pointed out he does not use city water or sewer from the city as there are none available. **Acting Council President Theken** pointed out the CSO project was a benefit to everyone and recalled some of the surrounding issues. But she pointed out also some seniors don't file income taxes and said there was a circuit breaker for them to take advantage of. She observed it was hard to justify the debt shift for much of Ward 5 to some extent and asked if there was any way for those who use no city services to apply for grants. **Mr. Dunn** said there are grants but they would have to probably agree hook up to city water to be eligible or sewer but may not be possible under some circumstances. **Acting Council President Theken** said that the exemption could still be applied for under these circumstances. **Ms. Papows** said they can apply for the exemption but she advised that it is income and assets outside of the domicile for those 65 years or older. **Acting Council President Theken** said if a home is in a trust. **Ms. Papows** said it is dependent on several factors and many elderly qualify if they have a life estate on the property. **Acting Council President Theken** briefly touched upon those homes that are in a trust with **Ms. Papows**.

**Councilor Verga** said that the Council votes on the perpetual, and asked what the procedure is moving forward. With \$2.8 million in debt on the books, and the Water Department comes forward next year and says they need another \$500,000 of work so when more debt is undertaken what happens. **Acting Mayor McGeary** said any new borrowing has to be approved by the Council. He observed that if the Council was uncomfortable with shifting 100 percent, the Council could vote the fixed figure of \$2.85 million which gives the most "bang for the buck" for the average homeowner, then next year if the debt goes to \$3.2 million, only \$2.85 million would be on the General Fund. As to the question raised by Councilor LeBlanc about what happens if someone gets an exemption that pays for that exemption. He pointed out that every year in the budget there is an item called, Reserve for Abatement, which pays for the exemption. Ideally the city receives a reimbursement from the state, he said. **Councilor Verga** said if the existing debt goes onto the tax rate and no further water debt is shifted, then would that \$2.85 million remain until it is paid off. **Mr. Dunn** said that is what would happen, in that debt decreases every year, and in this case it is about \$60,000 a year. In year five it would decrease by \$300,000 because some debt is being paid off. **Councilor Verga** said there is no automatic adding of more debt and **Mr. Dunn** said the vote could be crafted in that manner. He added that in the future if loan orders are approved, the Council can approve or not to add that particular project debt to be shifted also.

**Acting Council President Theken** asked what the debt for \$2.85 million represents. **Mike Hale**, Public Works Director, said over the last six years the city has updated the Babson and West Gloucester Filtration Plants; connected mainland Gloucester to the island portion of Gloucester by a new river crossing which updated a 100 year old masonry tunnel running under the Blynman Canal; replaced 25,000 feet of water line in the city's downtown and are still going. He said it is very important to recognize that there will always be water debt. The five year capital plan for water is \$2 million pipeline replacement annually for all wards. Ward 5 has some critical areas that need large scale water improvements related to water quality now which may be pushed off, he pointed out. There were water mains and lines replaced in Annisquam and East Gloucester. **Acting Council President Theken** asked where the water comes from in hydrants. **Mr. Hale** said all city hydrants are connected to the municipal water distribution system. **Mr. Hale** noted the city did \$5 million worth of work in Magnolia after a fire in 2004 on Lexington Avenue to extend a new water main from Essex Avenue through Magnolia Avenue to the intersection to Flume Road and Lexington Avenue which is one of the largest water mains in the city. **Acting Council President Theken** said if the shift was for \$2.85 million, with that is the city done or does the city continue every year to keep what it has. **Mr. Hale** said the \$2.85 million is the annual debt service on what has been borrowed already. He said going forward ideally in their master plan it has \$2 million of annual work of replace and maintain. Over 65 percent of the city's water mains are over 65 years old, he pointed out with 75 years as their life expectancy. He briefly discussed other parts of the water capital improvement water plan for the city. **Acting Council President Theken** pointed out that inevitably there will be some part of the city where it will be hard to justify but that overall the benefit is there. She pointed out people have said they don't have children in schools and yet they pay high taxes that support the schools. She said it is just something they have to do for the overall good of the community.

**Councilor Cox** asked if Ward 5 has the most well users with septic. **Mr. Hale** said presumed it to be the case. **Councilor Cox** noted a lot of septic systems are aging and failing and not getting Title V. If connections for those homes are improved they would benefit sooner or later from this debt shift. **Mr. Hale** said he wasn't sure a nexus could be drawn from a septic system working or not working from the shift. In areas where they are on municipal water and have an on-site system for their waste water, the improvements made the distribution system will benefit everyone. He said it would be difficult to draw the kind of conclusion the Councilor spoke of. He said it is about

the distribution, water treatment and storage system for the municipal water system. Mr. Hale spoke to recent improvements to the Plum Cove, Bond Hill and Blackburn water storage tanks.

**Councilor Cox** noted there was a third option for the debt shift which is to exclude future debt if the Council voted this evening to shift only the debt from those loan orders enacted prior to June 10, 2014. The Council by doing that would exclude future debt. Mr. Dunn said that future Councils could deal with any debt issues as loan orders came before them for approval and determine whether or not that new debt should be shifted at the time of that loan approval. **Mr. Dunn** confirmed with Councilor Cox that the Council could wait to vote the water debt shift to just before the passage of the budget at the next Council meeting of June 17 specifically for the FY15 budget passage.

**Acting Council President Theken closed the public comments.**

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On a motion by Councilor Lundberg, seconded by Councilor McGeary, the Budget & Finance Committee voted 2 in favor, 0 opposed, to recommend that the City Council that under Massachusetts General Law Chapter 59, §21C(n) that 100 percent of the water debt service charges be shifted to the tax levy.

#### DISCUSSION:

**Councilor Cox** explained that she supports 100 percent of the water debt to be shifted. She said she would defer to Councilor Lundberg as she was not present when the B&F Committee discussed the water debt shift.

**Councilor Whynott** moved to amend the motion to remove "100 percent and to insert "\$2.85 million," which was seconded by **Councilor Cox**.

**Councilor Whynott** said that if it is made at \$2.85 million would be all that would be on the debt. **Mr. Dunn** said \$2.85 million can go up \$2.85 million is the maximum that can be shifted each year as long as that amount of debt exists.

**Councilor Verga** confirmed that this amendment means that it is the water debt from this day back and would have to be made specific. **Councilor Cox** said there would have to be another amendment to exclude future debt. **Councilor Whynott** expressed his disagreement saying that the CFO said if the Council made the debt shift at that amount future debt is excluded for \$2.85 million or when another loan is voted, at that time the Council would have to determine if it wanted to add that debt to the debt shift and said she believed it meant that if it was \$2.85 million, or 100 percent it meant that every year the city could borrow that amount to do what they need. **Mr. Dunn** said if there is a specific amount then that is the maximum that can be shifted each year. But they can always shift \$2.85 million as long as that amount of debt exists. **Councilor Verga** suggested that the intention of the amendment was \$2.85 million for debt as of June 10, 2014 back. Councilor Whynott said he wants it for today's date back not for the future.

Councilor Cox asked if the Council excludes future debt, and use the \$2.85 million, will that debt next year will make the water rate go up again. Mr. Dunn said there are a couple of things in the pipeline - there is \$2 million outstanding in Bond Anticipation Notes (BANs) that has to go to permanent debt in the next 18 months and another piece of a \$12.4 million project approved by the Council in July 2012. He said there is still \$2.65 million of that that will be expended shortly. He suggested that the vote is to shift all debt associated with any loan order approved prior to June 10, 2014. He said that would take everything that has already issued and the two pieces of debt to be issued (\$2 million issued in the next 18 months and \$2.5 million to be issued in 36 months). **Acting Council President Theken** said that he Council votes \$2 million which impacts the average tax payer by \$174, but now the Council is being told \$4 million, to get rid of all the debt already voted on by the Council to date and asked what it would do to the tax rate. **Mr. Dunn** said it essentially doesn't change things. He explained that the \$2.8 million, \$2 million of that is principal. If over the next 36 or 48 months another \$4 million is added they will net less the outstanding than you are currently. This is suggesting a way to deal with everything that this and every council before had dealt with so that anything that comes before the Council in the future they can make a decision as each project for loan authorization comes to the Council for their approval.

**Councilor Cox** said she wished to refer the water debt shift back to B&F to get solid numbers and come back next Tuesday at the Special City Council meeting when the budget is passed. She urged that this way it can be done properly.

**Councilor Fonvielle** said he was concerned about the people whom the Acting Mayor labeled as the losers in all this who are unaware what is about to hit them because they don't know to attend the Council meetings who may not yet be 65 but are disabled and living on a fixed income and who will not be eligible for rebates and that in order to receive exemptions the burden is on them to apply each year for those exceptions. He said for those who are disadvantaged and disabled, the water debt shift will be borne on the backs of those in the community who are least able to afford it. He said in principal he supports the water debt shift but was still concerned for those who may suffer as a result of it. He said if there was a way to mitigate this to insure the poorest of the society are not bearing the brunt of the richest in the community it would enable his voting in the affirmative.

**Acting Council President Theken** clarified for Councilor Fonvielle that that Acting Mayor did not say losers but said those who may lose out.

**Councilor Cox** said that the Budget & Finance Committee would take up the matter of the water debt service charge debt shift at their Revisits and Motions meeting the following day starting at 4 p.m. **Acting Council President Theken** said she can justify the debt shift if it means better water pressure, better water quality and hydrants that are at the ready to snuff out a fire in her neighborhood in Ward 5. **Mr. Dunn** said he would run more numbers, but was 90 percent sure that the \$2.85 million as the amount to be shifted, even if the other two pieces that have yet to be issued as permanent debt come in over the next 36 to 48 months will not exceed the numbers that the Council has been given to consider. **Acting Council President Theken** asked that Ms. Papows be ready with some numbers for the B&F meeting tomorrow as requested earlier. **Ms. Papows** noted that there are set numbers through the Department of Revenue and will bring that to the meeting and also the information about the individual who doesn't receive a water bill at all. She said not everyone qualifies for the exemptions and she will be able to outline what the levels are and can answer other questions about no water bill at all.

**Councilor Cox** said another answer needed as to how many residents are on well water and what homes receive no water services. She said these and other points of information are important. **Councilor Verga** said there are those people who choose to be on well water even though there is water access. He asked to know who has wells and can't get access to the municipal water system.

**The Council voted unanimously to continue this hearing to June 17.**

**Councilor Whynott left the meeting at 8:21 p.m.**

#### **Committee Reports:**

##### **Budget & Finance: June 5, 2014**

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On a motion by Councilor McGeary, seconded by Councilor Fonvielle, the Budget & Finance Committee voted 3 in favor, 0 opposed, to recommend that the City Council accept under MGL c. 44, §53A a gift of \$2,500 from the Gloucester Fishermen Athletic Association (GFAA) for the exclusive purpose of funding supervisory/security personnel at the New Balance Track & Field at Newell Stadium for evening and weekend hours.

#### **DISCUSSION:**

**Councilor Cox** said that this was money donated to the city to allow for more supervision and public access to Newell Stadium. **Councilor LeBlanc** said he sits on the Stadium Committee and that more staffing ensures the maintaining of the pristine condition of the stadium and prevents vandalism.

**MOTION: On a motion by Councilor Cox, seconded by Councilor Fonvielle, the City Council voted 6 in favor, 0 opposed, 3 (McGeary, Hardy, Whynott) absent, to accept under MGL c. 44, §53A a gift of \$2,500 from the Gloucester Fishermen Athletic Association (GFAA) for the exclusive purpose of funding supervisory/security personnel at the New Balance Track & Field at Newell Stadium for evening and weekend hours.**

**MOTION: On a motion by Councilor Cox, seconded by Councilor Fonvielle, the City Council voted 6 in favor, 0 opposed, 3 (McGeary, Hardy, Whynott) absent, to accept the Budget & Finance Committee's Unanimous Consent Agenda dated June 10, 2014 as follows:**



1. Memorandum form Community Development Director & Public Health Director re: City Council acceptance of Get Fit Gloucester! Mass in Motion Year 6 grant award in the amount of \$25,000

**MOTION: On a motion by Councilor Cox, seconded by Councilor Fonvielle, the City Council voted 6 in favor, 0 opposed, 3 (McGeary, Whyntott) absent, that under MGL c. 44, §53A accept a \$25,000 grant from the Mass. Department of Public Health and associated funding partners for a Mass in Motion Municipal Wellness and Leadership Program that funds Get Fit Gloucester!**

2. Special Budgetary Transfer Request (2014-SBT-36) from the Department of Public Works

**MOTION: On a motion by Councilor Cox, seconded by Councilor Fonvielle, the City Council voted 6 in favor, 0 opposed, 3 (McGeary, Hardy, Whyntott) absent, to approve Special Budgetary Transfer 2014-SBT-36 for \$1,375 from DPW Solid Waste Permanent Positions, Account #101000.10.403.51100.0000.00.000.00.051 to DPW Administration Salary/Permanent Positions, Account #101000.10.421.51100.0000.00.000.00.051 for the purpose of funds needed to cover payroll costs through the end of FY2014 following the retirement costs of the DPW Confidential Secretary.**

3. Special Budgetary Transfer Request (2014-SBT-37) from the Department of Public Works

**MOTION: On a motion by Councilor Cox, seconded by Councilor Fonvielle, the City Council voted 6 in favor, 0 opposed, 3 (McGeary, Hardy, Whyntott) absent, to approve Special Budgetary Transfer 2014-SBT-37 for \$6,030.56 from DPW Solid Waste Disposal, Salary/Permanent Positions, Account #101000.10.403.51100.000.00.000.00.051 to DPW Facilities, Heating Oil, Account #10100.10.472.52170.0000.00.000.00.52 for the purpose of purchasing heating oil.**

4. Special Budgetary Transfer Request (2014-SBT-38) from the Department of Public Works

**MOTION: On a motion by Councilor Cox, seconded by Councilor Fonvielle, the City Council voted 6 in favor, 0 opposed, 3 (McGeary, Hardy, Whyntott) absent, to approve Special Budgetary Transfer 2014-SBT-38 for \$127 from DPW Engineering, Sick Leave Buyback, Account #101000.10.411.51920.000.00.000.00.051 to DPW Facilities, Heating Oil, Account #10100.10.472.52170.0000.00.000.00.52 for the purpose of purchasing heating oil.**

5. Special Budgetary Transfer Request (2014-SBT-39) from the Department of Public Works

**MOTION: On a motion by Councilor Cox, seconded by Councilor Fonvielle, the City Council voted 6 in favor, 0 opposed, 3 (McGeary, Hardy, Whyntott) absent, to approve Special Budgetary Transfer 2014-SBT-39 for \$913.38 from DPW Facilities, Worker's Compensation Payroll, Account #101000.10.472.51570.000.00.000.00.051 to DPW Facilities, Heating Oil, Account #10100.10.472.52170.0000.00.000.00.52 for the purpose of purchasing heating oil.**

6. Special Budgetary Transfer Request (2014-SBT-40) from the Department of Public Works

**MOTION: On a motion by Councilor Cox, seconded by Councilor Fonvielle, the City Council voted 6 in favor, 0 opposed, 3 (McGeary, Hardy, Whyntott) absent, to approve Special Budgetary Transfer 2014-SBT-40 for \$258.08 from DPW Facilities, Salary/Wage Longevity, Account #101000.10.472.51400.000.00.000.00.051 to DPW Facilities, Heating Oil, Account #10100.10.472.52170.0000.00.000.00.52 for the purpose of purchasing heating oil.**

7. Special Budgetary Transfer Request (2014-SBT-41) from the Department of Public Works

**MOTION: On a motion by Councilor Cox, seconded by Councilor Fonvielle, the City Council voted 6 in favor, 0 opposed, 3 (McGeary, Hardy, Whyntott) absent, to approve Special Budgetary Transfer 2014-SBT-41 for \$345.05 from DPW Other, Sick Incentive Pay, Account #101000.10.499.51944.000.00.000.00.051 to DPW Facilities, Heating Oil, Account #10100.10.472.52170.0000.00.000.00.52 for the purpose of purchasing heating oil.**

8. Special Budgetary Transfer Request (2014-SBT-42) from the Department of Public Works

**MOTION: On a motion by Councilor Cox, seconded by Councilor Fonvielle, the City Council voted 6 in favor, 0 opposed, 3 (McGeary, Hardy, Whynott) absent, to approve Special Budgetary Transfer 2014-SBT-42 for \$5,000 from DPW Other, Salary/Wage Overtime, Account #101000.10.499.51300.000.00.000.00.051 to DPW Facilities, Heating Oil, Account #10100.10.472.52170.0000.00.000.00.52 for the purpose of purchasing heating oil.**

9. Special Budgetary Transfer Request (2014-SBT-43) from the Department of Public Works

**MOTION: On a motion by Councilor Cox, seconded by Councilor Fonvielle, the City Council voted 6 in favor, 0 opposed, 3 (McGeary, Hardy, Whynott) absent, to approve Special Budgetary Transfer 2014-SBT-43 for \$48,000 from Water Enterprise Fund, Employee Health Insurance, Account #610000.10.450.51750.000.00.000.00.051 to Water Enterprise Fund, Contractual Services, Account #610000.10.450.52000.0000.00.000.00.52 for the purpose of funding various water projects related to the Water Enterprise Fund.**

10. Special Budgetary Transfer Request (2014-SBT-44) from the Department of Public Works

**MOTION: On a motion by Councilor Cox, seconded by Councilor Fonvielle, the City Council voted 6 in favor, 0 opposed, 3 (McGeary, Hardy, Whynott) absent, to approve Special Budgetary Transfer 2014-SBT-44 for \$41,560.33 from Water Enterprise Fund, Employee Health Insurance, Account #610000.10.450.51750.000.00.000.00.051 to Water Enterprise Fund, Maintenance Expenses, Account #610000.10.450.52460.0000.00.000.00.52 for the purpose of funding a contract change order with Veolia Water North America NE LLC for the filtration system.**

11. *Amendment of Supplemental Appropriation-Budgetary Request (2014-SA-66) from DPW (Sewer Enterprise Fund)*

**MOTION: On a motion by Councilor Cox, seconded by Councilor Fonvielle, the City Council voted 6 in favor, 0 opposed, 3 (McGeary, Hardy, Whynott) absent, to permit the amendment of Supplemental Appropriation 2014-SA-66 in the amount of \$450,000 (Four Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars) from the Sewer Enterprise Fund, Retained Earnings ("Free Cash"), Account #600000.10.000.35900.0000.00.000.00.000 to Sewer Enterprise Fund, Reserved for Capital Outlay, Account #600000.10.440.58000.0000.00.000.00.058 for the purpose of a Department of Environmental Protection required dumping area, sewer pipe replacement and sewer appurtenances, vactor pad, Pump Station Upgrades and a Pump Station generator. The original Supplemental Appropriation was approved by the City Council on May 13, 2014.**

\* \* \* End B&F Unanimous Consent Agenda \* \* \*

#### **Ordinances & Administration: June 2, 2014**

There were no matters for Council action from this meeting.

#### **Planning & Development: June 4, 2014**

**COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:** On a motion by Councilor LeBlanc, seconded by Councilor Verga, the Planning & Development Committee voted 2 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 (Lundberg) absent, to recommend that the City Council approve a Special Events Application with the previous conditions to hold the Downtown Block Party Series on July 19, 2014, August 16, 2014 and September 20, 2014.

#### **DISCUSSION:**

**Ms. Lowe** noted that the application was approved for the block parties based upon the previous 2013 conditions but those conditions were amended by the Special Event Advisory Committee earlier this spring and then read the conditions for 2014 to the Council to be incorporated into the Council's vote.

**MOTION:** On a motion by Councilor Verga, seconded by Councilor Cox, the City Council voted 6 in favor, 0 opposed, 3 (McGeary, Hardy, Whynott) absent, to approve a Special Events Application with the following conditions to hold the Downtown Block Party Series on Saturday, July 19, 2014; Saturday, August 16, 2014; and Saturday, September 20, 2014 in order to temporarily close Main Street from the open driveway of Bank Gloucester to Washington Street for each date for three separate occasions between the hours of 5:00 p.m. and 11 p.m.:

1. No vendor/merchant set ups on the sidewalk blocking entrance ways to retail or residential units, hydrants, crosswalks, or handicap ramps.
2. All vendor set ups in the street are to allow for no less than a 10 foot unobstructed, drivable area along the entire route - slightly wider at the curve of Palazola's Sporting Goods- to maintain adequate access for emergency vehicles. Failure to provide a 10 foot unobstructed margin of drivable area may necessitate the removal or relocation of the vendor/merchant at the discretion of the Fire Department, the Police Department, or the Block Party Committee.
3. The organizers shall allow the Fire Department drive-through access with the fire engine at the convenience of the Fire Department.
4. Any restaurant/merchant set up of tables and chairs, tents, or area enclosures should extend into the street no further than the lines painted on the street for vehicular parking.
5. That all of the side streets – Short, Porter, Center, and Hancock Streets – shall not be blocked by vendors, food establishments, tables, chairs, enclosures, equipment, or vehicles, so emergency vehicles may enter and exit Main Street as needed.
6. Vendor/merchants shall be responsible for their own trash removal.
7. Signs indicating the location of comfort stations shall be the responsibility of the Committee.
8. Plumbing Codes and regulations shall be adhered to regarding use of restaurant bathroom facilities.
9. Special lighting and electrical requirements necessitate approval of the Inspector of Buildings and the Electrical Inspector.
10. The closure of the street at the intersection of Main and Short, Porter, Center, and Hancock Streets be by means of sawhorses or the like, as directed by the Gloucester Police Department.
11. It is the responsibility of the Committee to procure any other necessary Federal, State, and local permits and approvals associated with this event.
12. That the Committee makes reasonable notification to all residents and merchants along the route that will be affected by the closure.
13. Restaurants or vendors wishing to serve food outside must notify the Board of Health 7 (seven) days in advance for approval and must obtain any necessary approval of event organizers.
14. Conditions imposed by the Gloucester Liquor Licensing Board shall also apply and shall become incorporated herein.
15. All other applicable laws, City ordinances, and/or regulations are in full force including: Ordinances regarding blocking of sidewalks; the Police Department will have regulation over this and will ask people to move their tables and chairs, in the interest of public safety.
16. Applicant shall also adhere to any requirements expressed by the Special Event Advisory Committee including that:
  - (a) Written permission is obtained from the Assistant Public Works Director to close the public parking lot behind the Rogers Street entrance to the Dog Bar Restaurant for musical performances,
  - (b) including that a letter from the office of the Mayor be provided assuring that the event is covered by the City of Gloucester Insurance, and (c) this approval is based on the Gloucester Block Party 2014 Street Plan submitted to the Council and on file.

**Scheduled Public Hearings:**

1. PH2014-040: Application for License of Flammable & Combustible Liquids, Flammable Gases & Solids  
Re: 73 Essex Avenue

This public hearing is opened at 8:30 p.m.

Those speaking in favor:

**John Wright**, Energy North Group, 73 Essex Avenue, said he is applying for the flammable liquids and gases permit. He asked for the Council's approval.

**Those speaking in opposition: None.**

**Communications: None.**

**Councilor Questions:**

**Acting Council President Theken** said this is just an ownership change as new owners which Mr. Wright confirmed.

**This public hearing is closed at 8:31 p.m.**

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On motion by Councilor Lundberg, seconded by Councilor Verga, the Planning & Development Committee voted 2 in favor, 0 opposed 1 (LeBlanc) absent, to recommend that the City Council grant Energy North Inc. a License of Flammable and Combustible Liquids, Flammable Gases and Solids for the property at 73 Essex Avenue for the storage of 26,000 gallons of Combustible Liquids. Said applicant shall pay for the cost of advertising for public hearing and postage for legal notices to all abutters in accordance with Sec. 8-1 of the Code of Ordinances.

**DISCUSSION: None.**

**MOTION: On motion by Councilor Verga, seconded by Councilor LeBlanc, the City Council voted by ROLL Call 6 in favor, 0 opposed, 3 (McGeary, Hardy, Whynot) absent, to grant Energy North Inc. a License of Flammable and Combustible Liquids, Flammable Gases and Solids for the property at 73 Essex Avenue for the storage of 26,000 gallons of Combustible Liquids.**

### **3. PH2014-042: Public Hearing on FY15 Proposed Budget**

**This public hearing is opened at 8:32 p.m.**

**Councilor Cox** announced that FY15 Budget Meeting draft minutes for meetings #1, #2, #3 and #6 all had typographical errors in their header which read "FY14 Budget Meeting #X" and all three sets of minutes have been corrected to now read, "FY15 Budget Meeting #X."

**Those speaking in favor:**

**Acting Mayor Paul McGeary** said that he represents the Administration and proposed a \$97 million budget for FY15. The Administration and the Council has gone through the budget line by line, and tomorrow the B&F Committee will review it all again and make recommendations to the Council for passage of the budget next week. He said it is a balanced budget as required by law which funds all of the city services at a level service provision for all city departments.

**Joan Kimberly**, 546 Washington Street, asked about the \$1.4 million increase for the Fire Department, and noted the firefighters are being guaranteed a 56 hour work week which is an extra 16 hours above an average work week paying 16 hours for 24 hours of work. She said this raises the question why wouldn't the department hire more firemen. She asked if another Animal Control Officer is added would they also have a vehicle and would it be part of the budget. **Fire Chief Eric Smith** said that Police and Fire are exempt under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) for overtime until they hit 53 hours in a work week. If an employee gets to 56 hours they would be due time and a half for that that 3 hour period, but if they take a shift off for sick or personal leave or vacation then that requirement drops off, he noted. He said there are different rules under federal law as to how overtime be handled.

**Jonathan Pope**, School Committee Chair, 16 Marble Street, thanked the B&F Committee for their hard work and admitted there wasn't enough money to go around. He said the goal this year was to preserve for the school district what they had. They were only able to achieve that by freezing the budget last year (FY14) and getting a bit of unexpected money from the state from the circuit breaker and rolling it into FY15. They are not level service funded, really, but the money rolled forward to put them in the position to have to do that again. He said the budget will have to freeze the budget the day after it is passed to rebuild the district's reserves. One in 68 eight year olds is diagnosed within the autism spectrum, he pointed out. That is a 30 percent increase in two years. By law the district must provide education for all children. The district has depleted its reserves in special needs in order to not have any cuts. If a needful child enters the system, it will be very costly he warned. The Administration and the Schools need to get together to figure out how to truly level fund all the departments, not just the schools. Through Free Cash there is a cycle of scrimping and saving and then funding, he observed. He said the district cut \$300,000 out of the budget before presenting it to the Council. There needs to be a better way found, he pointed out. There has to be good city services, but the school district has this issue that has to be paid for and ultimately the district doesn't have the money, he concluded.

**Kathy Clancy**, 78 High Popples Road, School Committee, Chair of the Budget & Finance Sub-Committee, said that the city's children are special as are their teachers. She then read a letter from Janet Donovan, a Gloucester teacher for 27 years:

"My name is Janet Donovan, and I am sorry I cannot attend the public hearing this evening.

I am hoping that my statement can be read as part of the public record. Not only am I a proud Gloucester High School graduate of the class of 1980 but I am also a proud Gloucester School teacher and have been one now for 27 years. Most recently I was part of a very rewarding process by being part of the Math Exploratory Committee.

Below is a summary of the work that was done.

- The curricula review process began with a survey conducted in January
- The results of the on-line survey were shared by Dr. Safier and Greg Bach
- Results of the survey indicated that the majority of teachers felt our core curriculum was not meeting the expectations outlined in the Common Core
- As a result a significant amount of supplementation was necessary
- In February a 19 member Exploratory Committee was formed with representation for all schools; general and special education teachers
- The Committee identified important criteria based on the needs of the district and suggestions outlined by the MA Department of Education
- Based on the criteria, representatives from two programs were invited to conduct presentations and pilot materials were given to grade level committee reps
- Committee members tried out lessons from the two programs with their students
- We visited several sites which currently use either of the two programs; lessons were observed, the committee met with teachers and administrators and asked questions
- The Committee met for a full day to debrief, share learning's, insights and discuss questions
- A "Fist to Five" process was used to reach consensus and make a unanimous recommendation to Greg Bach.
- An additional full day release addressed ideas and suggestions about how best to support colleagues, integrate with our new standards-based report card and plan professional development for the next two years
- Teacher Leadership Positions will help support a consistent implementation across all schools
- This committee presented its work to the entire elementary staff on June 3<sup>rd</sup>'s early release day

I hope that you will provide the schools with adequate funding to keep our students moving forward especially in the important and critical area of mathematics. Thank you."

**Ms. Clancy** pointed out this letter helps to give a voice to the city's teachers who are being asked to undertake 21 initiatives in addition to the district's core curriculum. She asked for full budget funding for the schools.

**Acting Council President Theken** noted that some special needs children's education is being paid by Gloucester because that is their last known address. She asked how many children there are in that situation that the city pays for. **Mr. Pope** said he didn't have that information but would get that for the Councilor to which **Hans Baumhauer**, Director of Finance & Operations for the Gloucester Public Schools said transportation for these students is \$1 million. **Acting Council President Theken** asked if there is something the city can do about such an untenable situation. **Mr. Pope** noted that circuit breaker from the state is for Special Education which pays 75 percent after the first \$42,000. The city can try to get the state to do something he said and pointed out that transportation is not included which is substantial. He said some kids cost up to \$100 per day which is not reimbursable. **Acting Council President Theken** said it is not fair to pay for children whose parents haven't been residents for years.

**Acting Council President Theken** asked about the status of whether the school district is paying for the St. Ann's School lease. **Mr. Pope** said that it is the district's contention it should not come from their budget. It is still under discussion with the Administration, he noted. **Acting Mayor McGeary** said it is under serious discussion and a way will be found to accommodate the district.

**Those speaking in opposition: None.**

**Communications:**

**Ms. Lowe** noted the letter read by Ms. Clancy from **Janet Donovan** has been received; a letter from **Peter Dolan**, 150 Mt. Pleasant avenue addressed various educational issues urging the Council to consider the importance of the city's public education system which supports the social and economic vitality of the city; **Jason Grow**, Marble Road, noted the shortchanging of the school district budget and urged that the school district's budget be made whole.

**This public hearing is closed at 8:56 p.m.**

**For Council Vote:**

- 1. CC2014-023 (Verga/LeBlanc) Request City Council to vote to request that the MassDOT Highway Division approve installation of “Blind Person” traffic sign on Essex Avenue & LePage Lane**

**Councilor Verga** explained that he received a call from the person affected that is visually impaired. As this is a state road this needs to be voted by the Council and a letter which includes the vote be forward to the Mass. Department of Transportation.

**MOTION: On a motion by Councilor Verga, seconded by Councilor LeBlanc, the City Council voted 6 in favor, 0 opposed, 3 (McGeary, Hardy, Whynott) absent, that it requests the MassDOT Highway Division approve installation of a “Blind Person” traffic sign on Essex Avenue (Route 133) in a westerly direction near the intersection of Essex Avenue and LePage Lane through a letter to be addressed to the State Traffic Engineer.**

**Acting Council President Theken** noted that the City Clerk would compose and forward the letter on behalf of the Council.

**Unfinished Business: None.**

**Individual Councilor’s Discussion including Reports by Appointed Councilors to Committees: None.**

**Councilors’ Requests to the Mayor:**

**Councilor Fonvielle** said the Magnolia Fire Station opens July 1, and on July 5 there will be barbecue starting at 11 a.m. celebrating its opening.

**Councilor LeBlanc** asked about the Centennial Avenue Bridge and that it is in need of emergency repair as the roadway is worn off with boards not attached to anything and expressed his concern and asked that the Administration seek out the responsible state department to obviate the situation. He said it is an emergency issue. **Acting Council President Theken** asked that an email be sent to the Acting Mayor to request this matter be forwarded to the responsible state agency.

**Councilor Lundberg** said as the Council considers what is the right answer for the School Department budget he noted he and several Councilors participated in the awards night and high school graduation which affirms their admiration for what the schools do and the level of excellence achieved by the city’s students.

**Acting Council President Theken** said that the B&F Committee has done a remarkable job in reviewing the budget. She pointed out that there is a need to address the issue of paying for children with special needs whose last known address was Gloucester and is very costly. She said there must be a way to highlight this plight to the state and urged a way will be found to have the state take notice and legislate some relief for cities and towns’ financial burden. It is millions of dollars.

**A motion was made, seconded and voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 9:04 p.m.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Dana C. Jorgensson  
Clerk of Committees**

**DOCUMENTS/ITEMS SUBMITTED AT MEETING:**

- Information packet and questions for the Board of Health on Fluoridation of the city’s water supply, from Mike Foley, 376 Essex Avenue**