

**SPECIAL GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL MEETING**

Saturday, December 19, 2015 – 10:00 a.m.

Kyrouz Auditorium – City Hall

**-MINUTES-**

**Present:** Vice Chair, Councilor Whynott; Councilor Joseph Ciolino; Councilor Greg Verga; Councilor William Fonvielle; Councilor Robert Stewart; Councilor Paul Lundberg; Councilor Steven LeBlanc

**Absent:** Council President Paul McGeary; Councilor Melissa Cox

**Also Present:** Mayor Sefatia Theken; City Clerk Linda T. Lowe; Assistant City Clerk, Joanne Senos; Clerk of Committees Dana Jorgensson

**Former Mayors:** Bruce Tobey; John Bell; and Caroline Kirk

**Former City Councilors:** John “Gus” Foote; Everett Brown; Dale Pope; John Bjorlie; Jane Porter; Lee Swekla, widow of Al Swekla

**Honored Guests:** State Senator Bruce Tarr; Barry Weiner; Carolyn Stewart; and Lee Swekla, widow of Al Swekla

**Councilors-Elect:** Val Gilman; Sean Nolan; Jamie O’Hara

**Former Clerk of Committees:** Anne Marchand

The meeting commenced at 10:05 p.m. The Council Vice President announced that this meeting is recorded by audio in accordance with state Open Meeting Law.

Flag Salute & Moment of Silence.

*Awarding of the First Al Khambaty Extraordinary Performance/Service Award  
to Former Long-term City Councilor Abdullah “Al” Khambaty*

*Accepting the award on behalf of the Khambaty Family is Mrs. Lynn Khambaty*

**Council Vice President Robert Whynott** related the story of his first meeting with Abdullah Khambaty in 1975 when he was on the City Charter Commission and their both being elected to the City Council and highlighted several outstanding accomplishments of Mr. Khambaty such as being responsible for bringing Varian to the city and ensuring the Goose Cove Reservoir was sound and able to provide the city with water for decades in the future. He recalled that in 1982 Mr. Khambaty was instrumental in instituting a Proposition 2½ override and tax classification, as well as a prime mover in the city’s acquisition of Pole’s Hill. He pointed out that Mr. Khambaty worked to close the Magnolia dump and helped to create what the city knows as Magnolia Woods, as well as his work with the Cape Ann Y.M.C.A. He cited Mr. Khambaty’s tenure on the School Committee and difficult district issues that were dealt with. He said he considered Mr. Khambaty a “superstar” of public service.

**Councilor Ciolino** said it was an honor to have worked with Mr. Khambaty. He said Mr. Khambaty was a mentor and teacher to new City Councilors. He recalled when he, Mayor Theken, Al Swekla and Jeff Worthley were new to the Council and how Mr. Khambaty shepherded them through the Council process and how after meetings they’d retire to a local restaurant for coffee and ice cream to review what had just transpired. He said above all else, Mr. Khambaty was a gentleman.

**Former Mayor and City Councilor Bruce Tobey** said that Mr. Khambaty was the ultimate gentlemen -- kind, thoughtful and a good man which he pointed out were largely due to the ultimate gentlewoman who stood by his side, his wife, Lynn. He said Mr. Khambaty was a consummate colleague. He recalled that during his second time as Mayor, he had the support of a man in the background, that of the Council President, Mr. Khambaty, noting that it wasn’t always the case that Mayors and Council Presidents have that kind of relationship. He cited that during his mayoral tenure with Mr. Khambaty’s support the city was made better through fundamental community projects, such as the West Gloucester Sewer Expansion which brought Essex as well as Rockport’s Long Beach which created a regional system, and did the same for Long Beach in Rockport. He noted that Mr. Khambaty played a key role that saw the city entering into a 20 year trash contract; the North Gloucester Sewer Project; Blackburn Industrial Park expansion; and as the first chair of the Harbor Plan effort. He lauded Mr. Khambaty’s intellect, focus and capacity to get basic city services done, and done right. He said that there was no truer a friend than Mr. Khambaty

and he described how his friendship with Mr. Khambaty continued well after they both left public service. Gloucester never had a truer friend and that is Mr. Khambaty's legacy, **Mr. Tobey** said.

**State Sen. Bruce Tarr** described his relationship and friendship with Mr. Khambaty and working through with him complex issues such as the city's waterfront development. He said someone who came from a distant place knew the character of this place so well. He pointed out that Mr. Khambaty gave his all to the people he cared about so much. He was a remarkable man, good friend and someone whose life and legacy reminds them all with busy lives they still have a duty to each other. This award will remind them of that duty and true honor in fulfilling it.

**Mayor Sefatia Theken** described for the audience some of her experiences of working with Mr. Khambaty from her Vice Presidency of the Gloucester Fishermen Wives Association to her time as a City Councilor. She pointed out not only did Mr. Khambaty have good ideas but worked to implement them. She pointed out that it was Mr. Khambaty who coined her nickname, "the Godmother." She noted that having Mr. Khambaty's respect was penultimate. She added that she would always keep Mr. Khambaty in her heart.

**Councilor Whynott** described the genesis of the Abdullah Khambaty Extraordinary Performance/Service award which came forward from a Council Order from Councilor Greg Verga and Council President Paul McGeary which the Council voted to institute. He welcomed Lynn Khambaty, Mr. Khambaty's daughter, Miriam and son-in-law Robert. He then presented the first Abudllah Khambaty Extraordinary Performance/Service Award posthumously to Mr. Khambaty which was accepted Mrs. Khambaty.

**Lynn Khambaty** then thanked all assembled for their approbation of her husband and his devotion to his beloved city, to the Council, and Mayor Theken. She described when she and Mr. Khambaty first moved to Magnolia saying that they chose to be in Gloucester because it was an ethnically diverse community that was so welcoming. She said he most loved the work of the city of Gloucester.

**A motion was made, seconded and voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 10:40 a.m.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Dana C. Jorgensson  
Clerk of Committees  
Gloucester City Council**

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