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City of Amesbury
Office of the City Clerk
62 Friend St.
Amesbury, MA 01913

City Council Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, October 22, 2024
City Hall Auditorium- 62 Friend St.
8:00 PM

President Mandeville called the meeting to order at 8:12 PM

Pledge of Allegiance – Councilor Frederique

Roll was called, and present were: Councilor Claudel Frederique, Councilor Pamela Gilday, Councilor Nick Wheeler, Councilor Anthony Rinaldi, Councilor Michael Hogg, Councilor Steve Stanganelli, and President Scott Mandeville

Also present: City Clerk Jennifer Smith, Assistant City Clerk Jess Manning, Chief of Staff Ann Marie Casey, OCED Director Nick Cracknell, Fire Chief, Police Chief Craig Bailey

Councilor Jessica Redfern was absent

Act on Minutes – None

Mayoral Appointments – None

Monthly list of licenses – None

7. Correspondence

· President/Vice President Communications

- Councilor Gilday shared that early voting has begun at City Hall since last Saturday. Election-related info found on City Website on Clerk's Department tab. Also, Abby Lowell has reminded us of a listening session for the Whittier Tech shared campus conversation. More can be learned on Whittier's website.

Communication from Elected Officials, Boards and Commissions

- Greg Noyes (School Committee) shared of a meeting from last night, Schools get funds from general fund & revolving accts. Net increase of roughly 150k dollars or a third of a percent of budget. Student received out of district placement, will cost a lot. (8:18). Transportation costs increasing dramatically. Imposed soft freeze on spending.
- Brock Omohundro (School Committee) advocated for the re-establishment of the Joint Education Committee, drawing attention to the importance of communication between the City Council and Public Schools.

Council Communications, Announcements and Committee Reports

- Councilor Stanganelli: last Budget & Finance meeting was held on 10/15, next meeting is scheduled for 11/19.

- Councilor Gilday: O&A met 10/21, material for tonight is on the agenda. Next meeting is scheduled for 11/18.
- Councilor Hogg: P&D met 10/16, next meeting is scheduled for 11/20
- Councilor Rinaldi: Energy last meeting 10/13.
- Councilor Rinaldi Chamber of Commerce been meeting with Councilors on the Tax Classification.
- Councilor Hogg: Disposition Committee has Trader Allen's truck stop in front of them. Last meeting was not held, as there was not a quorum.
- Councilor Stanganelli: Affordable Housing Trust met 10/16, 6 units pending sale on 132 Market Street. Next meeting is scheduled for 11/15.
- Councilor Frederique: Whittier Task Force Little in the way of updates besides email mentioned earlier.
- Councilor Wheeler: School Building Comm met 9/26, wrapping things up, working through final punch list. Next mtg 11/7. Project is still under budget.

Public Comment-

- Lisette Espinoza (2 Boardman St first fl) Spoke in favor of Question 2, Not enough is spoken of what is best for individual children.
- Maryann Tzima (55 Salisbury) Here in favor of Yes on Question 2. 10 year educator, sees that children are hurt by the MCAS requirement (economically disadvantaged, English as a 2nd language kids, etc).
- Emmy LeBlanc (18 Woodman Way, Newburyport) In favor of Yes on 2, has special ed student, passed the MCAS with modifications, but may not pass without those modifications. Unfair to special needs kids. Should focus on life skills.
- Roger Deschenes (17 Winter St Merrimack) Thanks Clerk's for election work, first line of democracy, urging yes vote on 2 as private citizen. Never designed as graduation requirement, simply an assessment tool for teaching curriculum. Students supposed to take it cold, more of an assessment for teachers.

Council Response to Public Comment

- Councilor Gilday thanked members of the public for coming out and using the podium.
- Councilor Stanganelli thanked those who came out. While the City Council is unable to make a formal resolution, he is personally advocating for Yes on 2.

Second Readings

2024-099 An Ordinance to amend the Cannabis Retail License Limits – Councilors Stanganelli and Rinaldi Sponsors

- President Mandeville read Planning Board positive recommendation
- Councilor Gilday read positive recommendation from O&A
- Councilor Hogg read positive recommendation from P&D

President Mandeville opened the public hearing at 8:48 PM. Seeing no members of the public looking to speak on the matter, President Mandeville closed the public hearing at 8:48 PM.

Councilor Gilday moved to amend the motion to modify percentage to put a maximum of 3 retail establishments. The motion was seconded by Councilor Frederique.

- Councilor Stanganelli: Will be circulating to CC some more legislative context & background. Reiterated comments KP Law consulted multiple times, legal counsel noted that supreme judicial court warns us... reasons this is submitted as zoning ordinance. Separate bill proposed (2024-132) as a "belt and suspenders" approach, concerned with 40% item tied to specific benchmark already in MGL 94G section 3. Clear, fair, objective standard. Not here to advocate for a specific business, just providing a limit.

- Councilor Wheeler: clearly cannot drop below 20% mark, 4 is on the high side in his opinion but concerned with dropping too low.
- Councilor Rinaldi: When process started, zone was to be central business district. Since then, new boundaries have been drawn which expand it. Envisions 4 because there would be room.
- Councilor Stanganelli invoked Rule 6J, which states that all changes must be proposed in writing.
- City Clerk Jennifer Smith clarified rule 6J
- Councilor Stanganelli asked if invoking a rule requires a vote? City Clerk Smith further clarified that invoking a rule does not need a vote, but waiving a rule does.

****President Mandeville called for a brief recess at 9:07 PM, returning at 9:14 PM****

- Councilor Gilday provided proposed amendment in writing.

Councilor Frederique moved to postpone 2024-099 to the City Council meeting on December 10. The motion was seconded by Councilor Stanganelli. The motion passed 6-1 via roll call, with Councilor Hogg voting against.

2024-125 An Order to authorize a transfer of \$50,000.00 from the FY25 Budget Reserve account to the Office of Community & Economic Development Salaries & Wages.

- Councilor Stanganelli provided the positive recommendation from B&F.

Councilor Stanganelli moved to approve 2024-125 as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilor Hogg and passed unanimously via roll call (7-0).

2024-126 An Order to authorize a transfer of \$35,000.00 from Fire Department Personal Services to Fire Department Other Expenses. – **Mayor Sponsor**

- Councilor Stanganelli provided positive recommendation from B&F

Councilor Stanganelli moved to approve 2024-126 as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilor Gilday and passed unanimously via roll call (7-0)

2024-127 An Order to approve payment from the FY25 general fund operating budget for the below listed prior year invoices. - **Mayor Sponsor**

- Councilor Stanganelli provided the positive recommendation from B&F, and clarified that the total amount is correct, but the original version of the bill had it coming from an incorrect account.

Councilor Stanganelli moved to substitute the revised version of 2024-127. The motion was seconded by Councilor Hogg and passed via roll call vote 6-0-1 with an abstention by Councilor Gilday

Councilor Wheeler moved to approve 2024-127 as revised. The motion was seconded by Councilor Hogg and passed unanimously via roll call (7-0).

2024-128 An Order to authorize the Mayor to accept and expend a grant in the amount of \$29,640.00 from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety and Security, Office of Grants and Research FY25 Municipal Road Safety (MRS) Grant Program.- **Mayor Sponsor**

- Councilor Stanganelli provided the positive recommendation from B&F
- Chief Bailey spoke in support of 2024-128.

Councilor Stanganelli moved to approve 2024-128 as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilor Frederique and passed unanimously via roll call (7-0)

2024-129 An Order to authorize the Mayor to accept and expend a grant from the Massachusetts Cultural Council for FY 2025.- **Mayor Sponsor**

- Councilor Stanganelli provided positive recommendation from B&F

Councilor Gilday moved to approve 2024-129 as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilor Stanganelli and passed unanimously via roll call (7-0)

2024-130 An Order to authorize the Mayor to accept and expend, for its fifth year, a Drug Free Communities Support Program Grant from the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDCP).- **Mayor Sponsor**

- Councilor Stanganelli provided positive recommendation from B&F

Councilor Stanganelli moved to approve 2024-130 as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilor Gilday and passed unanimously via roll call (7-0).

2024-131 An Order to authorize the Mayor to accept and expend a grant from the Massachusetts Seaport Economic Council for FY 2024.- **Mayor Sponsor**

- Councilor Stanganelli provided positive recommendation from B&F
- Wheeler: Asked Chief something (9:35) and Do we have to open the boat ramp if we receive this grant? NO

Councilor Gilday moved to approve 2024-131 as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilor Hogg and passed unanimously via roll call (7-0).

2024-132 An Ordinance to amend Chapter 334 Licenses and Permits with the municipal code to allow for licensing of adult cannabis retailers within the Retail Marijuana Overlay District.

- Councilor Gilday shared that O&A returned 2024-132 to the full City Council with a positive recommendation with 3 edits suggested.
- Councilor Stanganelli: This bill is not required according to KP Law but filed out of an abundance of caution. Would highly recommend that this be postponed.
-

Councilor Wheeler moved to continue 2024-132 to the City Council meeting on December 10. The motion was seconded by Councilor Stanganelli and passed unanimously (7-0).

First Readings

2024-133 An Order authorizing the Mayor to dispose of, by sale or lease, a portion or portions of City-owned property and any structures thereon consisting of approximately .18 acres (8,000 SF+/-) located at **9 School Street** (Parcel 52-199, formerly the "Ordway School") as shown on Exhibit 1, and approximately .07 acres (3,000 SF+/-) located at **5 School Street** (Parcel 52-202, formerly the "Orlando S. Bailey House") as shown on Exhibit 2.-**Mayor Sponsor**

Councilor Wheeler moved to refer 2024-133 to Ordinance & Administration, Planning & Development, Library Board of Trustees, Historical Commission, and the Planning Board, and set a second hearing & public hearing for 11/26 . The motion was seconded by Councilor Hogg and passed unanimously (7-0).

Councilor Stanganelli moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:47 PM. The motion was seconded by Councilor Wheeler and passed unanimously (7-0).

Respectfully submitted,

Jess Manning

Addendum N

Public Comment / Public Hearing Speaker's Request Form

In order to be recognized to speak on any matter you must complete all sections of this form.

Name: Lisette H. Espinoza

Address: 2 BOARDMAN ST. 1ST Floor

City: Amesbury State MA Zip 01913

Home Phone (PH) 518-6060

Matter(s) on which you would like to speak: Support Resolution on Question #2
OF Nov. 5 2024 BALLOT

Please disclose any relationship as well as any direct or indirect financial interest you or a family member, may have with this matter:

N/A

I have read and understand the rules of decorum printed on the reverse of this form.

Signature: Lisette H. Espinoza Date: 10/22/2024

CITY OF AMESBURY RESOLUTION:

Calling for the Passage of Question 2 to replace the High School Requirement of MCAS

CALL: For city council members of the City of Amesbury for the passage of Question 2 to replace the MCAS graduation requirement.

STATEMENT AND JUSTIFICATIONS OF RESOLUTION:

To acknowledge access to a high-quality, publicly funded education is a guaranteed right written into the Massachusetts Constitution.

To recognize that the goal of public education in MA is to instruct students essential, foundational skills such as reading, writing and arithmetic, and to develop critical thinkers, engaged citizens and lifelong learners.

To also recognize that public education in MA is the bedrock of the Commonwealth's world-class public education system, which is strong, statewide standards that are uniform throughout our public schools.

Hence, we have concluded that the MCAS significantly limits its ability to accurately and effectively measure whether students are meeting the Commonwealth's standards and developing the skills they need to thrive after high school.

Therefore, we highlight the fact that the most effective measures of whether students are meeting our strong, statewide standards and developing the skills they need to succeed in college, the workforce and beyond are educator-led assessments such as projects, papers, tests, and group activities that are conducted throughout the school year.

And to recognize that the punitive use of MCAS as a high school graduation requirement has restricted curriculum and shifted the focus of education in our public schools toward meeting a test score instead of fostering an environment of creativity, critical thinking and real teaching and learning that helps students realize their full potential.

And, due to informed by pediatricians, researchers and school counselors who have warned of the severe impact of high stakes testing like the MCAS graduation requirement on students' mental health and well-being.

This data leads to the understanding that standardized test requirements notoriously stack the deck against students of color, ESL students, and those with learning disabilities.

And to also understand that using MCAS testing as a high school graduation requirement has prevented or delayed thousands of students from earning a diploma, thereby interrupting or derailing education or career plans, with especially harmful impacts on students of color, low-income students, students with disabilities and students for whom English is their second language.

Please urge by the City of Amesbury Council to review and discuss this proposed resolution, as an effort to resolve to the City of Amesbury to support passage of Question 2 to replace the

MCAS graduation requirement and require instead that districts certify that students have satisfactorily completed coursework demonstrating mastery of the skills and knowledge required by the Commonwealth's strong, statewide standards in order to graduate.

Thank you,

Ms. Lisette Helena Espinoza

Resident and homeowner in City of Amesbury

Local college educator

lhaespinoza@gmail.com

Contact: 978-518-6060

Addendum N

Public Comment / Public Hearing Speaker's Request Form

In order to be recognized to speak on any matter you must complete all sections of this form.

Name: MARY ANN D'ENTENNA

Address: 55 MUDHOLE ROAD

City: SAUSBURY State MA Zip 01952

Home Phone (978) 360-5968

Matter(s) on which you would like to speak: Question 2

Please disclose any relationship as well as any direct or indirect financial interest you or a family member, may have with this matter:

I have read and understand the rules of decorum printed on the reverse of this form.

Signature: Mary Ann D'Entenna Date: 10/22/21

Addendum N

Public Comment / Public Hearing Speaker's Request Form

In order to be recognized to speak on any matter you must complete all sections of this form.

Name: Amy LeBlanc

Address: 18 Woodman Way

City: Newburyport State MA Zip 01950

Home Phone (978-872-8574)

Matter(s) on which you would like to speak: MCAS Question 2

Please disclose any relationship as well as any direct or indirect financial interest you or a family member, may have with this matter:

V/A

I have read and understand the rules of decorum printed on the reverse of this form.

Signature: Amy E. LeBlanc Date: 10/22/24

Addendum N

Public Comment / Public Hearing Speaker's Request Form

In order to be recognized to speak on any matter you must complete all sections of this form.

Name:

ROGER DESCHENES

Address:

17 WINTER ST APT 2

City:

MERRIMAC

State

MA

Zip

01860

Home Phone ()

Matter(s) on which you would like to speak:

BALLOT Question 2

Please disclose any relationship as well as any direct or indirect financial interest you or a family member, may have with this matter:

I have read and understand the rules of decorum printed on the reverse of this form.

Signature:

Date:

Addendum N

Public Comment / Public Hearing Speaker's Request Form

In order to be recognized to speak on any matter you must complete all sections of this form.

Name: Brock Omohundro

Address: 198 Market St

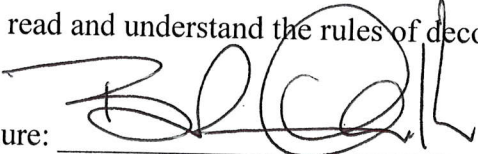
City: Amesbury State MA Zip 01913

Home Phone (508) 268-0577

Matter(s) on which you would like to speak: Joint City Council and School Committee
Sub Committee

Please disclose any relationship as well as any direct or indirect financial interest you or a family member, may have with this matter:

I have read and understand the rules of decorum printed on the reverse of this form.

Signature:  Date: 10/22/24

Addendum N

Public Comment / Public Hearing Speaker's Request Form

In order to be recognized to speak on any matter you must complete all sections of this form.

Name: Greg Noyes

Address: 8 clarks Rd

City: Amesbury State MA Zip 01913

Home Phone (978) 388-4579

Matter(s) on which you would like to speak: School budget

Please disclose any relationship as well as any direct or indirect financial interest you or a family member, may have with this matter:

I am a taxpayer

I have read and understand the rules of decorum printed on the reverse of this form.

Signature: Gregory L Noyes Date: 10/22/24