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City of Amesbury
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City Council Meeting Minutes

**Tuesday, March 10, 2026
7:00 PM**

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 PM by President Jessica Redfern.

Councilor Pamela Gilday led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll call was taken, and present were Councilor Pam Gilday, Councilor Amanda Haggstrom, Councilor Michael Hogg, Councilor Kelly Sullivan, Councilor Maryann Welch, Councilor Claudel Frederique, and President Jessica Redfern.
Councilor Mandeville was absent.

Councilor Steven Stanganelli joined the meeting at 7:04 PM.

Act on Minutes- None

Mayoral Appointments

2026-062 Reappointment of Lyndsey Haight to the position of member of the Amesbury Housing Authority for a term to expire December 31, 2028

2026-063 Reappointment of Ralph Noon to the position of member of the Amesbury Housing Authority for a term to expire December 31, 2029

Councilor Haggstrom offered a motion to approve 2026-062 and 2026-063 as presented. Councilor Hogg seconded, and the motion passed unanimously, 8-0.

2026-064 Reappointment of Thomas Champion to the position of member of the Amesbury Trustees of the War Memorials for a term to expire February 28, 2029

- President Redfern noted a memo received asking to waive the residency requirement.
- Councilor Gilday shared her support for waiving the residency requirement.
- Councilor Welch questioned if this is the final vacancy to fill for the Trustees of War Memorials. Chief of Staff Pam Tobey answered that there is one more vacancy with an applicant.

Councilor Sullivan offered a motion to waive the resident provision of Section 9-5 Subset A of the city charter. Councilor Gilday seconded, and the motion passed unanimously, 8-0.

Councilor Gilday offered a motion to approve 2026-064 as presented. Councilor Hogg seconded, and the motion passed unanimously, 8-0.

Monthly list of licenses –March

Councilor Haggstrom offered a motion to approve the March list of licenses. Councilor Welch seconded, and the motion passed unanimously, 8-0.

Correspondence

-President/Vice President Communications

- Councilor Haggstrom shared a reminder from the Cashman PTO about the annual dance on Friday, April 10th and the need for volunteers.

-Communication from Elected Officials, Boards and Commissions

None

Council Communications, Announcements and Committee Reports

- Councilor Frederique spoke against the idea of city versus schools when it comes to the budget.
- Councilor Sullivan mentioned contacting representatives about fully funding Student Opportunity Act.
- Councilor Stanganelli spoke to the need for cameras on buses.
- Councilor Hogg shared that the Disposition Committee has not met recently.
- Councilor Hogg shared that the Energy Committee met on March 3rd and much of the time was spent listening to the energy manager of the city and learning about the Community Aggregation Program. Councilor Hogg also shared that the next meeting is the first Tuesday in April at 5:00 PM.
- Councilor Sullivan shared that she will attend her first meeting with the Housing Trust the following day.
- President Redfern shared there is an opening on the Open Space Natural Resources and Trails Committee and that three projects were discussed: an invasives removal project at Woodsom, improvements to Batchelder Park, and improvements to Deer Island Park.

Public Comment

- President Redfern read an email from Ben Babcock, 56 Cedar Street, regarding the city's free cash (see attached).
- Joe Finn, 412 Main Street, spoke against 2026-029.

Council Response to Public Comment

- Councilor Haggstrom mentioned parents pulling students out of Amesbury public schools and the disrepair of the buildings.
- Councilor Gilday clarified that public hearings do not occur with every bill.
- Councilor Stanganelli shared support for email comments

Second Readings

Councilor Gilday offered a motion to waive the rules and take 2026-029 out of order. Councilor Hogg seconded, and the motion passed 7-1, Councilor Stanganelli opposed.

2026-029 An Order to appropriate \$100,000 from Free Cash- Mayor Sponsor

- President Redfern reported the Budget and Finance Committee voted to return 2026-029 to the full City Council with no recommendation.

- Mayor Gove gave some background to the bill and suggested a reduction from \$100,000 to \$55,000.
- Councilor Gilday noted that this background is good context for the residents.
- Councilor Frederique asked about the \$55k allocation. Mayor Gove shared that everything was cut in half and that the budget for furniture will be less than half of the original allocation.
- Councilor Sullivan asked about the cost to rehabilitate the old City Hall building. Mayor Gove replied that it would have been over \$35 million.
- Councilor Haggstrom spoke to the need for shutters in the clerk's office.
- Councilor Welch clarified that it is not allowed to bring old furniture to a new school building.
- Councilor Stanganelli asked about the difference between repair items and improvement items. Mayor Gove replied that free cash does not have a restriction regarding the difference with its use.
- Councilor Sullivan asked about how much of the free cash will be used for the old City Hall Building to get it ready for the recreation department. Mayor Gove answered that for the destruction of records it will be \$5,000.

Councilor Gilday offered a motion to accept 2026-029 with the amended number of \$55,000. Councilor Haggstrom seconded. After a roll call vote, the motion passed 6-2, Councilors Stanganelli and Frederique opposed.

2026-008 An Order to adopt Rules and Procedures for the Fifteenth Session of the Amesbury City Council

- Councilor Gilday read the positive recommendation from the Ordinance and Administration Committee with revisions (highlighted in the 026-008 REVISED City Council Rules O&A Revisions .doc (and .pdf) file and labeled 2.18.2026 O&A Recommended Revisions – V1 on the document's title page)
- Councilors engaged in discussion about when the vote for this bill is to take place.

Councilor Haggstrom offered a motion to continue 2026-008 to the next scheduled meeting on March 24, 2026. Councilor Hogg seconded, and the motion passed unanimously, 8-0.

Public Hearings

None

First Readings

2026-065 An Order to authorize the Mayor to accept and expend a FY26 Legislative Earmark Grant Award from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in the amount of \$20,000 for maintenance and improvements to a pocket park in the City of Amesbury.- **Mayor Sponsor**

- Councilor Haggstrom read the summary.

Councilor Frederique offered a motion to refer 2026-065 to the Budget and Finance Committee with a second reading on March 24, 2026. Councilor Sullivan seconded, and the motion passed unanimously, 8-0.

2026-066 An Order to authorize transfers from the Budget Reserve account of \$35,000 to the Revaluation Services account and \$40,000 the Legal Consultant Services account.-**Mayor Sponsor**

- Councilor Haggstrom read the summary.

Councilor Frederique offered a motion to refer 2026-066 to the Budget and Finance Committee with a second reading on March 24, 2026. Councilor Welch seconded, and the motion passed unanimously, 8-0.

2026-067 An Order to authorize the Mayor to accept and expend Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association (MIIA) Wellness Public Safety Grant in the amount to of \$14,858.- **Mayor Sponsor**

- Councilor Haggstrom read the summary.

Councilor Frederique offered a motion to refer 2026-067 to the Budget and Finance Committee with a second reading on March 24, 2026. Councilor Hogg seconded, and the motion passed unanimously, 8-0.

2026-068 An Order to amend the Amesbury Zoning Ordinance by repealing and replacing Section XI.K.3, Accessory Dwelling Units.-**Mayor Sponsor**

- Councilor Haggstrom read the summary.

Councilor Haggstrom offered a motion to refer 2026-068 to the Ordinance and Administration Committee and the Planning Board with a second reading and public hearing on April 14, 2026. Councilor Sullivan seconded.

- Councilors engaged in brief discussion regarding the date of the second reading and public hearing.

The motion passed unanimously, 8-0.

Adjourn

Councilor Haggstrom offered a motion to adjourn at 8:27 PM. Councilor Sullivan seconded, and the motion passed unanimously, 8-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Jasmine Looney

March 18, 2026