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

City Council Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, March 25, 2025
City Hall Auditorium- 62 Friend St.
7:00 PM

President Mandeville called the meeting to order at 7:10 PM

Pledge of Allegiance – Councilor Rinaldi

Roll was called, and present were: Councilor Anthony Rinaldi, Councilor Steve Stanganelli, Councilor Nick Wheeler, Councilor Claudel Frederique, Councilor Pamela Gilday, Councilor Amanda Haggstrom, Councilor Michael Hogg, Councilor Jessica Redfern, 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, Planning Director Nipun Jain, Police Chief Craig Bailey, Fire Chief James Nolan.

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Act on Minutes – March 11, 2025

**Councilor Stanganelli moved to approve the minutes from March 11, 2025, as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilor Haggstrom and passed unanimously (9-0).**  
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Mayoral Appointments –

2025-035 Reappointment of Amy Vander Els to the position of member of the Amesbury Cultural Council for a term to expire February 29, 2028

Councilor Gilday moved to approve 2025-035. The motion was seconded by Councilor Hogg and passed unanimously (9-0).

2025-036 Appointment of Bonnie Brady to the position of member of the Amesbury Cultural Council for a term to expire February 29, 2028.

- Councilor Wheeler thanked Ms. Brady for applying, noting that she had served previously from 2018-2022.

Councilor Wheeler moved to approve 2025-036. The motion was seconded by Councilor Gilday and passed unanimously (9-0).

****President Mandeville called for a brief recess at 7:16 PM, returning at 7:20 PM.****
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Monthly list of licenses – March

**Councilor Stanganelli moved to approve the license list for March 25, 2025. The motion was seconded by Councilor Gilday and passed unanimously (9-0).**  
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Correspondence

· President/Vice President Communications

- President Mandeville requested a moment of silence to honor the passing of former Mayor Nick Costello, first mayor of Amesbury and longtime State Representative.
- Councilor Gilday reminded residents to be mindful for children and pedestrians as spring approaches and the weather gets warmer.

· Communication from Elected Officials, Boards and Commissions - None

· Council Communications, Announcements and Committee Reports

- B&F (Councilor Stanganelli): The committee met last Tuesday (3/18) and discussed items which will be voted on tonight. Next meeting on April 15.
- O&A (Councilor Gilday): The committee met last Monday (3/17) and discussed 2024-096 with presentation by Nipun Jain. Their next meeting will be on April 14.
- P&D (Councilor Haggstrom): The committee met last Wednesday (3/19) and discussed 2024-096. Next meeting April 16.
- Open Space (Councilor Redfern): Previous meeting spent discussing recommendations on how to best maintain properties. Also discussed town forest trail updates and public use plan for 120 Haverhill Rd.
- Energy (Councilor Rinaldi): reported that they met April 4, nothing new to report, just installed a cloth drop box by Sparhawk School.
- Chamber of Commerce (Councilor Rinaldi): Meeting was usual, discussed various developments going on in the city.
- Disposition (Councilor Hogg): Did not meet in March, nothing currently scheduled for April.
- Affordable Housing Trust (Councilor Stanganelli): Met this past month. Report from OCED shows a balance of \$164,662, pending receipt for sales on Market Street with a potential \$90,000 dollars, CDBG Grant Issues. Next meeting is to be held on April 17 at 4:30PM.
- Whittier Task Force (Councilor Frederique): Nothing to report, will hear on next meeting within the next week or so.
- Joint Ed. Committee (Councilor Stanganelli) The committee had a meeting on March 5 and discussed budget options and AIHS.
- School Building Committee (Councilor Wheeler) No meeting last month, last meeting was on February 11. No set date for next meeting yet. Waiting for final pricing for pipe repairs. Furthermore, Councilor Wheeler attended the Community Preservation Committee's first meeting. Officers appointed include Suzanne Egan as chairperson, Mel Webster as Vice Chair, and Jay Williamson as Clerk. Next meeting is scheduled for April 10.
- Rinaldi said first aggregation report is in, amounts to \$53,000 savings in December, November savings equaled \$34,000.

Public Comment

- Timothy Ryan (15 Wells Avenue) – voiced concerns on acceptable use of social media by elected officials and mentioned possibly-illegal fences in the city.

Council Response

- None

Public Hearings

2024-096 An Ordinance to amend the Amesbury Zoning Ordinance expanding the Renewable Energy Development Overlay District (REDD) – **Mayor Sponsor**

- President Mandeville read the positive recommendation from the Planning Board, with proposed amendments.
- Councilor Gilday provided the positive recommendation from O&A, with amendments proposed by the Planning Board.
- Councilor Haggstrom provided the positive recommendation from P&D, with amendments proposed by the Planning Board.
- Bruce McBrien (80 High Street) President of Lake Gardner Association. Amesbury is one of very few communities with quality, plentiful water. Can sell to other communities. Mr. McBrien stressed

- that a clean water supply cannot take for granted and urged the protection of natural resources.
- Earl Doliber (26 Oak Circle) – Spoke in opposition to the bill as first presented but thanked the Planning Board for their help in presenting an acceptable amended bill.
- Barry Fogel - Attorney on behalf of Lake Attitash Association. Wants to give credit to Nick Cracknell and Nipun Jain for their hard work in amending the original version of 2024-096.
- Nipun Jain gave a presentation on recent developments concerning 2024-096. Solar facilities currently allowed in the REDD. Original Proposal was to expand the district by including an area that happened to be the Water Resource Protection District. Solar facilities are typically afforded special protections but there are nuances affecting how they can be regulated. REDD is 8% of community. State looking to provide communities with a definite framework for regulation. Overlay map not changed regarding size of the REDD, but what expanded is where solar facilities are allowed, as well as the addition of more performance standards.
- Councilor Stanganelli asked Nipun Jain clarifying questions concerning protections for solar energy facilities. Additionally, the proposal mentions 300' measure. How is that measured – from the center point or the perimeter point? Mr. Jain clarified that the measure is from the perimeter point. The Councilor also asked clarifying questions pertaining to future cleanup of the site.
- President Mandeville voiced his opinion that it would be prudent to wait on accepting the redline until it has a chance to be reviewed by the public.
- OCED Director Cracknell shared that the amended bill is substantially different from the original bill. To allow for the public to view the amended bill, he would recommend continuing the bill to the next meeting out of an abundance of caution.
- Councilor Stanganelli stated his belief that it would make sense to continue the proposed bill, but with the accepted redline for clarity.
- City Clerk Jennifer Smith explained that the intent is to clearly state that it should be republished as a continued Public Hearing to avoid the appearance that this is a new issue.
- Councilor Haggstrom asked for clarification on Public Hearing posting, specifically whether it is legally required. OCED Director Cracknell explained that continuing the bill and reposting it strengthens the city's hand in case of possible future litigation. It is not legally required but may be wise out of an abundance of caution.
- Councilor Wheeler asked clarifying questions regarding documentation.
- Councilor Redfern drew attention to the importance of this issue, was looking forward to taking a vote tonight but is in favor of a delay to be safe.
- Councilor Rinaldi would like to ensure that the redline is posted where the public can easily see it.
- Councilor Gilday asked for clarification on where the proposed redline is being posted. City Clerk Smith clarified that it will be posted in both the 2024 Council Bills page and the 2025 Council Bills page.

Councilor Wheeler moved to continue 2024-096 to the regularly scheduled meeting on April 22 and request the City Clerk to republish notice in the newspaper with reference to the recommendation that City Council received. The motion was seconded by Councilor Redfern. Roll was called and the motion passed unanimously (9-0).

Second Readings

****Councilor Haggstrom left the meeting at 8:27 PM****

2025-030 An Order to transfer \$65,000.00 from Police Personal Services to Police Other Expenses.

- Councilor Stanganelli provided the positive recommendation from B&F.
- Councilor Wheeler asked Chief Bailey a question concerning the source of the money to be transferred. Chief Bailey replied that most of the money is due to an unfilled vacancy.

Councilor Stanganelli moved to approve 2025-030 as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilor Rinaldi and passed unanimously via roll call (8-0).

2025-031 An Order to authorize the Mayor to accept and expend a grant in the amount of \$15,000 from the Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association (MIIA) Wellness Grant program to be used by the Amesbury Police Department.

- Councilor Stanganelli provided the positive recommendation from B&F.
- Chief Bailey provided background for the proposed grant.

Councilor Redfern moved to approve 2025-031 as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilor Stanganelli and passed unanimously via roll call (8-0).

2025-032 An Order to authorize a transfer of \$30,000.00 from the FY25 Budget Reserve account to the Legal Consultant Services account.

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

Councilor Stanganelli moved to approve 2025-032 as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilor Hogg and passed unanimously via roll call (8-0).

2025-033 An Order to authorize the Mayor to accept and expend a grant in the amount of \$9,020.00 from the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency to be used by Amesbury Emergency Management Agency, which is managed by the Amesbury Fire Chief.

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

Councilor Wheeler moved to approve 2025-033 as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilor Rinaldi and passed unanimously via roll call (8-0).

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First Readings - None  
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Councilor Stanganelli moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:38 PM. The motion was seconded by Councilor Hogg and passed unanimously (8-0).

Respectfully submitted,

Jess Manning