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By City Clerk at 11:15 am, Sep 09, 2026



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

City Council Special Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, August 5, 2026
Virtual Meeting
6:00 PM

President Jessica Redfern called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM

Roll was called, and present were Councilor Michael Hogg, Councilor Kelly Sullivan, Councilor Maryann Welch, Councilor Pamela Gilday, Councilor Amanada Haggstrom and President Jessica Redfern.

Councilor Steve Stanganelli, Councilor Claudel Frederique and Councilor Scott Mandeville were absent.

Also present: Joseph Muraco and Daniel Combes of National Grid, City Clerk Jennifer E. Smith

Public Hearing:

2026-123 National Grid Pole Hearing WR #30531898 Sparhawk St./Main St.-Underground Conduit

President Redfern opened the public hearing at 6:02 pm

Mr. Combes explained that the petition before the council is for underground conduits that are part of the new substation to be located on Hillside Avenue.

Councilor Stanganelli joined the meeting at 6:04 PM briefly and stated he was having difficulty with his audio.

Mr. Muraco introduced himself and thanked councilors for having this special meeting to address this matter.

Councilor Sullivan asked what is planned for the area currently housing National Grid's substation.

Mr. Muraco stated that the current plan for the older site is to keep the area green and create a more natural slope of the grounds.

Councilor Stanganelli rejoined the meeting.

Councilor Gilday questioned whether this upgrade would prevent future outages like the one that was experienced in parts of the city this July.

Mr. Muraco stated the upgraded substation is an integral piece of that puzzle.

Councilor Haggstrom asked if the city would experience outages during the upgrade.

Mr. Muraco responded that the city would not experience any disruptions during this phase but may have some outages at the end of the two year project during the actual switch over.

Councilor Stanganelli questioned why this matter did not appear on the July agenda.

The Clerk responded that this matter was presented to the DPW close to two years ago. The Director has been addressing concerns with National Grid since then. Approval was granted by DPW in mid-July, but with the absence of the Clerk due to illness and the mandated notification of over 100 abutters, the public hearing requirements could not be met in time for the July 28, 2026 meeting agenda deadline.

Mr. Muraco explained that National Grid had an Open House with residents this summer, and at that time, National Grid announced that construction of the underground conduits would begin in August. To comply with that promise, and to keep the project on time, National Grid requested the Council President call a special meeting of the City Council to hold the statutory public hearing.

Councilor Stanganelli asked what the ramifications would be if this project were not completed by the end of 2027.

Mr. Muraco responded that this is an internal deadline and there would not be any ramification to the city. The only ramification would be the delay to the project.

Councilor Stanganelli further questioned if this particular request includes removing current poles.

Mr. Muraco responded that no poles are being removed, and the underground conduit is the result of the current poles having no more room for additional wiring.

Councilor Stanganelli asked if underground conduits are subject to property tax.

Mr. Muraco responded in the affirmative.

Councilor Sullivan left the meeting.

President Redfern read DPW Director Joseph Buckley's approval letter regarding the proposed underground conduit request.

President Redfern closed the public hearing at 6:33pm

Councilor Gilday offered a motion to approve bill 2026-123 as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilor Haggstrom and passed unanimously (6-0) on a roll call vote.

Councilor Welch offered a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:35 PM. The motion was seconded by Councilor Hogg and passed 5-0-1 on a roll call, with Councilor Stanganelli abstaining.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer E. Smith