



Watertown City Council

Administration Building
149 Main Street
Watertown, MA 02472
Phone: 617-972-6470

CITY COUNCIL MEETING TUESDAY, MAY 14, 2024, 7:00 P.M. RICHARD E. MASTRANGELO COUNCIL CHAMBER ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, 149 MAIN STREET

MINUTES

ACCESS INFORMATION:

- A. This meeting will be held on May 14, 2024 at 7:00 PM in the Richard E. Mastrangelo Council Chamber
- B. The meeting will be televised through WCATV (Watertown Cable Access Television): <http://vodwcatv.org/CablecastPublicSite/?channel=3>
- C. The Public may join the virtual meeting online: <https://watertown-ma.zoom.us/j/92991331344>
- D. Public may join the virtual meeting audio only by phone: (877) 853-5257 or (888) 475-4499 (Toll Free) and enter Webinar ID: 929 9133 1344
- E. Public may comment through email: vpiccirilli@watertown-ma.gov
- F. Please Visit the City Council Website here: <https://www.watertown-ma.gov/350/City-Council>

1. ROLL CALL

Council President Sideris called to order a regular meeting of the City Council at 6:00 p.m. in the Richard E. Mastrangelo Chamber, Administration Building. Those present were Councilors John M. Airasian, Caroline Bays, John G. Gannon, Nicole Gardner, Emily Izzo, Anthony Palomba, Vice President Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., and Council President Mark S. Sideris. Also present were George Proakis City Manager, and Brendan T. McCarthy, Council Clerk.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. PUBLIC FORUM

Clyde Younger – 188 Acton Street – Remarked that he has been active online in expressing his concerns about President Sideris being recognized and honored by outside developers versus the City itself. He then noted that the Council President also serves on the School Committee as well. He remarked that he believes President Sideris has done very significant work in being able to accomplish construction and renovations of almost all schools in town without the use of an override and believes that he should be recognized in the schools for accomplishing that.

Linda Scott – 55 Alcott Street – Remarked on the May 9th Planning Board meeting where they had a lengthy discussion about their rules. She raised her concern with how written public correspondence is handled. A public member has the option of writing an email; if these letters are submitted a few days in advance are forwarded to all board members, but those submitted last minute are just submitted into the record and not read or heard. She continued to express concern with how long it might take for members to get emails to communicate with the public, how emails are shut down during meetings even though their agenda states they can write at that time, the suspicion that written emails aren't being used the same way as in person participation, and general poor handling of public communications.

4. EXAMINATION OF RECORDS OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

A. Minutes from City Council Meeting April 23, 2024

Councilor Piccirilli moved to approve the minutes from City Council Meeting April 23, 2024 and Councilor Bays seconded.

The motion passed unanimously in a Voice Vote.

B. Minutes from Special City Council Meeting April 30, 2024

Councilor Piccirilli moved to approve the minutes from Special City Council Meeting April 30, 2024 and Councilor Bays seconded.

The motion passed unanimously in a Voice Vote.

5. PRESIDENTS REPORT

A. Announcement of Committee of the Whole Meetings on Tuesday, May 21 & Wednesday, May 29 to Discuss the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget

President Sideris stated that department heads will be coming in to discuss their budgets on those dates.

B. Council Clerk Evaluation

President Sideris stated that the Council Clerk has been in the position for a year and so he is requesting a referral to the Committee on Personnel and City Organization to review the evaluation document to see if it needs to be updated to proceed with the evaluation including a discussion of a potential cost of living adjustment.

Councilor Piccirilli moved to refer the matter to the Committee on Personnel and City Organization and Councilor Gardner seconded.

The motion passed unanimously in a Voice Vote.

6. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS, PROCLAMATIONS, AND SIMILAR PAPERS AND MATTERS

A. National Public Works Week Proclamation

Councilor Piccirilli presented the proclamation.

Councilor Piccirilli moved to accept the proclamation and Councilor Bays seconded.

The motion passed unanimously in a Voice Vote.

B. Burnham-Manning VFW Post 1105 Day Proclamation

President Sideris presented the proclamation.

Veterans' Service Officer Patrick George received the proclamation, and invited the Council and public to celebrate on May 24th as they commemorate their 100th anniversary at the VFW.

Councilor Piccirilli moved to accept the proclamation and Councilor Bays seconded.

The motion passed unanimously in a Voice Vote.

Councilor Gannon remarked that his father was a member of Burnham-Manning VFW where served as a member in various roles until he passed. He commended the VFW on their 100th anniversary.

C. Ranucci Square Dedication Proclamation

Councilor Airasian presented the proclamation.

Veterans' Service Officer Patrick George invited the Council and the public to attend the Hero Square dedication on May 20th.

Councilor Piccirilli moved to accept the proclamation and Councilor Gardner seconded.

The motion passed unanimously in a Voice Vote.

D. Former Chief Orangio Proclamation and Flagpole Dedication

Councilor Piccirilli presented the proclamation.

Fire Chief Nicholson received the proclamation noting that it meant a great deal to the Orangio family and thanked the community for the flagpole dedication service held the prior day.

Councilor Piccirilli moved to accept the proclamation and Councilor Gannon seconded.

The proclamation was accepted unanimously in a Voice Vote.

7. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- A.** Public Hearing and Vote on a Petition from Eversource for a Grant of Location in Arsenal Street to install and maintain approximately 45 linear feet of conduit from pole #5/13 to a new street light control cabinet. This work is necessary to provide electric service to a street light control cabinet in front of 550 Arsenal Street. The recommendations and conditions set out by the Department of Public Works shall be required upon approval of this application.

Joanne Callender – Eversource – presented the petition for the grant of location.

Councilor Piccirilli moved to approve the grant of location and Councilor Gardner seconded.

Councilor Palomba asked if this is a new traffic light, and remarked that the large number of lights is a public concern.

City Engineer Tyler Glode clarified that this isn't a traffic light, but a street light replacement.

The motion passed unanimously in a Voice Vote.

- B.** Public Hearing and Vote on a Petition from Eversource for a Grant of Location in Arsenal Street to install and maintain approximately 25 linear feet of conduit from pole #5/5 to a new street light control cabinet. This work is necessary to provide electric service to a street light control cabinet in front of 570 Arsenal Street. The recommendations and conditions set out by the Department of Public Works shall be required upon approval of this application.

Joanne Callender – Eversource – presented the petition for the grant of location.

Councilor Piccirilli moved to approve the grant of location and Councilor Gardner Seconded.

The motion passed unanimously in a Voice Vote.

- C. Public Hearing and Vote on a Petition from Comcast for a Grant of Location in Elm Street to relocate service to 23 Elm Street from aerial to underground. This work is necessary to provide telecommunications service to 23 Elm Street. The recommendations and conditions set out by the Department of Public Works shall be required upon approval of this application.

Manuel Furtado – Comcast – Presented the petition for the grant of location.

Councilor Piccirilli moved to approve the grant of location and Councilor Gardner seconded.

The motion passed unanimously in a Voice Vote.

- D. Public Hearing and Vote on a Petition from Comcast for a Grant of Location in Main Street to install and maintain approximately 154 linear feet of 3-inch conduit in Main Street. This work is necessary to provide telecommunications service to 166 Main Street. The recommendations and conditions set out by the Department of Public Works shall be required upon approval of this application.

Manuel Furtado – Comcast – Presented the petition for the grant of location.

Keith Miller of Beaver Brook Staff Inc. stated that they serve eight individuals at this location, and that continued ADA access to the building is paramount. The building provides services to people with disabilities, so the need for uninterrupted wheelchair access is of the utmost importance. He then asked how long this process is going to take and during what hours.

Manuel Furtado responded that the ADA ramp must be maintained during the entirety of the project, that safety personnel are on hand, and that it will take place overnight for two nights.

Councilor Piccirilli read an email from Alice Chen – resident of 170 Main Street – which asked if garage access will be available during the period of work, and if not, what alternative plans are being made?

Manuel Furtado responded that traffic must be maintained at all times. Plates will be placed down during the time of ground work.

Elodia Thomas – 67 Marion Road - Expressed her excitement for work going underground from poles and aerial wires as well as her desire for this work to continue across town.

Councilor Piccirilli moved to approve the grant of location and Councilor Gardner seconded.

Councilor Piccirilli asked if there could be specific conditions written in to maintain ADA access.

City Engineer Glode replied that it is indeed already a specific condition written in to their standard conditions for all projects.

The motion passed unanimously in a Voice Vote.

E. Public Hearing and Vote on an Ordinance to Revise the City Code to Reflect Adoption of the Municipal Opt-In Specialized Stretch Energy Code

City Manager Proakis stated that the Council has already approved the Stretch Energy Code, the first community in Massachusetts to do so, and that the City has been implementing it since July 10, 2023. At the time there was not a written ordinance to reflect that, but it has now been brought to the administrations attention that it is best practice to do so and cement it into code of ordinances.

Councilor Piccirilli moved to approve the ordinance and Councilor Bays seconded.

The motion passed unanimously in a Voice Vote.

F. Public Hearing and Vote on an Amendment to the FY24 Budget to fund the Police Association Collective Bargaining Agreement

City Manager Proakis stated that all the bargaining agreements are in place with all unions through the end of 2025 which includes retro payments, and that there is a series of items to facilitate those agreements. This particular one relates to the Police Association.

Councilor Piccirilli moved to approve the amendment and Councilor Gardner seconded.

The motion passed unanimously in a Roll Call Vote.

G. Public Hearing and Vote on an Amendment to the FY24 Budget to fund the Library Union Collective Bargaining Agreement

City Manager Proakis stated this is a similar item as the previous one, this one pertaining to the Library Union.

Councilor Piccirilli moved to approve the amendment and Councilor Gannon seconded.

The motion passed unanimously in a Roll Call Vote.

8. MOTIONS, ORDINANCES, ORDERS, AND RESOLUTIONS

- A. Resolution Authorizing a Transfer of Funds in the Amount of \$123,700 from the FY24 City Council Reserve to Various Library Department Accounts

City Manager Proakis stated that this transfer of funds is to facilitate the Library Union amendment above.

Councilor Piccirilli moved to approve the transfer of funds and Councilor Gannon seconded.

The motion passed unanimously in a Roll Call Vote.

- B. Resolution Authorizing a Transfer of Funds in the Amount of \$547,000 from the FY24 City Council Reserve to Various Police Department Accounts

City Manager Proakis stated that this transfer of funds is to facilitate the Police Union amendment above. This also marks the last item for all collective bargaining unions through 2025.

Councilor Proakis moved to approve the transfer of funds and Councilor Gannon seconded.

The motion passed unanimously in a Roll Call Vote.

- C. Resolution Authorizing a Transfer of Funds in the Amount of \$80,000 from the FY24 City Council Reserve to the FY24 City Attorney - Litigation/Legal Services Account

City Manager Proakis stated that this is to cover the legal services for the remainder of the fiscal year. He remarked that this year has called for significant access to legal services in regards to completing all collective bargaining sessions.

Councilor Piccirilli moved to approve the transfer of funds and Councilor Gardner seconded.

The motion passed unanimously in a Roll Call Vote.

- D. Resolution Authorizing a Transfer of Funds in the Amount of \$15,000 from the FY24 City Council Reserve to FY 24 City Manager Contracted Services Account

City Manger Proakis stated that one of the goals of the administration is to join the Metro Mayors and Managers Coalition. Almost all of the surrounding communities participate in the organization. This is an association where adjoining communities meet with legislative officials and conduct policy discussions. This transfer of funds would account for that membership.

Councilor Piccirilli moved to approve the transfer of funds and Councilor Gardner

seconded.

The motion passed unanimously in a Roll Call Vote.

- E. Resolution Authorizing a Transfer of Funds in the Amount of \$542,428 from the FY24 Debt Retirement - Planned Debt Account to the FY24 Transfer to Capital Projects - IT Department Account

City Manager Proakis stated that the debt retirement planned dept account has the funds requested available to directly cover IT projects. This saves the administration from having to borrow these funds for cyber security matters.

Councilor Piccirilli moved to approve the transfer and Councilor Gardner seconded.

The motion passed unanimously in a Roll Call Vote.

- F. Approval and Acceptance of Gifts of Funds Totaling \$475 from Greg Lichniak, Watertown Resident; Dr. Diane Ah-Kine', Gaze Optical ;and Tammy Mckenna, Events Coordinator to Offset Expenditures of the Watertown Pride 2024 Events

City Manager Proakis thanked the gracious gifts to help offset the cost for Watertown Pride events.

Councilor Piccirilli moved to approve the acceptance of gifts of funds and Councilor Gardner seconded.

The motion passed unanimously in a Roll Call Vote.

President Sideris asked to suspend the rules to bring up item 9A

Councilor Piccirilli made that motion and Gardner seconded.

The motion passed unanimously in a Voice Vote.

- 9A** Committee on Personnel and City Organization Report regarding Its meeting on April 18, 2024 - Bays, Chair

ACTION ITEM:

To recommend that the City Council approve the proposed change to a year-round short Friday/extended Tuesday schedule for employees in City Hall, Parker Annex, and the Senior Center.

Councilor Bays presented the report.

Councilor Piccirilli moved to accept the minutes and Councilor Gardner seconded.

The motion passed unanimously in a Voice Vote.

President Sideris stated that they will not be voting on the action item tonight as it needs to go through an ordinance. He then directed the meeting back to item 8G as it is the First Reading of the content of the action item in this report.

G. First Reading of an Ordinance to Modify the Hours of Operation of City Buildings

City Manger Proakis stated that there will be a Public Hearing and vote on this on May 28th. The typical summer hours will not commence, as it is the aim that these new permanent hours will take its place. There will not be any long Tuesday hours until this ordinance is finalized, but buildings will close at 2:00 PM on May 24th for Memorial Day Weekend.

9. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

A. Committee on Personnel and City Organization Report regarding Its meeting on April 18, 2024 - Bays, Chair

ACTION ITEM:

To recommend that the City Council approve the proposed change to a year-round short Friday/extended Tuesday schedule for employees in City Hall, Parker Annex, and the Senior Center.

*** See Above***

B. Committee on Public Safety Report regarding its meeting on May 7, 2024 - Airasian, Chair

ACTION ITEM:

To recommend that the City Council confirm Robert Airasian for reappointment to the Traffic Commission for a term to expire May 15, 2026

Councilor Airasian presented the report.

Councilor Piccirilli moved to accept the report and Councilor Gannon seconded.

The motion passed unanimously in a Voice Vote.

Councilor Piccirilli moved to approve the action item and Councilor Gannon seconded.

The motion passed unanimously in a Voice Vote.

10. NEW BUSINESS

There was no New Business.

11. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CITY MANAGER

A. Request for Referral to Committee regarding the Reorganization Plan

City Manager Proakis remarked that the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget included a reorganization plan much like the previous year. This year the reorganization is simpler with a few adjustments to the finance team, public buildings, and community development and planning departments. He continued to remark that this needs to go to a committee for approval, and he hopes that it will go along with the budget approval hand in hand.

President Sideris stated that this will be automatically referred to the Committee of the Whole and work in conjunction with the budget.

B. Consideration and Action regarding Withdrawal from Civil Service - Watertown Patrol Officers

City Manager Proakis reiterated that the Patrol Officer group agreed to withdraw from Civil Service for several reasons; the most significant being the recruitment of qualified candidates. He noted that existing Patrol Officers retain Civil Service status, but that this shift of it no longer being a requirement needs a vote from City Council.

Councilor Piccirilli moved to revoke its prior acceptance of GL Chapter 31, the Civil Service Law, for all positions of the rank of Patrol Officer within the Police Department and Councilor Gannon seconded.

Councilor Palomba remarked that he believes Civil Service has helped in many facets. He asked for clarification on what are the constraints in terms of hiring someone from Civil Service.

Police Chief Hanrahan replied that the process of hiring in Civil Service includes being provided a specific list of Civil Service individuals to which Watertown Police Department reaches out to inquire if those people on the list are interested in working for WPD. He gave a recent example of sending out 100 inquiry notifications and receiving about 4 responses. Out of those 4 responses, they were able to hire 1 individual. He continued to remark that Civil Service has devolved over the years despite its noble origins, and now they are severely hampered in their hiring ability. In removing the Civil Service requirement, the Police Department could widen the pool and hire quicker.

Councilor Palomba asked if the people on the Civil Service list are already trained and

ready to be implemented to the force.

Police Chief Hanrahan replied that they are not, and that the process typically takes well over a year. Conversely, if they are allowed to hire outside Civil Service, they could take in officers that are already trained from other departments that do not have Civil Service requirements. Additionally, if there was a Civil Service transfer between different departments, the department that the officer is leaving must grant permission and approval of the transfer, which makes it a cumbersome process. He remarked that the majority of departments in Massachusetts no longer have Civil Service requirements. He concluded by saying that by recruiting non-Civil Service candidates, they can recruit trained transfers as well as entry level individuals at the same time in a much more expediated fashion.

Councilor Gannon asked if this would affect protection of individuals within the Civil Service status in hypothetical disciplinary cases.

Police Chief Hanrahan replied that Civil Service individuals would retrain their status, but that the truth of the matter is that Civil Service protections have largely dissipated and really don't offer much. If there was a potential disciplinary case, that status does not make a significant difference between the two groups. He concluded by saying that this is a net positive for the process.

The motion passed unanimously in Roll Call Vote.

C. Request for Confirmation for Appointments and Reappointment to the Solid Waste & Recycling Advisory Committee

City Manager Proakis requested the confirmations of reappointment for Judy Fellows for a term to expire May 15, 2027, and the appointments of Lise Paul and Andrew Thompson to terms to expire May 15, 2027 to the Solid Waste & Recycling Advisory Committee.

President Sideris stated that these go to the Committee on Public Works.

City Manager Proakis announced Memorial Day week agenda items including the Ranucci Square Hero Dedication, flag placement at Ridgelawn Cemetery, assemblies in public schools, the poppy social at the Commander's Mansion, and the VFW open house celebration. He also announced the recycling event, clothing drive, and Watertown Porch Fest. He reminded the public that the administration is still seeking members for the ZBA and an alternate member for the Planning Board. He concluded by announcing a Watertown Square meeting on June 3rd where the topic and focus of conversation will be primarily concerning zoning code.

12. REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION/REVIEW OF LIST OF PENDING MATTERS

Councilor Palomba asked for an update on the Health and Human Services Assessment. He remarked that they haven't heard much since January and the target date is upon us. He then asked about the status on an opioid settlement which has a deadline to sign on May 17th.

City Manager Proakis replied that he has already signed on to the settlement, so they are now a part of the class, and should there be payments, they will be a part of it.

13. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councilor Palomba announced an upcoming Committee on Human Services meetings as well as his annual City Councilor meeting.

President Sideris the Watertown Square Draft Plan will be scheduled June 12th at 6 PM which will also be a hybrid meeting. He continued to say that if there needs to be several meetings to get the job done, they will take several meetings.

14. PUBLIC FORUM

There were no participants in Public Forum.

15. RECESS OR ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Piccirilli made a motion to adjourn and Councilor Gardner seconded.

The motion was adopted unanimously in a Voice Vote.

The meeting adjourned at 8:31 p.m.

I hereby certify that at a regular meeting of the City Council for which a quorum was present, the above minutes were adopted by a vote of 9 for, 0 against, 0 present on May 28, 2024.



Mark S. Sideris, Council President
s:/BTM

Wm. 1912

Article 16. To hear the report of the Selectmen on the layout of Adams Street, and to see if the Town will vote to accept said street as and for a public highway, or act thereon.

Voted: To refer this article to the Selectmen with instructions to report at the next Town Meeting.

Article 17. To see if the Town will vote to accept the provisions of Section 37 of Chapter 19 of the Revised Laws so far as it applies to all members of the regular or permanent police of the Town, or take any action relating thereto.

Voted: To accept the provisions of Section 37 of Chapter 19 of the Revised Laws so far as it applies to all members of the regular or permanent police of the Town.

Total number of voters present, two hundred ^{and} seventy-five (275)

Wm. S. McGuire
Town Clerk

During the year we have a large number of calls to convey sick and injured persons to the Cambridge and Waltham hospitals, which is done in the patrol wagon now in use. Our wagon is totally unfit for such use, and much valuable time is lost in conveying seriously injured persons to the hospital by this slow method.

It has been demonstrated in cities where the automobile has been adopted, that it costs less to maintain an automobile than a horse and wagon. The horse is a continual expense, while the automobile is under no expense when not in use.

I think it would be economy, and add largely to the efficiency of the service, to purchase an automobile to take the place of the horse and wagon now in use.

More Patrolmen.

There has been no increase in the number of officers in this department since the year 1906, when it was increased by the addition of one patrolman, making a total number of thirteen members, the same as today; while the number of inhabitants has increased nearly if not quite two thousand, and the assessed valuation has increased more than one and a half million of dollars.

In my opinion, it is absolutely necessary for the proper protection of the lives and property of the citizens and the maintenance of good order, that one or more regular patrolmen be appointed to the force as soon as practicable.

In connection with this subject, I think it would be advisable to consider the adoption of civil service for the Police Department. Nearly all of the larger cities and towns of the Commonwealth have accepted civil service, and find that it works to the advantage of the service and of the members of the department as well.

Conclusion.

In conclusion, I wish to thank the Honorable Board of Selectmen for their assistance to me in the performance of my duties, and for the kind treatment I have received at their hands.

To the lieutenant and patrolmen, I extend my heartfelt thanks for their co-operation, and for the cheerful and efficient manner in which they have performed their duties.

DAVID A. BOLTON, *Chief of Police*

1911

CHAPTER 31, GENERAL LAWS

Civil Service
 Examinations
 Veterans' Reference
 Investigations
 Application of Law to Commonwealth, Cities and Towns
 General Penalty

Rules:
 Appointments
 General Powers
 Miscellaneous Provisions

Ch. 31, Sec. 4	Ch. 468, Acts 1911	Police Chief, Civil Service	March 10, 1913	8
Ch. 31, Sec. 48	Ch. 19, Sec. 37	Civil Service for Regular Police	June 24, 1912	17
Ch. 31, Sec. 48	Ch. 19, Sec. 37	Civil Service, Permanent & Call Firemen	November 11, 1912	3
Ch. 31, Sec. 47		Civil Service for all Town Employees	May 23, 1938	13
Ch. 31, Sec. 43	Ch. 629, Sec. 2	not so already classified		
Para. "E"	Acts 1956	Punishment of Police Officers	December 29, 1958	Selectmen
Ch. 31, Sec. 5	Ch. 397, Acts 1950	School Traffic Supervisors, Exempt from Civil Service		

1 SECTION 37. In a town which by a vote of a majority of the
2 voters voting thereon at an annual or special town meeting accepts
3 the provisions of this section or has accepted the corresponding
4 provisions of earlier laws, the provisions of this chapter and the
5 rules made under the authority thereof which relate to the police
6 and fire forces of cities except Boston shall apply to all members
7 of the regular or permanent police and fire forces, or to the call
8 fire force, or to either of said forces, of a town. Such vote may
9 limit the application of the provisions of this chapter and of the
10 rules made thereunder either to the police force or to the fire force
11 of such town, or it may extend such application to both of said
12 forces. Upon such vote of acceptance, each member of the force
13 or forces included therein and within the classified civil service shall
14 continue to hold his office until his death, resignation or removal.
15 He shall not be removed except for cause shown after a full hearing
16 before the board or officer of the town having power to make
17 removals, and such member shall have the right to be present at
18 such hearing and to be represented by counsel.

Application to
fire and police
forces in
towns.
1901, 78.