

A regular meeting of the Keene City Council was held on Thursday, February 1, 2024. The Honorable Mayor Jay V. Kahn called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Roll called: Kate M. Bosley, Laura E. Tobin, Michael J. Remy, Randy L. Filiault, Robert C. Williams, Edward J. Haas, Philip M. Jones, Andrew M. Madison, Kris E. Roberts, Raleigh C. Ormerod, Bryan J. Lake, Catherine I. Workman, Bettina A. Chadbourne, Thomas F. Powers, & Mitchell H. Greenwald were present. Councilor Remy led the Pledge of Allegiance.

MINUTES OF THE PRECEDING MEETING

A motion by Councilor Greenwald to adopt the January 18, 2024, minutes as presented was duly seconded by Councilor Bosley and the motion carried unanimously with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Kahn announced a Council workshop on potential amendments to the City Council's Rules of Order scheduled for February 13 at 7:00 PM in Council Chambers. This time will allow Councilors to attend the Southwest Regional Planning Commission's legislative update at 5:30 PM that same evening. The Mayor also announced that the Capital Improvement Program review would continue before the Finance, Organization, and Personnel Committee. Further, the public hearing on the CIP is scheduled for March 7 at 7:00 PM. Mayor Kahn continued, announcing that to accommodate additional Municipal Services, Facilities, and Infrastructure Committee meetings focused on the downtown infrastructure project, special MSFI meeting dates were scheduled for March 13, April 10, and May 8, with all these meetings starting at 5:30 PM; the Planning, Licenses, and Development Committee's meeting time would shift to a 7:00 PM start on these dates. Lastly, the Mayor announced that the Legislative Delegation Meeting would be on March 26 at 6:30 PM at Heberton Hall.

COMMUNITY RECOGNITION: CHERYL BELAIR AND RYAN BARCOME – THE INSURANCE SOURCE – MAIN STREET AMERICA COMMUNITY IMPACT AWARD

Mayor Kahn welcomed Cheryl Belair and Ryan Barcome of The Insurance Source to honor their recent Main Street America grant, from the parent company of the National Grange Mutual Insurance Company. As a part of their 100-year anniversary, NGM launched the Community Impact Award to acknowledge agencies from across the country that share in the philosophy that each of us plays a role in creating equitable, diverse, and thriving communities. This year, The Insurance Source received the award because they understand what it means to be a part of the community that they strive to support daily. Ms. Belair is one of the original founders of The Insurance Source and she has made it her mission to give back to the Monadnock Region and the community that she credits with having helped to build her business. Many years ago, Ms. Belair began serving on local boards and organizations and quickly realized that she could support the community further by incorporating the philosophy in her business model—from donations to events. Ms. Belair and her dedicated staff—including Mr. Barcome—have made a mark on the Keene community. In 2023, Ms. Belair and her team offered over 300 volunteer hours supporting 15 local human services organizations, thereby serving thousands in the community.

Mayor Kahn congratulated Ms. Belair, Mr. Barcome, and The Insurance Source for this Award and presented them with a City of Keene pin.

Mayor Kahn intends to continue taking nominations of people, students, businesses, and organizations in the community that have risen to broad recognition in Keene and beyond. Nominations can be submitted to Mayor Kahn or the City Clerk.

RETIREMENT RESOLUTION – KURT BLOMQUIST

The retirement recognition was postponed until Mr. Blomquist is available.

CONFIRMATIONS – BICYCLE PEDESTRIAN PATH ADVISORY COMMITTEE, CONSERVATION COMMISSION, CONGREGATE LIVING AND SOCIAL SERVICES LICENSING BOARD, PLANNING BOARD, TRUSTEES OF TRUST FUNDS AND CEMETERY TRUSTEES

Mayor Kahn previously nominated the following individuals to serve on City Boards and Commissions: Bicycle/Pedestrian Path Advisory Committee: Diane Duffy as an alternate member with a term to expire on December 31, 2025; Samantha Jackson as a regular member with a term to expire on December 31, 2026; Autumn DeLaCroix as a regular member with a term to expire on December 31, 2025; Conservation Commission: Barbara Richter as a regular member with a term to expire on December 31, 2026; Congregate Living & Social Services Licensing Board: Ashok Bahl as an alternate member, with a term to expire on December 31, 2026; Planning Board: Sarah Vezzani as a regular member with a term to expire on December 31, 2026; Michael Hoefler as an alternate member with a term to expire on December 31, 2026; Trustees of Trust Funds and Cemetery Trustees: Ely Thayer as a regular member, with a term to expire December 31, 2026. A motion by Councilor Greenwald to confirm the nominations was duly seconded by Councilor Bosley. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

CONFIRMATION – KEENE HOUSING AUTHORITY

Mayor Kahn previously nominated Emily Benson to serve as a regular member of the Keene Housing Authority, with a term to expire December 31, 2028. A motion by Councilor Greenwald to confirm the nomination was duly seconded by Councilor Bosley. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

ACCEPTANCE OF RESIGNATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS TO THE AD HOC – ROADWAY SAFETY ACTION PLAN COMMITTEE

Mayor Kahn nominated Councilor Laura Tobin and Debra Bowie to serve on the ad hoc Roadway Safety Plan Committee to replace Councilor Lake and Reagan Messer who were previously appointed but would not be available for the meeting schedule. A motion by Councilor Greenwald to accept the resignations of Councilor Bryan Lake and Reagan Messer with regret and appreciation, and to confirm the appointments of Councilor Tobin and Debra Bowie to the Roadway Safety Plan Committee, was duly seconded by Councilor Bosley. The motion carried unanimously with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor. The Clerk identified

an error in the nomination included in the Councilors' packet. Aja Davis should have been nominated to serve on the Human Rights Committee. A separate nomination would be prepared for the next meeting.

COMMUNICATION – REQUEST FOR COMMUNITY-FUNDED EVENT STATUS – 2024 PRIDE FESTIVAL

A communication was received from Adam Toepfer, submitting an application for the Keene Pride Event to be considered for Community Event Funding Status in the next fiscal year budget. Mayor Kahn referred the communication to the Finance, Organization, and Personnel Committee to be considered during the fiscal year 2025 budget review.

COMMUNICATION – LET IT SHINE – REQUEST TO USE CITY PROPERTY – 2024 PUMPKIN FESTIVAL

A communication was received from Michael Giacomo, requesting the event license for the 2024 Pumpkin Festival, scheduled for October 12, 2024. Mayor Kahn referred the communication to the Planning, Licenses, and Development Committee to be placed on more time to allow the protocol meetings to occur.

MSFI REPORT – COUNCILOR REMY – ENFORCEMENT OF WINTER PARKING BAN

A Municipal Services, Facilities, and Infrastructure Committee report read, unanimously recommending that the enforcement of the winter parking ban be referred to the City Manager for further review and consideration with a report back to the MSFI Committee. A motion by Councilor Greenwald to carry out the intent of the Committee report was duly seconded by Councilor Filiault. The motion carried unanimously with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

MSFI REPORT – POWERPOINT PRESENTATION – WINTER OPERATIONS

A Municipal Services, Facilities, and Infrastructure Committee report read, unanimously recommending the presentation on winter parking operations be accepted as informational. Mayor Kahn accepted the report as informational.

MSFI REPORT – POWERPOINT PRESENTATION – NEIGHBORHOOD PARKING PROGRAM – COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

A Municipal Services, Facilities, and Infrastructure Committee report read, unanimously recommending the presentation on a neighborhood parking program be accepted as informational. Mayor Kahn accepted the report as informational.

MSFI REPORT – STEPHEN BRAGDON – SAFETY ISSUES ASSOCIATED WITH THE DRIVEWAY AT 82 COURT ST. AND STAFF RESPONSE TO NO PARKING REQUEST – 82 COURT ST.

A Municipal Services, Facilities, and Infrastructure Committee report read, unanimously recommending accepting the communication regarding Safety Issues Associated with the Driveway at 82 Court Street as informational. Mayor Kahn accepted the report as informational.

DOWNTOWN PROJECT TIMELINE – CITY MANAGER; AND COUNCILOR GREENWALD – DESIGN ISSUES TO BE CONSIDERED IN THE DOWNTOWN IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

A Municipal Services, Facilities, and Infrastructure Committee report read, unanimously recommending accepting the update on the project as informational. Mayor Kahn accepted the report as informational. In addition, the report recommended referring Councilor Greenwald's letter to the City Manager. A motion by Councilor Greenwald to carry out the intent of the Committee report was duly seconded by Councilor Filiault. The motion carried unanimously with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

MSFI REPORT – POWERPOINT PRESENTATION – TRANSPORTATION HERITAGE TRAIL, PHASE 1 – PROPOSED ACTION

A Municipal Services, Facilities, and Infrastructure Committee report read, unanimously recommending the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the proposed action as presented for the Transportation Heritage Trail Phase 1 project to include:

- Trail alignment along the Rail Corridor;
- Screening consisting of chain link fencing with slats;
- Implementation of Trailhead Alternative 1 including angled parking and one way traffic circulation through the parking lot; and
- Surface Materials consisting of stone dust

A motion by Councilor Greenwald to carry out the intent of the Committee report was duly seconded by Councilor Filiault. The motion carried unanimously with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

MSFI REPORT – POWERPOINT PRESENTATION – PROJECT UPDATE – THOMPSON ROAD RECONSTRUCTION PROJECT

A Municipal Services, Facilities, and Infrastructure Committee report read, unanimously recommending that the PowerPoint presentation on the Thompson Road Reconstruction Project be accepted as informational. Mayor Kahn accepted the report as informational.

FOP REPORT – AUTHORIZATION TO APPLY FOR GRANT FUNDING – DOWNTOWN INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

A Finance, Organization, and Personnel Committee report read, unanimously recommending that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to apply for applicable state and federal grant funding for the Downtown Infrastructure Improvement and Reconstruction Project. A motion by Councilor Powers to carry out the intent of the Committee report was duly seconded by Councilor Remy. The motion carried unanimously with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

FOP REPORT – ENGINEERING SERVICES PERTAINING TO AIRPORT SNOW REMOVAL EQUIPMENT PURCHASES

A Finance, Organization, and Personnel Committee report read, unanimously recommending that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to execute a professional engineering services contract with McFarland Johnson Inc. for the development of bid specifications and associated grant administration for an airport Snow Removal Equipment purchase. A motion by Councilor Powers to carry out the intent of the Committee report was duly seconded by Councilor Remy. The motion carried unanimously with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

FOP REPORT – AIRPORT ENGINEERING AND ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES

A Finance, Organization, and Personnel Committee report read, unanimously recommending that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to enter into an agreement with McFarland Johnson Inc. for Airport Engineering and Architectural Services for the Keene Dillant-Hopkins Airport. A motion by Councilor Powers to carry out the intent of the Committee report was duly seconded by Councilor Remy. The motion carried unanimously with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

FOP REPORT – SUBORDINATION AGREEMENT – 310 MARLBORO STREET

A Finance, Organization, and Personnel Committee report read, unanimously recommending that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to sign a Subordination Agreement to a mortgage from 310 Marlboro Street, LLC to Newburyport Five Cents Savings Bank. A motion by Councilor Powers to carry out the intent of the Committee report was duly seconded by Councilor Remy. The motion carried unanimously with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

FOP REPORT – EXPENDITURE OF TRUST FUNDS – ACQUISITION OF LIGHTS AT CEMETERY

A Finance, Organization, and Personnel Committee report read, unanimously recommending that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary for the expenditure of Cemetery Trust Fund B – Capital Reserve of \$7,890.00 for the purpose of replacing light fixtures in the maintenance building at Monadnock View Cemetery. A motion by Councilor Powers to carry out the intent of the Committee report was duly seconded by Councilor Remy. The motion carried unanimously with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

CITY MANAGER COMMENTS

The City Manager announced that in partnership with Healthy Monadnock and Cheshire Medical Center, the City would be installing NaloxBoxes, both at City Hall and the Library. These are Opioid rescue kits that will be installed on the wall near the AED units. They contain Narcan, which is a trade name for Naloxone, a medication that counteracts the effects of opiates, reversing their effect and the overdose. Narcan is available as an over-the-counter medication. The Fire Department has also offered training for Staff regarding use of the Narcan.

Next, the City Manager provided an update regarding the continued work to clean up trash and abandoned encampments on both private and public property. Most recently, the team at the City worked with a private contractor to clean up the parcel owned by City near Hannaford's (more directly behind Melanson). This parcel abuts the Ashuelot River and includes a small island during low flow. City Staff removed 15.8 tons of trash and installed fencing to discourage future use of the site. The City Manager thanked the Director of Parks, Recreation, and Facilities Director, Andy Bohanon, for taking the lead on this site. The next location the City is hoping to have cleaned is the large parcel privately owned directly behind Hannaford's.

The City Manager also provided an update regarding overflow shelter beds. The City is working with Southwestern Community Services (SCS) and the United Church of Christ (UCC) to open an overflow shelter for the coldest nights of the year. The agreement was finalized on January 31. As of Monday, February 5, approximately 10–12 spaces would be available on nights that the temperature is forecasted to be 10 degrees or below. The space will be staffed with a staff person from SCS and a volunteer, as well as a volunteer from the UCC. SCS began a volunteer training program for theirs and the UCC volunteers. The City Manager thanked Beth Daniels, Chief Executive Officer at SCS, and Reverend Cindy Bagley from the UCC, as well as their volunteers for stepping up to help meet this need in our community. Working with them has been a real partnership.

Next, the City Manager shared upcoming important dates for the downtown infrastructure project. Upcoming design review forums and dedicated MSFI dates were scheduled, and the City would be publicizing that information after this meeting. Upcoming public design review forums were scheduled for March 6, April 3 and May 1. The City Manager added she was in the process of finalizing a date for an update on the public forums to the full City Council sometime in June. The consultants were working on the RAISE grant application for this project, which was due at the end of February. Lastly, the City Manager recognized the City's new hires and service milestones.

02/01/2024

ECC REPORT – 2024 ENERGY EXPO EVENT SPONSORSHIP – ENERGY AND CLIMATE COMMITTEE

A report read from the Energy and Climate Committee recommends, on behalf of the Monadnock Sustainability Hub, that the City Council consider sponsorship, in terms of waiving any permit fees and access to City facilities, of the 2024 Energy Expo event, to be scheduled in the fall of 2024. Mayor Kahn referred the report to the Finance, Organization, and Personnel Committee.

RELATING TO THE ACCEPTANCE AND APPROPRIATION OF UNANTICIPATED BRIDGE REVENUE – RESOLUTION R-2024-04

A Finance, Organization, and Personnel Committee report read, unanimously recommending adopting Resolution R-2024-04. A motion by Councilor Powers to adopt Resolution R-2024-04 was duly seconded by Councilor Remy. The motion carried unanimously with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

NON-PUBLIC SESSION

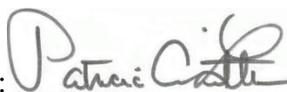
A motion by Councilor Greenwald was duly seconded by Councilor Bosley to go into non-public session to discuss the compensation of a public employee under RSA 91-A:3, II (a), the hiring of a public employee under RSA 91-A:3, II (b), and the consideration of a pending claim or litigation under RSA 91-A:3, II (e). The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

The non-public session began at 7:40 PM. The Fire Chief and the Community Development Director were invited to remain for a portion of the discussion. Discussion was limited to the subject matters. The non-public session ended at 9:48 PM.

A motion by Councilor Greenwald was duly seconded by Councilor Bosley to, with respect to the compensation of a public employee under RSA 91-A:3, II (a), and the hiring of a public employee under RSA 91-A:3, II (b), keep the minutes of the non-public session non-public until the matter discussed becomes effective. Concerning the pending claim or litigation under RSA 91-A:3, II (e) I move to keep the non-public minutes non-public until the litigation is concluded. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mayor Kahn adjourned the meeting at 949 PM

A true record, attest: 
City Clerk