

A regular meeting of the Keene City Council was held on Thursday, June 5, 2025. 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 (arrived at 7:03 PM), Kris E. Roberts, Jacob R. Favolise, Bryan J. Lake, Catherine I. Workman, Thomas F. Powers, and Mitchell H. Greenwald were present. Councilor Remy led the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### MINUTES FROM PRECEDING MEETING

A motion by Councilor Greenwald to adopt the May 15, 2025 minutes as presented was duly seconded by Councilor Bosely. The motion carried unanimously with 14 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilor Madison was absent.

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Kahn began noting in the course of the year, he was recognizing events inscribed in federal or state laws, or that organizations were honoring. His Executive Assistant had identified 83 such events throughout the year. The Mayor pointed out that June was Small Cities Month, in honor of which the National League of Cities sent a bulletin stating that 40% of the American population comes from cities with populations of 50,000 or less, representing three-quarters of all the municipal governments in the nation.

Mayor Kahn also congratulated the Keene High School Class of 2025, which was graduating the following weekend, as well as their families. He called it a really talented class that the City Council had an opportunity to meet.

Next, the Mayor shared upcoming community events:

- June 6, 2025: D-Day Remembrance
- June 6–15, 2025: Art Walk
- June 7, 2025: Taste of Keene Food Festival
- June 14, 2025: Flag Day Celebration on Central Square
- June 19, 2025 at 5:00 PM: Juneteenth Celebration on Central Square
- June 20, 2025: World Refugee Day
- June 20–22, 2025: *Jumanji* 30th Anniversary Festival

The Mayor also announced that the Master Plan Future Summit held on June 3 at the Keene Public Library was very well attended by over 100 community members. The Mayor thanked Community Development Department staff for their efforts organizing the event.

Lastly, Mayor Kahn provided the Council's summer schedule:

- The July 3, 2025 City Council meeting is canceled for Independence Eve
- The rest of the July meetings will be held as usual.
- The August 7, 2025 City Council meeting is canceled, and
- August 13 and 14, 2025 PLD and FOP meetings are canceled
- Council will resume its regular schedule on August 21, 2025.

## PRESENTATION OF RETIREMENT RESOLUTION - PATRICIA A. LITTLE

Mayor Kahn welcomed former City Clerk, Patty Little. The Mayor read into the record and presented Ms. Little with a copy of a Resolution honoring her retirement as the longest-serving Clerk of the City of Keene, all of her accomplishments, and her leadership during those five decades.

Ms. Little said it had been a long farewell, with this being her fourth retirement celebration, all of which have been amazing. She shared that this beginning transition period of retirement included a lot of adjustment, much more activity, travel, involvement in her town committees (like the Conservation Commission and Historical Society), and much more time with family. She said all these wonderful things about retirement would not have been possible without her amazing career with the City of Keene, which she loved every day of, thanks to the Council's support and the good counsel of her fellow Charter Officers, the Mayors', and her incredible staff who had been willing to take on herculean tasks time and again. Ms. Little thanked everyone and was applauded.

REPORT - CHANGE IN EVENT SPONSORSHIP/LICENSE HOLDER - *JUMANJI* 30TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION - CITY CLERK

A memorandum was read from the City Clerk, Terri Hood, recommending the City Council accept the withdrawal of Greater Monadnock Collaborative as event sponsor for the *Jumanji* 30th Anniversary Celebration, and that the license for the event is reissued to BW Enterprises, LLC subject to the following conditions:

- The signing of a standard revocable license and indemnification agreement;
- That the petitioner provide a certificate of liability insurance with the City of Keene listed as additional insured in the amount of \$1,000,000;
- That the Petitioner agrees to absorb the cost of any City services provided to the event, and agrees to remit said payment within 30-days of the date of invoicing;
- That the Petitioner is permitted to conduct a road race reenactment of the "stampede" depicted in the film and a parade to occur on Main Street on Saturday, June 20th at noon with assistance from the Keene Police Department to temporarily close certain streets or rights-of-way intersecting with the planned route;
- That the petitioner is permitted to close a portion of Church Street from Main Street to just east of the Hannah grimes parking lot each day of the event from 11:00 AM to 8:00 PM to allow food trucks to participate, with the road being reopened to traffic at the close of each day. Additional road closures may include any portions of other streets needed to facilitate detour routes. The full extent of road closures and detour routes shall be agreed upon with City staff;
- That the petitioner is permitted to use areas on the sidewalk adjacent to the Colonial Theatre on Friday, June 20th, as well as Central Square common, Railroad Square and Gilbo Avenue along the bike path on Saturday, June 20th for other planned activities;
- That the Petitioner is permitted to place portapotties in City parking spaces with the specific locations to be determined in conjunction with City staff from Friday, June 20, 2025 to Monday June 23, 2025 which will be chained together and affixed to ensure they are not vandalized while unattended overnight;

- The submittal of signed letters of permission from any private property owners for the use of their property; and
- Said permission is granted subject to obtainment of any necessary licenses or permits and compliance with all laws, including obtainment of any necessary licensing for the use of intellectual property; and compliance with any recommendations of City staff.

A motion by Councilor Bosley to suspend Section 26 of the Council's Rules of Order to act on the request on first reading was duly seconded by Councilor Jones. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

A motion by Councilor Bosley to carry out the intent of the memorandum submitted by the City Clerk was duly seconded by Councilor Jones.

Councilor Bosley explained that the Greater Monadnock Collaborative notified the City Clerk's office that it would not be moving forward as the sponsor (event producer) of the *Jumanji* 30th Anniversary Celebration scheduled to be held on June 20–22, 2025. On May 27, 2025, BW Enterprises, LLC submitted a letter to the Mayor and City Council seeking permission to take over as event producers. Councilor Bosley said the same core group who have been organizing the event and attending the City Protocol meetings are still involved, including the petitioner, Brandie Wells. BW Enterprises would provide insurance, sign the license agreement, and take fiscal responsibility for the event, including payment for any City services provided. Councilor Bosley said City Staff are comfortable with the change and recommend the City Council proceed with reissuing the license under the parameters documented in the City Clerk's memo.

Councilor Haas thanked Ms. Wells for stepping in to take this over. The Councilor said a lot was done previously by the Greater Monadnock Collaborative (GMC) and this was no reflection on it, only that there were processes to be followed, noting the GMC would still be sponsoring other events. Councilor Haas thanked Ms. Wells again. The Mayor agreed.

The motion to carry out the intent of the memorandum submitted by the City Clerk carried unanimously with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

Mayor Kahn introduced members of the *Jumanji* 30th Anniversary Celebration organizing group, Ms. Wells and Cathy Bergstrom, crediting Ms. Bergstrom as the leader who brought this forward and thanking Ms. Wells for her work.

#### PUBLIC HEARING - AMENDMENT TO LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE - FEATHER SIGNS IN THE INDUSTRIAL AND INDUSTRIAL PARK DISTRICTS - ORDINANCE O-2025-08-A

Mayor Kahn opened the Public Hearing at 7:23 PM and the City Clerk, Terri Hood, read the notice of hearing. The Mayor welcomed Mari Brunner, Senior Planner, for an overview of Ordinance O-2025-08-A. Ms. Brunner said this Ordinance would define a type of sign called a feather sign—also known as a blade sale sign—as a sign made of flexible material that is generally, but not always, rectangular in shape and attached to a pole on one side so the sign can move with the wind. She explained that under the City's existing Sign Code and Zoning Ordinance, feather signs were considered animated because they are designed to move—like a

flag. This Ordinance would allow feather signs in the Industrial and Industrial Park Districts for 30 days at a time, up to four times per year per property, with some conditions: (1) sign face cannot be more than 20 square feet in area, (2) signs must be spaced at least 10 feet apart, (3) signs must be at least 15 feet from the property line, and (4) signs must be 25 feet from an intersection. This Ordinance was first introduced to Council on March 20, 2025. The public workshop of the Joint Planning Board-Planning, Licenses and Development Committee occurred on April 14, 2025 without public comment. However, Ms. Brunner noted there was some discussion by the Committee, with the only change being the addition of the 25-foot setback from an intersection, resulting in the “A” version of the Ordinance.

Mayor Kahn opened the floor to public comments and hearing none, he closed the Public Hearing at 7:26 PM, except that written comments would be accepted up until 1:00 PM on Tuesday, June 10.

A true record, attest:



City Clerk

#### PUBLIC HEARING - AMENDMENT TO LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE - SINGLE-FAMILY PARKING REQUIREMENTS - ORDINANCE O-2025-09

Mayor Kahn opened the Public Hearing at 7:27 PM and the City Clerk, Terri Hood, read the notice of hearing. The Mayor invited Mari Brunner, Senior Planner, to introduce Ordinance O-2025-09. Ms. Brunner briefly recalled this Ordinance was to fix an inadvertent omission from Ordinance O-2024-20-A, which was a larger change to parking requirements. Through that process, single family dwellings were inadvertently omitted from the table in O-2024-20-A. Ms. Brunner said Ordinance O-2025-09 would add single family dwellings back in so that use would have the same parking requirement as other residential uses in the City, which is one parking space per unit.

Mayor Kahn opened the floor for public comments.

Andy Holt of Forest Street understood the intent of this Ordinance to correct something unintentional and imagined the Council would be inclined to pass it and move on. However, he encouraged the Council to give the Ordinance more consideration, calling this a rare opportunity. At this time, there was no mandate for single family parking, which was how he thought it should be, and by putting it back in place, he thought the Council would miss an opportunity to remove a barrier for housing. He recalled a conversation at the Master Plan Future Summit about Keene's stable population for decades, and yet the City had been in a housing crisis without enough housing for the number of residents. Mr. Holt said one barrier to developers which inhibited them adding more units were parking mandates. He said that a reduction was great but suggested cutting out the parking requirements because there is no benefit to having a mandate for how much parking there should be. He thought developers or homeowners would add parking as needed and said requiring an arbitrary number is an unnecessary burden that impedes housing. So, Mr. Holt asked the Council and Planning, Licenses and Development to take time to

discuss the pros and cons. He noted that many cities around the country of very similar size to Keene—including some in this region—had removed all parking mandates and have seen positive impacts, and Mr. Holt thought Keene would too. Lastly, he reiterated that developers or homeowners would add parking as needed and said there was no need for a mandate.

Hearing no further comments, Mayor Kahn closed the Public Hearing at 7:30 PM except that written comments would be accepted up until 1:00 PM on Tuesday, June 10.

A true record, attest:



City Clerk

#### PUBLIC HEARING - PROPOSED FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026 OPERATING BUDGET

Mayor Kahn opened the Public Hearing at 7:32 PM and the City Clerk, Terri Hood, read the notice of hearing. Mayor Kahn shared opening comments, which he thanked the City Manager, Elizabeth Ferland, and Finance Director, Kari Chamberlain, for helping him to prepare. The Mayor recalled good presentations from the City Departments before the City Council's Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee over the previous six weeks. He wanted to be clear that a Budget is always a plan that needs to be executed over the next 13 months; it is always a balancing act. He thought this Budget successfully addressed and balanced three priorities: (1) maintaining existing City services, (2) addressing long term infrastructure needs, (3) and managing the pressures on the City's tax rate. The Mayor said this represented collaborative efforts by staff across the organization to align with the Council's Fiscal Policies while continuing to meet the community's expectations. The Fiscal Policies (adopted at the beginning of 2025) limit property tax revenue increases; that limit is defined by a rolling three-year average of the Northeast Region Consumer Price Index (CPI), which excludes expenditures required by law, like retirement, and excludes debt service payments, and capital leases. Mayor Kahn said this year's rolling average of the CPI would have been 4.1%, according to the calculation of three years (page 6 of the Budget). If the City followed the 4.1% cap, the Budget would have been \$468,506.00 higher. So, the Mayor said this proposed Budget would fall under what the City's cap allowances—which is good news. Rather than a 4% increase on property taxes, this Budget anticipated a 2.06% increase in the City's portion of the tax rate—approximately \$0.28 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation.

Mayor Kahn shared two highlights from the Budget:

- Staffing adjustments: \$478,000 wage adjustments approved by the Council in April 2025 for four additional firefighters (one per shift) in this budget. \$170,000 wage adjustments for ambulance services. Cost of living increases for additional firefighters and increased overtime expenses as well. A \$126,000 increase to Library Services, in particular for part-time wages to align with the staffing changes over the previous few years. The Mayor explained that wages (page 9 of the Budget) were the primary Budget driver. Adjustments reflected union contracts and non-union wage increases, which included a 3% cost of living adjustment (COLA) for all other staff. Of the total \$1,590,000 Budget increase, \$1,490,000 was related to personnel changes, and the remaining \$103,469 net change was

for operational costs, which included \$50,000 for the Human Services Department (vs. the \$1.2 million allocation needed in FY 24–25).

- Capital Improvement Program (CIP; 2025–2031): The Council approved the current CIP in 2024, and it would be updated in the 2025–2026 fiscal year. The Mayor said there were only minor tweaks to projects in the CIP reflected in this Budget, no projects were eliminated, and only a couple of projects were pushed out.

Mayor Kahn discussed how the 3% personnel COLA increase and other increases mentioned would result in only a 2.06% increased tax rate. He said it was because the City's Operating Budget had increasingly more revenue streams. For example, interest income would be high in the coming year (\$600,000), motor vehicle registration fees were up significantly (over \$100,000), and ambulance billing generated an additional \$200,000 from added call volume that would be applied to the Fire Department's staffing needs. The Mayor said this Budget anticipated the State of NH's municipal aid contributions remaining level. In total, Mayor Kahn said this General Operating Budget would depend largely on tax supported revenues, the self-supporting operations of the City—including the Airport, Water, and Sewer Departments—and the CIP. This Budget would appropriate a total of \$81,746,416. The Mayor recalled that the previous year, the Outside Agencies request of the City was \$407,000, including an allocation for the start-up of Monadnock Economic Development Corporation's Housing Fund; the City ultimately budgeted \$375,000. This year, staff recommended \$338,100 for Outside Agencies.

The Finance Director pointed out that there are revisions to Resolution R-2025-12-A, which resulted in R-2025-12-B. The revisions were to fix the Capital Reserve Appropriations that were originally included in the Total Estimated Operating Revenues, originally reported as \$81,047,049. The Capital Reserve Appropriations had been properly separated out and Ms. Chamberlain said the new aggregating total is \$76,180,161.

Mayor Kahn welcomed public comments on each section of the proposed Budget. There were comments on two sections, Outside Agencies & Community Funded Events.

#### Outside Agencies:

Ockle Johnson, President of the Board of Directors of the Keene Senior Center. He said Senior Center Executive Director, Kim Rumrill, regretted being unable to attend because of another obligation at the NH Charitable Foundation that evening; Mr. Johnson noted that nonprofits require a lot of funding sources. He thanked the Council for its previous support. The Center had been operating for one year out of its new location on Marlboro Street, renting from Home Healthcare, Hospice, and Community Services, with increased parking, allowing for expanded offerings. Membership had increased to 468, with 291 from Keene. Mr. Johnson explained that Keene Senior Center promotes wellness—physical, social, and emotional—with very low dues and helpful scholarship offerings. Mr. Johnson mentioned the Senior Center's many signature programs: Super Senior Marathon (part of Clarence DeMar Marathon), pickleball (collaborative with the Keene Recreation Department), and Cheshire Village at Home (supports seniors to remain in their homes by providing social calls, light help around the house, and rides to doctors/errands). Mr. Johnson recalled being asked in the past whether other towns also support the Senior Center and he was happy to report that this year that the Town of Stoddard generously

agreed to support them at a rate of over \$100 per capita of the members coming from Stoddard. The Center would look to other member towns as well. Like other non-profits, he said the Senior Center was in a deficit budget situation, and although they had no building rent and a lean staff, they have to close that deficit through a variety of methods like fundraising (e.g., Keene Runway 5K at the Airport) and grants. Additionally, Mr. Johnson said the Senior Center was seeking a slight increase from the City Council, so the Center requested \$20,000 this year, up from the previous \$16,500, which would be approximately \$75 per member; he said that would essentially be a matching grant for the dues the Senior Center asks for. He also reminded the Council of the Keene Senior Center's essential function to serve the citizens of Keene and the region and thanked the Council for the much needed and appreciated support.

Jessica Iris, Executive Director of Arts Alive—an organization that supports the arts across the Monadnock Region, with offices local to Keene for 15 years—noted Arts Alive have received \$500 from the City of Keene for many years. The contribution was initiated by former Councilor Carl Jacobs about a decade prior, when funding was directed to Arts Alive's Discover Monadnock Project, which promotes arts and culture in the region, both to locals and across the New England states. Arts Alive has an online calendar, newsletter, and a booklet distributed across New England tourist visitor centers. Ms. Iris said she was present because she was feeling more urgency about public funding for the arts because in the previous few weeks there had been a lot of federal and state changes to funding for the arts, directly impacting Arts Alive and other important organizations in Keene like the Colonial Theatre and MoCo Arts. For example, more than \$27 million in federal grants to organizations from the National Endowment for the Arts was recently withdrawn, with Arts Alive losing \$25,000. Additionally, Ms. Iris said the recent Executive Orders prevented Arts Alive from accepting a \$33,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture because the organization values access to arts as a human right. That language put the organization out of compliance with the current Executive Orders. At the state level, Arts Alive faced dismantling of the New Hampshire State Council on the Arts, which distributed funding across the state to many different organizations; the State Council faced 5% of its usual budget, meaning it could not accept \$1.7 million in federal money that it would generally redistribute to organizations across the state. Arts Alive was grateful for the ongoing \$500 contribution from and partnership with the City, which had helped the organization leverage its past state and federal funding. However, with that federal funding no longer possible, Ms. Iris was requested the Council consider amending the Budget to fund Arts Alive at \$10,000 in the next fiscal year. She explained what that contribution would support: (1) mini grants to small organizations and groups under the median income in Keene for arts programming (e.g., infrastructure to show member art at the Keene Senior Center); (2) sustaining the Discover Monadnock program, which had grown and was blossoming, with over 5,000 people receiving the e-mail newsletter and 10,000 booklets promoting arts across tourist destinations and highway stops all over New England; (3) empowering Arts Alive to continue its Fiscal Sponsorship Program, partnering with individual artists and community groups like Nova Arts at Brewbaker's, the Keene Walldogs Mural Project, and programs like Ashuelot Concert—all developed from the Fiscal Sponsorship Program that Arts Alive was very proud of. Primarily, Ms. Iris believes including this modest contribution in the next Budget would allow the Keene community to say yes, public and collaborative investment in the arts is important and this community values the arts enough to pool our resources for an organization that supports arts across the region. She said that this \$10,000 equated to less than \$0.50 per person in Keene. Ms.

Iris thanked the Council for listening to her passion and shared a one-page handout with some of these details. Councilor Remy noted that Arts Alive had been miscategorized in the Budget under Boards & Commissions since 2014 and the City Manager said she would fix it.

Carl Jacobs of 81 Wyman Road spoke on behalf of Arts Alive, noting importantly that Arts bring money to Keene; spending money on arts programs results in people coming to Keene, eating meals, staying at hotels, and patronizing other establishments. Without arts attractions, people would not come to the community. So, Mr. Jacobs said this would not be money thrown at artists, but money returned to Keene, mentioning studies on the exponential return.

#### Community Funded Events

Mayor Kahn noted that dates of all proposed Community Funded Events were listed on the City website. Councilor Jones thought it was safe to say these funds—although an assigned dollar value—were mostly in-kind donations of services and personnel. The Mayor and City Manager agreed.

Alan Stroshine of Salisbury Road has been presenting to the Council since 2012 on behalf of the Clarence DeMar Marathon and expressed his gratitude and appreciation for the support the Council had provided. The Marathon had been happening since 1978 and the Keene Elm City Rotary took over in 2012, making it its signature fundraiser. He said the Rotary is grateful for the City's partnership, does not take it lightly, and tries to support the community. Mr. Stroshine could not speak more highly of all the City departments involved: Police, Fire, Finance, and more. He was also grateful for the City Manager's support. He explained that the Rotary continued to run a full marathon, half marathon, Kids DeMar program, and Super Seniors marathon. All proceeds from the marathon support a nonprofit in Keene. Mr. Stroshine thanked the City again for the ongoing support and partnership and invited everyone to the quad at Keene State College on Sunday, September 28, 2025, for the marathons. Mayor Kahn thanked Mr. Stroshine for his leadership, noting that weekend would also bring people to Keene for the International Festival.

Hearing no further public comments on any other sections of the proposed FY 2025–2026 Operating Budget, the Mayor closed the Public Hearing at 8:14 PM, except for written public comments, which would be accepted until 1:00 PM Tuesday, June 10. Written comments must be signed and submitted to the City Clerk by that date and time to be included in the record.

A true record, attest:



City Clerk

Mayor Kahn reminded Councilors that Council Rules of Order require them to submit a written communication to the City Clerk containing any proposed amendments to the budget Resolution. The deadline for submittal was 4:00 PM on Tuesday, June 17. He encouraged them to submit any proposed changes as soon as possible to allow staff review and placement on the June 19 Council



agenda. Additionally, a copy of the newest iteration of Section 15 of the Rules of Order related to Voting and Conflicts of Interest was provided for Councilors to review and ensure any conflicts related to their household members were disclosed—particularly those related to any of the Outside Agencies receiving funding in the Budget.

Councilor Jones pointed out that the Council kept hearing about tax breaks at the state level. He said the presentation from Arts Alive was a good example of what happens when they cut funds at the state level—the funds get pushed down to the municipal level and the City must pay to maintain programs like Arts Alive. He said that was the case with a lot of state Budget cuts and he hoped people would realize that. Mayor Kahn agreed and said he was grateful the City Manager presented the concept of City reserves during the Budget presentations. The City Manager, Elizabeth Ferland, said the Mayor was referring to something every town and city has, which is called the Fund Balance, or the “rainy day reserves.” That Fund is there in case something comes up during the year the City does not anticipate, so the Manager can request the additional appropriation from the Council. She added at this time, the State of NH was legislating increases to retirement funding that could also have a downward effect on municipalities in the coming years, as well as considerations of reducing the Rooms & Meals appropriation, which she said would directly impact the City’s receipt of funding. So, to Councilor Jones’ point, those would be things to observe during the operating year. Councilor Jones agreed.

#### RELATING TO THE 2025-2026 OPERATING BUDGET - RESOLUTION R-2025-12-A

A motion by Councilor Powers was duly seconded by Councilor Remy to amend Resolution R-2025-12-A as described in the Finance Director’s memorandum, and the resulting “B” version of the Resolution be tabled until the June 19, 2025, City Council meeting.

Councilor Remy briefly explained that the changes were to make things add up properly again, because the sum of the original two numbers only totaled to the General Fund, and this corrected it. The City Manager, Elizabeth Ferland, added that attached to the Resolution was a breakdown of all the funds. There was a problem with one of the cells, which as Councilor Remy pointed out, did not add up. Secondly, the City Manager noted that Capital Funds in the last section of the Budget—just over \$5 million—was counted in another number. The Finance Director had fixed it, and it did not impact the bottom line of the Budget. This change would only address the revenue and how it broke apart on the Resolution. Mayor Kahn repeated the proposed Budget total: \$81,746,416.

The motion to amend Resolution R-2025-12-A as described in the Finance Director’s memorandum, and to table the resulting “B” version of the Resolution until the June 19, 2025, carried unanimously with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

#### NOMINATION - TRUSTEES OF TRUST FUNDS AND CEMETERY TRUSTEES

Mayor Kahn nominated Andrew Royce to serve as a Regular member of the Trustees of Trust Funds and Cemetery Trustees, with a term to expire December 31, 2027. Mayor Kahn tabled the nomination until the next regular meeting.

## CONFIRMATIONS - HERITAGE COMMISSION, HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE

Mayor Kahn nominated Acacia Johnston to serve as a Regular member of the Heritage Commission, with a term to expire December 31, 2027. The Mayor also nominated Julie Odatto to serve as an Alternate member of the Human Rights Committee, with a term to expire December 31, 2026. A motion by Councilor Greenwald to confirm the nominations was duly seconded by Councilor Bosely. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

## COMMUNICATION - PABLO FLEISCHMANN/KEENE MUSIC FESTIVAL - REQUEST TO USE CITY PROPERTY - AUGUST 30, 2025

A communication was received from Pablo Fleischmann, requesting a license to use Downtown City property to conduct the annual Keene Music Festival on August 30, 2025. Mayor Kahn referred the communication to the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee.

## COMMUNICATION - JOE SCHAPIRO - SAFETY ISSUES ASSOCIATED WITH ON-STREET PARKING - CHURCH STREET

A communication was received from Joe Schapiro, submitting concerns he and his neighbors have relative to on-street parking on Church Street in the vicinity of Gathering Waters School and requesting a change in parking regulations. Mayor Kahn referred the communication to the Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee.

## COMMUNICATIONS - CAMERON TEASE/ROTARY CLUB OF KEENE, TOM JULIUS/MONADNOCK INTERFAITH PROJECT, PHIL WYZIK/KEENE ELM CITY ROTARY CLUB, AND CARL JACOBS – ALL FOR SUPPORT FOR A PEACE POLE ON CENTRAL SQUARE

Four communications were received, all in support for a Peace Pole on Central Square from: Cameron Tease/Rotary Club of Keene, Tom Julius/Monadnock Interfaith Project, Phil Wyzik/Keene Elm City Rotary Club, and Carl Jacobs. Mayor Kahn accepted all four communications as informational.

## MSFI REPORT - INSTALLATION OF A PEACE POLE - CENTRAL SQUARE

A Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee report was read, unanimously recommending the City Council move forward with a standalone Peace Pole in Central Square. A motion by Councilor Greenwald to carry out the intent of the Committee report was duly seconded by Councilor Filiault.

Councilor Workman thanked the petitioners for their patience while the Committee debated this topic. She was not at the meeting but expressed her support. Councilor Workman appreciated Mr. Julius' letter highlighting why the Peace Pole should be placed on Central Square, because it was something she had been struggling with, though she thought she would have voted in favor no matter what.

The motion to carry out the intent of the Committee report carried unanimously with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

#### MSFI REPORT - REQUEST FOR THE INSTALLATION OF A CROSSWALK - TIFFIN STREET

A Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee report was read, unanimously recommending the City Manager be authorized to install a new crosswalk on Tiffin Street near Timken. A motion by Councilor Greenwald to carry out the intent of the Committee report was duly seconded by Councilor Filiault.

Councilor Williams asked if there would be temporary signage to alert cars/pedestrians to the new crosswalk. The City Manager, Elizabeth Ferland, confirmed with the Public Work Director that there would be.

The motion to carry out the intent of the Committee report carried unanimously with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

#### MSFI REPORT - COURT STREET PEDESTRIAN SAFETY RISKS

A Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee report was read, unanimously recommending the City Manager be authorized to install additional signage, pavement markings, and lighting to enhance the safety of crosswalks on Court Street between Vernon Street and Starling Street, and on Washington Street between Taylor Street and Citizens Way. 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 - SAFETY ISSUES ASSOCIATED WITH THE DRIVEWAY AT 82 COURT STREET

A Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee report was read on a vote of 3–1, recommending the City Manager be directed to draft an ordinance to prohibit parking within 10 feet of a driveway. A motion by Councilor Greenwald to carry out the intent of the Committee report was duly seconded by Councilor Filiault.

Councilor Remy said he understood the concept of wanting to only have one rule but wondered if the rule could be written as a five-foot default or 10-feet by request. Councilor Greenwald said he tried for that. The City Attorney, Amanda Palmeira, said she did not want to go down the hypotheticals for the rule at this time. She had provided the guidance to the Committee that it is important to be consistent because when it comes to customizing by property, it moves away from immunities the City has for a discretionary function. She thought building that sort of customization into a rule would risk that. The City Attorney thought the Committee reached a solution that was a good compromise.

Councilor Tobin said she voted in opposition of this, stating she did not have a problem removing the space but did not feel confident that the visibility problem was just the result of the vehicles parked there. She noted the Committee heard from the neighbor across the street—another business in the same situation having accidents as people are coming out of their driveway—and she heard about things related to foliage, trees, vehicles, telephone poles, the angle of the road, and the height of the driveway. Looking at it, Councilor Tobin said she did not feel confident that it was the parking space itself. She would have preferred a broader approach than just going there and looking at the actual visibility and how much the parking space is the problem. Councilor Tobin did not think only changing the amount of space by a driveway would necessarily help.

Councilor Madison asked if this hypothetical Ordinance would be restricted to Court and Washington Streets or if it would be Citywide. City Manager, Elizabeth Ferland, said the MSFI Committee decided that this would not apply to residential neighborhoods, so this would be forced to roads like Court and Washington Streets, and not neighborhoods.

Councilor Workman was not present at the MSFI meeting on this matter. She stated that the petitioner had come to the Committee many times, so Councilor Workman appreciated that the Council was taking action to mitigate this problem. As Councilor Tobin said, there were many different factors involved, but Councilor Workman thought mitigating even one of those factors would be worth it for public safety. She recalled that at a previous MSFI meeting, she discussed the need for the City to consider public safety over parking, and she was glad her fellow Committee members saw that. She also reminded her fellow Councilors that the MSFI Committee had heard about the pedestrian safety issue many times, including regarding driveways on Marlboro Street, so she said it was impacting many different places in the City. Councilor Workman said she would support this, but the City should continue working on its parking and its Ordinance.

Councilor Lake said he generally approved of additional safety measures on Court Street, having been traveling the roadway his whole life and knowing how difficult it could be not only to access driveways there but also side streets. So, he supported added safety options, but said he slightly opposed the motion on the floor on procedural grounds of the Ordinance already being vague enough. He said the executive branch was already interpreting this to be five feet, so if it was the consensus of the Council, he did not see a reason why it could not be reinterpreted to five feet or whatever other safety measure it decides needs to go with it; that could happen without drafting a new ordinance for approval. Unless the City Manager, City Engineer, or Public Works Director were highly opposed to the 10-foot potential reinterpretation, Councilor Lake suggested not going through all the formality of adopting a new ordinance when the existing Ordinance could be interpreted to do exactly what the Council wanted for increased safety.

Mayor Kahn said his understanding from the MSFI Committee was that this would be an iterative step, and as Councilors Tobin and Workman pointed out, if it worked, it would be a step in the right direction.

The City Manager, Elizabeth Ferland, noted the City follows the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), and varying from that manual requires a reason identified in a traffic study. She asked for more input from the Public Works Director, Don Lussier, who was glad to hear the MUTCD referenced, but said it did not address the issue of distance from the driveway to a parking stall; it does address things like areas in front of sidewalks. In direct response to Councilor Lake, Mr. Lussier said the existing City Code prohibited parking in front of or in close proximity to a driveway. Mr. Lussier called that ambiguous, which he does not prefer; “close proximity,” for example, could mean something different to each person and he thought trying to define it differently for different zones in the City would make it even more confusing. So, he said the MSFI Committee talked about this being applicable to non-residential zones. Mr. Lussier thought it had been very difficult for the Keene Police Department to discern vehicles parked within five feet of driveways within the various City zones. He believes in well-defined, clear roles vs. strategic ambiguity

Councilor Filiault said this would not be a sure fix-all but that there was a reason this had come back to MSFI twice now, stating the Committee had talked about it ad nauseam. He said Councilor Lake’s point was discussed by the Committee, which considered every possible avenue to do this legally and safely. Councilor Filiault said the Committee’s recommendation sounded simple but was not simple; it would double the safety parameter from five to 10 feet and though it would not be a cure-all, he said it would make Washington and Court Streets a lot safer, which many community members petitioned for. The Councilor hoped his colleagues would vote unanimously in favor.

Councilor Favolise briefly reiterated Councilor Filiault’s point and recalled some of the other options discussed by the Committee. Councilor Favolise said the MSFI Committee discussed putting parking meters there and trying to deter some of the parking that way but that was not an option the Committee chose. The Councilor said he also questioned putting up a sign that says, “Compact Car Parking Only,” but the Committee was unsure if it would be enforceable. So, the Councilor said this was not something the Committee arrived at on a whim; there was extended discussion. He said he would vote to support this. He said Councilor Lake gave him something to think about, but Councilor Favolise did not think that doing nothing in this case was an option based on City staff’s feedback. To Councilor Workman’s point, Councilor Favolise said this was a safety issue that had continued to come up.

The motion to carry out the intent of the Committee report carried on a vote of 14–1. Councilor Tobin voted in opposition.

#### MSFI REPORT - REQUEST TO ADD AUDIO AND DATA CABLES AS PART OF DOWNTOWN INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT

A Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee report was read, unanimously recommending accepting the communication as informational. Mayor Kahn filed the report as informational.

**MSFI REPORT - VERBAL UPDATE: DOWNTOWN INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT**

A Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee report was read, unanimously recommending accepting the update about the Downtown Infrastructure Project as informational. Mayor Kahn filed the report as informational.

**FOP REPORT – 79-E COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION TAX RELIEF APPLICATION FOR 34 COURT LLC**

A Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee report was read, unanimously recommending that the structure proposed for redevelopment, located at 34 Court Street is a qualifying structure as defined by RSA 79-E that the structure is not within a currently defined tax increment financing district.

The structure is not a residential property subject to an election for tax assessment relief under the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program of RSA 75-1-A. That the proposed rehabilitation cost estimates exceed the threshold amount of \$75,000 and constitutes substantial rehabilitation. That the proposed rehabilitation provides the following public benefits as required by Resolution R-2018-33:

1. Enhances the economic vitality of downtown areas.
2. Enhances and improves the structure that is culturally or historically important on a local, regional, state, or national level.
3. Promotes the preservation and reuse of existing building stock.
4. It promotes the efficient design safety and a greater sense of community in a manner consistent with the Keene Comprehensive Master Plan, and
5. It will add to the city's employment base by creating at least one new full-time job in Keene's downtown area.

Therefore, the Committee recommends that the application for property tax relief on any assessed tax increment resulting from substantial rehabilitation of the qualifying structure be granted for a period of five years, beginning with a substantial rehabilitation as determined by the City's Community Development Department.

And conditioned upon the property owner granting to the City at the time of substantial completion, a covenant ensuring that the structure shall be maintained and used in a manner that furthers the public benefits for the period of the tax relief to be recorded at the Cheshire County Registry of Deeds at the expense of the property owner.

A motion by Councilor Powers to carry out the intent of the Committee report was duly seconded by Councilor Remy.

Councilor Jones called this something truly positive, recalling when Rhett Lamb and Med Kopczynski first introduced the concept of 79-E to the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee. Councilor Jones said there were negative public comments at the time asserting it would be a tax break but he said it was not a tax break; the owners still pay taxes on what is there, but someone will improve their property when they may not otherwise, and he said it

would not be possible if the City did not offer 79-E. He thanked Mr. Luse for making it work. Councilor Jones was very proud of this project. Mayor Kahn agreed that 79-E would give businesses like this one the opportunity to start up and develop an income stream to cover future expenses.

The motion to carry out the intent of the Committee report carried unanimously with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

#### RELATING TO THE APPROPRIATION OF FUNDS FOR THE BEAVER STREET BRIDGE AND SPRING STREET BRIDGE LOAD RATING STUDY - RESOLUTION R-2025-22

A Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee report was read, unanimously recommending adoption of Resolution R-2025-22. Mayor Kahn filed the report. A motion by Councilor Powers to adopt Resolution R-2025-22 was duly seconded by Councilor Remy. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

#### FOP REPORT - ENGINEERING AGREEMENT WITH HOYLE AND TANNER FOR THE BEAVER ST BRIDGE AND SPRING ST BRIDGE LOADING RATING STUDY

A Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee report was read, unanimously recommending the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to negotiate and execute an engineering services agreement with Hoyle & Tanner for the Beaver Street Bridge and Spring Street Bridge Load Rating Study up to \$25,000. 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 REPORTS - EXECUTION OF AN AGREEMENT FOR ENGINEERING SERVICES DURING CONSTRUCTION WITH GREENMAN-PEDERSEN INC (GPI), AS PART OF THE MARLBORO STREET CORRIDOR CONSTRUCTION PROJECT; AND EXECUTION OF AN AGREEMENT FOR ENGINEERING SERVICES DURING CONSTRUCTION WITH GREENMAN-PEDERSEN INC (GPI), AS PART OF THE GEORGE STREET BRIDGE RECONSTRUCTION PROJECT

The first Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee report was read, unanimously recommending the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to execute an agreement with Greenman-Pedersen Inc (GPI) for engineering services during construction as part of the Marlboro Street Corridor Construction Project (75J0018B) for up to \$300,000. A second Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee report was read, unanimously recommending the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to execute an agreement with Greenman-Pedersen Inc (GPI) for engineering services during construction as part of the George Street Bridge Replacement Project (75M020A), up to \$350,000. A motion by Councilor Powers to carry out the intent of both Committee reports was duly seconded by Councilor Remy. The motion carried unanimously with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

The Mayor called a recess from 9:01–9:06 PM.

## CITY MANAGER COMMENTS

City Manager, Elizabeth Ferland, recognized the Community Development Department team for its work on the Comprehensive Master Planning process and specifically Senior Planner, Mari Brunner. The City Manager said the team did a great job throughout the process, which began in January 2024.

The City Manager also recognized the Finance Department and specifically Finance Director, Kari Chamberlain, for her great work in a very short time with the Budget and working through the audit. The City Manager said the Finance Director's and all Departments' work made the Manager's job much easier, allowing her to put forward a budget that weighs both policies and the economic realities of the community, which the City Manager greatly appreciated.

Lastly, the City Manager shared details of the upcoming 2025 Juneteenth Celebration ([www.Juneteenth.com](http://www.Juneteenth.com)), sponsored and organized by the City's Human Rights Committee:

- June 11, 2025: Two film screenings at the Showroom at 6:00 PM
- June 12, 2025: Freedom Trail open for self-guided tours
- June 14, 2025: Musical performance & activities at Birdies
- June 19, 2025: Juneteenth Celebration at 5:00 PM on Central Square

Councilor Favolise asked the City Manager about a legislative topic that came up in the past around ambulance billing and reimbursement rates. The Councilor understood that a compromise was reached in Concord and asked if it was the number the City wanted. The City Manager said yes, 25%.

## REPORT - WARRANT FOR UNLICENSED DOGS - CITY CLERK

A memorandum read by the City Clerk, recommending that the list of unlicensed dogs be referred to the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee for their review and recommendation regarding issuance of the warrant for unlicensed dogs including authorization to issue forfeiture fines pursuant to NHRSA 466:14. Mayor Kahn referred the Warrant for Unlicensed Dogs to the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee.

## REPORT - ACCEPTANCE OF DONATION

A memorandum read from the Finance Director/Treasurer, Kari Chamberlain, recommending the Council accept the donation in the amount of \$2,000, as noted below, and the City Manager be authorized to use the donation in the manner specified by the donor:

- Pamela Slack, and her two brothers, have generously donated \$2,000 for the purchase of two memorial benches in honor of their mother, Patricia T. Russell, and their brother, Kevin Russell. Russell Park is named after Patricia T. Russell, who served as the first and only woman mayor of Keene, and the bocce court at the park was inspired by Kevin's enthusiasm and dedication to the Special Olympics.

A motion by Councilor Powers to accept the donation was duly seconded by Councilor Remy.



Councilor Powers noted this was a great honor for some people who spent a lot of time working for this community and he was sure the Deputy City Manager, Andy Bohannon, would get the benches finished quickly so everyone could enjoy them this summer.

The motion to carry out the intent of the Committee report carried unanimously with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

#### HERITAGE COMMISSION REPORT - CITY SUPPORT FOR A 250TH INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION - JULY 4, 2026

A communication was read from the Heritage Commission, requesting City sponsorship of an Independence Day 250th Anniversary Celebration on July 4, 2026, which would include a parade and activities on City property. Mayor Kahn referred the communication to the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee. The Mayor acknowledged the Heritage Commission's new Chair, Molly Ellis, for taking on the new role and suggesting the City's partnership in this celebration.

#### MORE TIME - MSFI REPORT - FREDERICK MACMILLAN - REQUEST TO INSTALL A SCULPTURE AT PATRICIA RUSSELL PARK

A Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee report was read, unanimously recommending placing the request to install a sculpture at the Patricia Russell Park on more time to allow staff to come back after review of the Public Art Resolution with the artist and petitioners to determine if it is appropriate for this space. Mayor Kahn granted more time.

#### ORDINANCE FOR SECOND READING - RELATING TO CLASS ALLOCATION AND SALARY SCHEDULE - ORDINANCE O-2025-18

A Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee report was read, unanimously recommending the adoption of Ordinance O-2025-18. Mayor Kahn tabled Ordinance O-2025-18 until the June 19 City Council agenda to be considered after the adoption of the Operating Budget Resolution.

#### RESOLUTION - RELATING TO APPROPRIATIONS OF FUNDS FOR THE TRANSFER STATION PAVING PROJECT - RESOLUTION R-2025-23

A Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee report was read, unanimously recommending the adoption of Resolution R-2025-23. A motion by Councilor Powers to adopt Resolution R-2025-23 was duly seconded by Councilor Remy.

The City Manager, Elizabeth Ferland, noted that there was money in the Capital Improvement Program for this but upon review, it was a much more extensive paving project, which is why the City did not underbid. The appropriation would be taken from the Transfer Station Fund Balance, which is a separate fund balance from the City's general taxation.

The motion to adopt Resolution R-2025-23 carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

RESOLUTIONS - FOP REPORT - RELATING TO THE APPROPRIATION OF FUNDS FOR THE FY 2025-2026 BOND ISSUES: FIRE APPARATUS REPLACEMENT PROGRAM - RESOLUTION R-2025-13; LOWER WINCHESTER STREET RECONSTRUCTION PROJECT - RESOLUTION R-2025-14; ROADWAY PRESERVATION & REHABILITATION PROJECT - RESOLUTION R-2025-15; STORMWATER RESILIENCY PROGRAM- RESOLUTION R-2025-16; T-HANGAR APRON MAINTENANCE PROJECT - RESOLUTION R-2025-17; SEWER IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM - RESOLUTION R-2025-18; 3MG WATER TANK REPAIRS - RESOLUTION R-2025-19; WATER DISTRIBUTION IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM - RESOLUTION R-2025-20; WELL FIELD UPGRADE PROGRAM - RESOLUTION R-2025-21

A Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee report was read, unanimously recommending adoption of the following Resolutions: Resolution R-2025-13; Resolution R-2025-14; Resolution R-2025-15; Resolution R-2025-16; Resolution R-2025-17; Resolution R-2025-18; Resolution R-2025-19; Resolution R-2025-20; and Resolution R-2025-21. Mayor Kahn tabled the Resolutions until the June 19 City Council agenda to be considered after the adoption of the Operating Budget Resolution.

#### NON PUBLIC SESSION

A motion by Councilor Greenwald to go into non-public session to receive legal advice pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II(L) was duly seconded by Councilor Bosley. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor. The session began at 9:17 PM.

The session concluded at 9:30 PM. A motion by Councilor Greenwald to seal the minutes of the non-public session held this evening as divulgence of the information would render the proposed actions ineffective was duly seconded by Councilor Bosley. 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 9:30 PM.

A true record, attest:



City Clerk