

A regular meeting of the Keene City Council was held on Thursday, June 19, 2025. The Honorable Mayor Jay V. Kahn called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Roll called: Laura E. Tobin, Michael J. Remy, Randy L. Filiault, Robert C. Williams, Edward J. Haas, Philip M. Jones, Andrew M. Madison, Kris E. Roberts, Jacob R. Favolise, Bryan J. Lake, Catherine I. Workman, Bettina A. Chadbourne, and Thomas F. Powers were present. Kate M. Bosley was absent. Having declared that a quorum was present in the Council Chamber, the Mayor acknowledged that Councilor Greenwald requested to participate remotely due to family travel; Councilor Greenwald stated that he was alone at his location.

Councilor Roberts objected to Councilor Greenwald's remote participation due to the reason. Councilor Roberts felt it was a choice, and that family vacation was not one of the intended allowances for remote participation in the Rules of Order. He did not think it constituted unforeseen circumstances as the rule intended.

Hearing the challenge, Mayor Kahn called for a vote on the remote participation per the City Council's Rules of Order. On a vote of 12–2, the City Council allowed Councilor Greenwald's remote participation. Councilors Roberts and Workman voted in opposition. Councilor Bosley was absent.

Councilor Filiault led the Pledge of Allegiance.

MINUTES FROM PRECEDING MEETING

A motion by Councilor Powers to adopt the June 5, 2025, minutes as presented was duly seconded by Councilor Filiault. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 14 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilor Bosley was absent.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Kahn wished everyone a Happy Juneteenth (June 19), noting today represented the sixth celebration of the national holiday and fifth of the state holiday. He thanked the Human Rights Committee, including Councilor Workman, for organizing the celebration on Central Square.

The Mayor announced that Concerts on the Common would begin on Wednesday, July 2, 2025, noting that more information is available on www.Keeneparks.com.

Next, Mayor Kahn shared that he participated in the NH Tech Alliance National Defense Conference along with optics manufacturers from Keene. That was a great opportunity to showcase the region. As of January 2024, the Mayor and Steve Fortier of New Hampshire Business and Economic Affairs have been convening The Keene Area Manufacturing Association. Therefore, Mayor Kahn and Mr. Fortier were invited by the NH Tech Alliance—a statewide organization—to present at the Northeast National Security Conference along with Jim Crowley from Keene State College, Samrad Bukovcan from Moore Nanotechnology Systems, and John Solomonides from Soldiers Systems D-MIL. The Mayor called it a great opportunity to showcase the optics manufacturing ecosystem that exists in this region and said it was very well received.

The Mayor also announced the *Jumanji* 30th Anniversary Celebration: A screening of the film will be held on June 20, 2025, at 6:00 PM at the Colonial Theatre, as well as events in downtown on Saturday, June 21, 2025, including a custom-themed road race on Main Street at 12:00 PM followed by a parade at 12:30 PM. Finally, there will be a scavenger hunt on Sunday, June 22, 2025, from 12:00 PM–4:00 PM, as well as a closing ceremony at the Central Square gazebo at noon.

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.

Lastly, the Mayor recognized Councilor Powers for an announcement regarding funeral arrangements for Lt. Aaron Cooper of the Keene Fire Department. Councilor Powers shared details of downtown impacts for the services, apologizing for any inconvenience for the 1–1.5 hours. On behalf of the Fire Department, Councilor Powers thanked all the individuals and businesses for stepping up to help. He also thanked communities like Berlin and Manchester, whose Fire Departments would help cover calls in Keene as needed over the next 36–48 hours.

COMMUNITY RECOGNITION - SAVINGS BANK OF WALPOLE - 150TH ANNIVERSARY

Mayor Kahn recognized the Savings Bank of Walpole’s 150th Anniversary. There is a sign inside the banks stating, “We put the community in banking.” Mayor Kahn said that had been their focus for 150 years, effective July 2, 2025. Bank President, Mark Bodin, challenged his staff to perform 150 Good Deeds in the course of the year; a list of those Good Deeds was published on the Savings Bank of Walpole website. Mr. Bodin is a member of the Monadnock Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (MDEIB) Coalition and Treasurer at Cheshire Medical Center. The Mayor said about one third of the staff at Savings Bank of Walpole (SBW) were actively engaged in some organization or board in the community beyond this Good Deeds program. For example, Dominic Perkins was on the Southwestern Community Services Board of Directors with the Mayor, Kristen Noonan was a member of the Monadnock Regional School District and Monadnock United Way Board of Directors, Danielle Ruffo was Board Chair of the Keene Housing Kids Collaborative and a Cheshire Health Foundation Board member, and Andrew Richardson was a member of the Chamber of Commerce. Mayor Kahn welcomed Mr. Bodin, also a member of the SBW Board of Directors and Local Corporator of NH Mutual Bancorp.

Mr. Bodin thanked the Mayor for his kindness and the Council for this opportunity to celebrate SBW’s 150th Anniversary. He said every single day of those years, SBW did nothing but serve the financial and community needs of this region; while other banks left the region, SBW stayed, even opening two new branches in recent years, now totaling seven in Cheshire County. Mr. Bodin cited approximately 100 Bank employees and 24,000 customers who had \$800 million entrusted in SBW. Comparatively, he said big banks typically would not serve small businesses

in rural towns. Whereas SBW closes over \$100 million of loans annually between businesses and individuals. Mr. Bodin was very proud of the Bank, but more than that, people tell him being a community institution is a part SBW's business model; he said the community engagement function was purposeful, with three dedicated staff. Staff are given unlimited time to be involved in the community, and community members notice. Mr. Bodin said SBW does not think there is anything more important, with its business model to be purposefully involved in the community and engaged; it had been in the company's DNA for 150 years. He explained that was why it had not changed from a Mutual Bank, which means it does not have outside shareholders or owners—SBW is owned by the community and there is no incentive to leave. He said under Gregg Tewksbury's leadership—fellow member of the SBW Board of Directors and Local Corporator of NH Mutual Bancorp—SBW was a part of a mutual holding company with like-minded banks. Mr. Bodin continued, describing the 150th Anniversary Celebration, working with their partners and the SwampBats on a community event on June 28, 2025, 4:00–8:00 PM, at Alumni Field (free admission). Mr. Bodin said the event would have a lot of kids' activities and 25–30 nonprofits tabling, with incentives for people to engage with them. He asked the Council and City to view the SBW website as they were soliciting Good Deeds to distribute to their staff. For example, a nine-year-old in Winchester submitted the idea for a blanket drive and SBW implemented the idea with the child, collecting many blankets because of their one idea. Mr. Bodin remarked on the potential of everyone's collective suggestions for Good Deeds.

Mayor Kahn invited the Council to join him when he presents a Proclamation on behalf of the City on June 28, 2025, at City Hall at 9:00 AM honoring the Savings Bank of Walpole's 150th Anniversary.

NOMINATIONS - LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES, ENERGY AND CLIMATE COMMITTEE

Mayor Kahn renominated Hollie Seiler and Pam Russell Slack to serve as Regular members of the Library Board of Trustees, both with terms to expire June 30, 2028. The Mayor also nominated Catherine Koning to serve as an Alternate member of the Energy and Climate Committee, with a term to expire December 31, 2026. Mayor Kahn tabled the nominations until the next regular meeting.

CONFIRMATION - 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. A motion by Councilor Powers to confirm the nomination was duly seconded by Councilor Filiault. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 14 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilor Bosley was absent.

COMMUNICATION - LET IT SHINE - REQUEST TO USE CITY PROPERTY - 2025 PUMPKIN FESTIVAL

A communication was received from Mike Giacomo, on behalf of Let It Shine, requesting the event license for the 2025 Pumpkin Festival, scheduled for October 17 and 18, 2025. Mayor Kahn referred the communication to the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee.

COMMUNICATION - KEENE PRIDE - REQUEST TO DESIGNATE KEENE A SANCTUARY CITY FOR THE LGBTQIA+ COMMUNITY

A communication was received from Adam Toepfer, Keene Pride President, along with a petition requesting that the City of Keene be designated as a sanctuary city for the LGBTQIA+ community. The petition containing 785 signatures as well as the signatures of the nine members of Keene Pride's Board of Directors, was placed on file with the City Clerk. Mayor Kahn referred the communication to the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee.

COMMUNICATION - UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST - LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR KEENE PRIDE'S PETITION TO BE DESIGNATED A SANCTUARY CITY FOR THE LGBTQIA+ COMMUNITY

A communication was received from Reverend Cynthia Bagley and the United Church of Christ in Keene indicating their support for the Keene Pride petition for Keene to be designated a sanctuary city for the LGBTQIA+ community. Mayor Kahn accepted the communication as informational.

COMMUNICATION - BCM ENVIRONMENTAL LAND LAW, PLLC - REQUEST FOR CITY'S CONTRIBUTION TO MONADNOCK CONSERVANCY FOR DRAINAGE REPLACEMENT AT 0 ASHUELOT STREET

A communication was received from Attorney Thomas R. Hanna, representing Monadnock Conservancy, requesting the City Council authorize the allocation of \$234,845 to pay for the portion of the Conservancy's site work relating to drainage replacement and installation of a flood compensation swale on property located at 0 Ashuelot Street. Mayor Kahn referred the communication to the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee.

COMMUNICATION - COUNCILOR REMY - PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO FISCAL YEAR 2026 OPERATING BUDGET

A communication was received from Councilor Michael Remy, pursuant to Section 30 of the Council Rules of Order, requesting an increase to the Arts Alive allocation in General Fund account 521815 from \$500 to \$7,000, with a corresponding \$6,500 decrease to Outside Agency account 521330 for the Keene Senior Center. Mayor Kahn tabled the communication until the consideration of Resolution R-2025-12-B later during this meeting.

COMMUNICATION - COUNCILORS TOBIN AND WILLIAMS - PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO FISCAL YEAR 2026 OPERATING BUDGET

A communication was received from Councilors Laura Tobin and Robert Williams, pursuant to Section 30 of the Council Rules of Order, requesting to increase the Arts Alive allocation in

General Fund account 521815 from \$500 to \$10,000. Mayor Kahn tabled the communication until the consideration of Resolution R-2025-12-B later during this meeting.

COMMUNICATION - COUNCILOR LAKE - PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO FISCAL YEAR 2026 OPERATING BUDGET

A communication was received from Councilor Bryan Lake, pursuant to Section 30 of the Council Rules of Order, requesting to amend the Fiscal Year 2026 Operating Budget as follows: increase General Fund account 521815 for Arts Alive from \$500 to \$10,000; increase Outside Agency account 521360 for the Keene Community Kitchen from \$110,000 to \$115,000; increase Outside Agency account 521470 for Kh Kids Collaborative from \$12,500 to \$13,000; increase Outside Agency account 521330 for the Senior Citizens Center from \$16,500 to \$17,750; and that account 580100-Transfer-Capital Reserve be decreased from \$2,295,000 to \$2,285,500. Mayor Kahn tabled the communication until the consideration of Resolution R-2025-12-B later during this meeting.

COMMUNICATION - COUNCILOR FAVOLISE - REQUEST TO PLACE KENO QUESTION ON 2025 MUNICIPAL GENERAL ELECTION BALLOT

A communication was received from Councilor Jacob Favolise, requesting that the City Council consider placing a question on the November 4, 2025, Municipal General Election Ballot asking voters if they wish to prohibit the operation of Keno games within Keene. His letter referenced House Bill 737, which would authorize Keno statewide except in municipalities that have opted out. Mayor Kahn referred the communication to the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee. However, he said to expect the need to hold a hearing afterward, once the City receives confirmation that the state has acted on legislation awaiting signature.

COMMUNICATION - COUNCILOR HAAS - AVAILABILITY OF 2025 HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN AND SUGGESTIONS RELATED TO CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS PLANNING

A communication was received from Councilor Edward Haas, requesting the 2025 Hazard Mitigation Plan continue to be made available online for public review, and further suggesting the City of Keene consider developing Continuity of Operations plans for mapping departmental functions and fulfillment of critical services. Mayor Kahn referred the communication to the City Manager.

PLD REPORTS - KEENE MUSIC FESTIVAL - REQUEST TO USE CITY PROPERTY - AUGUST 30, 2025; & KEENE ELM CITY ROTARY CLUB - REQUEST TO USE CITY PROPERTY - CLARENCE DEMAR MARATHON - SEPTEMBER 28, 2025

The first Planning, Licenses and Development Committee report was read, unanimously recommending the Keene Music Festival be granted a street fair license to use downtown City rights-of-way, as well as use of downtown City property on Central Square, Railroad Square, and designated parking spaces on Main Street to conduct the Keene Music Festival on Saturday, August 30, 2025 from 8:00 AM to 11:00 PM, with downtown merchant sidewalk sales permitted

in locations where a minimum of six feet of clearance is maintained for pedestrian access. In addition, the applicant is permitted to close off a portion of Railroad Street from Main Street to Wells Street and a portion of Lamson Street from Main Street to Federal Street. This permission is granted subject to the following conditions: the signing of a 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; and submittal of signed letters of permission from any private property owners for the use of their property. In addition, the petitioner is granted use of the requested parking spaces free of charge under the provisions of the Free Parking Policy. 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. The petitioner agrees to absorb the cost of any City services over and above any amount of City funding allocated in the FY 26 Community Events Budget. Said payment shall be made within 30 days of the date of invoicing.

A second Planning, Licenses and Development Committee report was read, unanimously recommending The Elm City Rotary Club be granted permission to sponsor the Clarence DeMar Marathon on September 28, 2025, subject to the signing of a revocable license and indemnification agreement and the submittal of a certificate of liability insurance in the amount of \$1,000,000 listing the City of Keene as an additional insured. This license is conditional upon the petitioner providing an adequate number of volunteer race marshals to ensure runner safety along the course, and submittal of signed letters of permission from any private property owners for the use of their property. 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. The petitioner agrees to absorb the cost of any City services over and above any amount of City funding allocated in the FY 26 Community Events Budget. Said payment shall be made within 30 days of the date of invoicing.

A motion by Councilor Jones to carry out the intent of both Committee reports was duly seconded by Councilor Williams. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 14 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilor Bosley was absent.

PLD REPORT - COUNCILOR JONES - REQUEST FOR RESOLUTION (DECLARATION) HONORING THE LGBTQIA+ COMMUNITY

A Planning, Licenses and Development Committee report was read, unanimously recommending the Request for a Declaration Honoring the LGBTQIA+ Community be accepted as informational. Mayor Kahn filed the report as Informational.

PLD REPORT - 2025 HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

A Planning, Licenses and Development Committee report was read, unanimously recommending the City Council adopt the 2025 Hazard Mitigation Plan and that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to execute the Plan. A motion by Councilor Jones to carry out the intent of the Committee report was duly seconded by Councilor Williams. The motion carried

unanimously on a roll call vote with 14 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilor Bosley was absent.

PLD REPORT - WARRANT FOR UNLICENSED DOGS

A Planning, Licenses and Development Committee report was read, unanimously recommending the City Council issue a warrant for unlicensed dogs pursuant to NHRSA 466:14, and the Keene Police Department and the City Clerk's Office be directed to issue a civil forfeiture to those dog owners who have failed to license their dog by April 30, 2025. A motion by Councilor Jones to carry out the intent of the Committee report was duly seconded by Councilor Williams. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 14 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilor Bosley was absent.

FOP REPORT - REQUEST TO TRANSFER FY 2025 FUNDS TO THE AMBULANCE CIP

A Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee report was read, unanimously recommending the City Manager be authorized to transfer available FY2025 operating funds in the amount of \$39,564.00 from the Ambulance Transfer-Grant fund (line item 40200000-580080), to the FY2025 Ambulance Replacement Program CIP (#40M0002B). A motion by Councilor Powers to carry out the intent of the Committee report was duly seconded by Councilor Remy. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 14 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilor Bosley was absent.

FOP REPORT - WRITTEN PUBLIC COMMENTS - PROPOSED FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026 OPERATING BUDGET

A Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee report was read, unanimously recommending the written public comments from Cameron Tease in support of Outside Agency funding for the Keene Senior Center be accepted as informational. Mayor Kahn filed the report as Informational.

FOP REPORTS - REQUEST TO EXPEND FUNDS FROM CDD PERSONNEL FUNDS TO PURCHASE A COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PERMITTING SOFTWARE PLATFORM; & REQUEST TO APPROVE A CHANGE ORDER TO THE OPENGOV (CARTEGRAPH) CONTRACT (PO20250067) FOR THE INCLUSION OF A CLOUD PERMITTING PLATFORM FOR THE PLANNING, BUILDING, CODE ENFORCEMENT AND HEALTH INSPECTION SERVICES OF THE CITY

The first Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee report was read, unanimously recommending the City Manager be authorized to expend \$93,557 from FY25 Community Development Department (CDD) Personnel funds for the purchase of the OpenGov Permitting Software Platform.

A second Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee report was read, unanimously recommending the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to execute a change order to the existing contract the City has with OpenGov for the inclusion of a cloud permitting platform.

A motion by Councilor Powers to carry out the intent of the Committee reports was duly seconded by Councilor Remy. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 14 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilor Bosley was absent.

FOP REPORT - LWCF GRANT ROUND 36 - INTENT TO APPLY

A Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee report was read, unanimously recommending the City Manager be authorized to execute an Intent to Apply for LWCF Grant Round 36 for the Ashuelot Green Space 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 on a roll call vote with 14 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilor Bosley was absent.

FOP REPORT - LEVITT MUSIC SERIES GRANT - LETTER OF COMMITMENT

A Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee report was read, unanimously recommending accepting the withdrawal of the Levitt Music Series Grant project request for Letter of Commitment. A motion by Councilor Powers to carry out the intent of the Committee report was duly seconded by Councilor Remy. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 14 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilor Bosley was absent.

FOP REPORT - ACCEPTANCE OF FAA AIP GRANT FOR AIRPORT – AIRPORT TAXIWAY ‘A’ RECONSTRUCTION PROJECT

A Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee report was read, unanimously recommending the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to accept, execute, and expend grant funding for up to the amount of \$3,300,000 from the Federal Aviation Administration Airport Improvement Program for the Taxiway A 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 on a roll call vote with 14 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilor Bosley was absent.

FOP REPORT - AGREEMENT FOR CONSTRUCTION ENGINEERING SERVICES WITH GREENMAN-PEDERSEN INC (GPI), FOR THE ISLAND STREET INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT

A 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 Island Street Infrastructure Improvements Project (32MI0224, 34MI0224, 75M00624), up to the aggregate amount of \$250,000. A motion by Councilor Powers to carry out the intent of the Committee report was duly seconded by Councilor Remy. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 14 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilor Bosley was absent.

CITY MANAGER COMMENTS

The City Manager, Elizabeth Ferland, reported that the Keene Public Library will now be offering public access to a Grant Station, a resource for nonprofits, government agencies, and educational institutions seeking grants. It will offer access to 150,000 plus funding profiles, 15,000 curated grants, as well as strategies and other tools for successful applications. The City Manager said this will be a welcome addition to the Library for the many nonprofits in the area.

City Manager Ferland also shared an update related to the 2025 Hazard Mitigation Plan the Council had just adopted: The plan will now be posted to the City's website. To date, it was posted on the Southwest Regional Planning Commission's website, as they assisted with drafting the document. In addition, Kürt Blomquist, the City's Emergency Management Administrator, was assigned duties working with the City departments to update Continuation of Operations Plans as a part of his Fiscal Year 2026 contract.

The City Manager also noted that Community Night will be Tuesday, August 19, 2025, 4:00 PM–7:00 PM at the Public Works facility. She said it is always a great family-friendly evening, with a lot of equipment out, and she hoped everyone would attend.

Lastly, she noted that one of Keene's own, Fire Lieutenant Aaron Cooper, passed away after a long and courageous battle with cancer. The City Manager said his loss was deeply felt by his family, friends, colleagues, and the entire Fire Department. Lieutenant Cooper would be laid to rest on June 20, 2025, and the City Manager invited City Councilors to join Department heads and other staff proceeding together to the United Church of Christ to enter as a group immediately following the firefighters and their families. The City Manager reported that on behalf of the City, flowers were sent both to the family and to the services in honor of Lieutenant Cooper's memory and service.

MUNICIPAL INVESTMENT FUND GRANT - REQUEST FOR PRE-APPROVAL OF GRANT ACCEPTANCE

The Mayor said this is time sensitive due to the Council's summer break.

A motion by Councilor Powers to suspend Section 26 of the Rules of Order to act on the memorandum on first reading was duly seconded by Councilor Remy. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 14 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilor Bosley was absent.

Community Development Director, Paul Andrus, agreed that this is a time-sensitive grant. The City was originally approached by Local Governments for Sustainability USA (ICLEI) in a planning capacity for a program development grant to support green energy projects in the region. He said the goal was to essentially build an effective coalition of partners who would attract capital and accelerate green energy projects supported by the larger community. The request submitted was for \$135,245 to hire a consultant or contract employee to work on a number of initiatives along with Keene's core coalition partners. Mr. Andrus said there would be no guarantees, noting the original funding source had been pulled back like many of Keene's

federal dollars had been. He explained that the City received notice that there is potential for it to receive this grant, so with all the timing involved, staff wants to get this pre-approval from the Council.

Councilor Favolise asked for an example of a project that would or would not be eligible for promotion under this grant. Mr. Andrus replied that it will ultimately be for clean energy projects, and the building capacity to find additional funding sources, programmatic elements, and approval processes to support those types of projects. He referred to the memo provided and said these included market building activities, which is terminology the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) uses including marketing, customer education and engagement, community outreach, contractor engagement, workforce development, development of clean energy and climate action plans, and more activities this grant cover. The City Manager, Elizabeth Ferland, added that this will hopefully be the first grant of more to come. She agrees that this program is about building capacity—actually putting together the programs that the City might be able to implement in Keene and the region to bring forward more green projects. However, the actual construction projects themselves will be down the line.

Councilor Haas asked if this grant would cover hiring another employee for the duration of the grant. The City Manager replied that part of it would be used to hire a consultant or contract employee, and that decision had not yet been made—the contract employee would work until the end of the grant for this purpose. Senior Planner, Mari Brunner, reminded the City Manager that the City always wanted to do more with its Sustainability Coordinator position but never had funds to do so. The City Manager thought a lot of the work this consultant/contract employee and coalition might accomplish will be similar to what a Sustainability Coordinator might do for the City. So, she thought there was potential for opportunities.

Councilor Powers made the following motion, which was duly seconded by Councilor Remy.

On a roll call vote of 14–0, the City Council authorized the City Manager to do all things necessary to accept, execute and expend a Municipal Investment Fund Phase I grant, if awarded to the City of Keene, and enter into a subgrant agreement with ICLEI USA within 30 days of receipt of a notice of funding. Councilor Bosley was absent.

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

A Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee report was read, unanimously recommending placing the request for City support for a 250th Independence Day Celebration - July 4, 2026, on more time to allow staff to begin planning efforts with the Heritage Commission to determine the City's role and the scope of event. Mayor Kahn granted the request for more time.

ORDINANCE FOR FIRST READING - RELATING TO PROHIBITED PARKING IN PROXIMITY TO DRIVEWAYS - O-2025-22

A memorandum was read from the Public Works Director, Don Lussier, recommending that Ordinance O-2025-22 Relating to Prohibited Parking in Proximity to Driveways be referred to

the Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee. The Mayor referred Ordinance O-2025-22 to the Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee.

ORDINANCE FOR SECOND READING - RELATING TO AMENDMENTS TO THE LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE, FEATHER SIGNS IN INDUSTRIAL DISTRICTS - ORDINANCE O-2025-08-A

A Planning, Licenses and Development Committee report was read, unanimously recommending the Council adopt Ordinance O-2025-08-A Relating to Feather Signs in the Industrial and Industrial Park Zones. A motion by Councilor Jones to adopt Ordinance O-2025-08-A was duly seconded by Councilor Williams. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 14 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilor Bosley was absent.

ORDINANCE FOR SECOND READING - RELATING TO AMENDMENTS TO LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE - SINGLE-FAMILY PARKING REQUIREMENTS - ORDINANCE O-2025-09

A Planning, Licenses and Development Committee report was read, unanimously recommending the Council adopt Ordinance O-2025-09 Relating to Parking Requirements for Single Family Dwellings. A motion by Councilor Jones to adopt Ordinance O-2025-09 was duly seconded by Councilor Williams. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 14 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilor Bosley was absent.

ORDINANCE FOR SECOND READING - RELATING TO THE DISCHARGE OF FIREWORKS - ORDINANCE O-2025-19

A Planning, Licenses and Development Committee report was read, unanimously recommending the Council adopt Ordinance O-2025-19 Relating to Discharge of Fireworks. A motion by Councilor Jones to adopt Ordinance O-2025-19 was duly seconded by Councilor Williams.

Mayor Kahn thanked the City Attorney, Amanda Palmeira, for her input on this straightforward Ordinance.

Councilor Williams talked about the origins of the Ordinance, particularly for newer Councilors. He recalled a few years prior, when there was an incident, in which the Council approved a fireworks display at a private location that it did not typically approve. The Council learned later via social media that an autistic child living nearby was affected because the parents did not have ample warning. That got Councilor Williams thinking about the fact that fireworks are fun, but they also have negative effects for autistic people, people with PTSD, and others who do not like the lights and noise, as well as animals, and the natural environment. He appreciated all the work that has gone into this Ordinance. Councilor Williams added that in addition to capping the number of fireworks shows that the Council would approve in a year, the Ordinance closed a loophole that would allow commercial fireworks operators to use non-commercial fireworks to avoid getting a License. He hoped his fellow Councilors would vote in favor.

Councilor Haas pointed out that for the most part, this would not change the number of fireworks shows in a year—there would still be Independence Eve and the SwampBats end-of-season game, for example. He said this would just keep them from getting out of hand and was closing the loopholes Councilor Williams mentioned.

The motion to adopt Ordinance O-2025-19 carried on a roll call vote of 13–1. Councilor Remy voted in opposition. Councilor Bosley was absent.

TABLED ITEM - RESOLUTION - RELATING TO THE 2025–2026 OPERATING BUDGET - RESOLUTION R-2025-12-B

Mayor Kahn removed from the table Resolution R-2025-12-B Relating to the 2025-2026 Fiscal Year Budget and the City Clerk, Terri Hood, read it into the record.

Resolution R-2025-12-B – Relating to the 2025/2026 Fiscal Year Budget: *“Resolved by the City Council of the City of Keene, as follows: That the sum of \$30,291,365 be raised by taxation during the current year, which together with \$45,888,796 for estimated operating revenues aggregating \$76,180,161 is hereby appropriated for the use of the several departments of the City Government, and further that the sum of \$5,566,255 be appropriated for capital expenditures and capital reserve appropriations in the City proprietary funds, funded by the use of capital reserves, fund balance and current revenues, for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025, as attached hereto and made a part thereof.”*

A motion by Councilor Powers to adopt Resolution R-2025-12-B was duly seconded by Councilor Remy.

Councilor Powers—Chair of the Finance, Organization and Personnel (FOP) Committee—summarized the City’s spending plan for the next year, noting a lot went into getting it before the entire Council. Councilor Powers said the Budget represented a lot of daily work by the staff who build it in every Department, and specifically the Finance Department who pulls everything together. He said the City had a lot of activity and he thought it had a process that worked well to consider and try to finance all the needs, so they do not adversely affect the average person paying the bill through their taxes. Councilor Powers said he was very happy to introduce the 2025/2026 Fiscal Year Budget and urged his colleagues to vote unanimously to adopt it after discussing all amendments.

Councilor Filiault noted this was his 27th Budget, four of which he was glad to be the FOP Chair, so he appreciated the challenging process. That said, the Councilor was very clear that he would not support any changes to the Budget, no matter what the amendment. He felt that staff and the FOP Committee put together an excellent Budget, stating kudos to the City Manager that the Budget was actually 0.7% below the rate of inflation for the area; he called that an incredible budget. Councilor Filiault recalled arguments during his 27 years because when he was an early Councilor, before there was a protocol for nonprofit funding, the Council would argue the Budget past midnight. He said it was based on emotion and any one Councilor could be correct about why any cause deserved funding; and not supporting one could hurt someone politically. Councilor Filiault said that system was not fair to Councilors or nonprofits, because whoever

could give the best argument might get the most money even though they might not have deserved more. So, the Council developed the existing protocol after former Mayor Lynch created a committee, which Councilor Filiault Chaired, to study how the City funded Outside Agencies on logic and protocol—not emotion. The Committee developed the existing protocol for spending the Budget before adoption night to avoid the emotional pleas. The protocol is based on how many Keene residents use the particular nonprofit, whether the nonprofit could use funding from other sources/towns, etc. Councilor Filiault said that if any Councilors did not think that protocol was fair, they should speak with the City Manager about a process for changing it, not do this on the Council floor based on which Councilor gave the best emotional speech. He said each Councilor could give an impassioned speech for each Agency and would be in the right, and the Council would be back to where it was years ago, arguing the Budget past midnight, changing it at the 11th hour for nonprofits. Councilor Filiault added that it was not fair to those nonprofit directors who went through the Council protocol and did not show up at the last minute to ask for more money; if they knew they could get more money, he said they might have been there too. He agreed that the argument that agencies were getting less money from the state and the federal governments was legitimate, but said those budgets were still incomplete, and it was unclear if the City would even get the allocations it needed from them. He cited the Rooms and Meals Tax being cut again in the City. So, Councilor Filiault asked where these extra allocations for the Outside Agencies would come from when the City is cut from state and federal budgets too. If Councilors wanted to change this protocol, he reiterated sitting down with the City Manager when emotions were not so high, doing so based on logic. He knew there would be amendments proposed to increase the funding for one Outside Agencies and to take from one agency and give to another at the 11th hour. He stated again that the Budget should be based more on logic. Councilor Filiault knew the FOP Committee and staff were aware of the six months of work that went into the Budget and every single line item; he said Councilors had a chance to attend every FOP meeting to propose changes. He reiterated that he did not support last-minute changes for nonprofits based on emotion and Councilors should propose changes to the funding protocol.

Councilor Remy said he generally agreed with Councilor Filiault except that it was completely wrong in the instance of Arts Alive, because the Agency was not listed as an Outside Agency to be able to ask for money. So, when Arts Alive came forward at the Public Hearing, it was their first opportunity to request money and be evaluated through that very detailed process. Having gone through that process and not wanting the Budget to go up more, Councilor Remy said he was trying to see if the City could meet the Agency's needs in some way because he thought it was important. He reiterated that Arts Alive did not have the same opportunity to request funding as the other Agencies and called it a matter of tradeoffs and how to balance the Budget to stay flat. Councilor Remy did not think it was fair to call that an 11th hour change, because the Council's process allows Agencies to come to the Public Hearing and request changes and this was when the Rules allowed Councilors to submit amendments. So, Councilor Remy felt that calling these amendments 11th hour was just Councilor Filiault trying to make his point, not a fair representation.

Councilor Roberts heard some of his fellow Councilors talking about being insulted because other Councilors were not following the process and submitting amendments based on emotions. Councilor Roberts stated that he was insulted because he had a long professional career of

making decisions without emotions involved. If he made mistakes, people died; so, he had to be emotionless. Thus, Councilor Filiault insinuating that fellow elected officials did not have the ability to make judgments without emotions completely insulted Councilor Roberts. Councilor Roberts said he and every Councilor had every right to stand and state what they thought was best about every proposed amendment. He added that it was wrong to imply anyone who spoke on emotion was not a leader and should not be there.

Before further comments on the general Budget, Mayor Kahn heard the proposed amendments. Mayor Kahn removed from the table Communications from Councilors Remy, Williams and Tobin, and Lake.

A motion by Councilor Remy was duly seconded by Councilor Workman to amend Resolution R-2025-12-B to increase the Arts Alive allocation in the General Fund account 521815 from \$500 to \$7,000, and that the Outside Agency account 521330 for the Keene Senior Center be reduced by \$6,500 to offset.

Councilor Favolise addressed this proposed amendment, noting as Councilor Remy said, there were three different ways to get to a similar result for the Arts Alive funding. Councilor Favolise wanted to read from the Community Funded Events portion of the Budget, which referenced the City Council's policy on the events. He said Councilor Remy referenced Community Funded Events in his letter to the Council introducing the amendment. Councilor Favolise said everything listed under Community Funded Events was a singular occurrence event—like Independence Eve and 4 on the 4th Road Race. He wondered if that accurately captured the funding under discussion. Councilor Favolise said he was always happy to go back and review policies. He said that for this particular Resolution, it stated: *“For an event to be a Community Funded Event, the City Council must find the Event takes place on public property, that the Event applicant is registered with the State of New Hampshire as a nonprofit organization, but also that the Event shall have been previously produced at least twice prior.”* Councilor Favolise said he struggled to see how something like the Keene Senior Center, as an entity, would be a Community Funded Event. He thought it was something the Council should keep in mind.

Councilor Remy clarified, confirming that the Senior Center was not categorized as a Community Funded Event but as an Outside Agency. His reason for referencing Community Funded Events in his communication was because Keene's policy states that an event must support up to 500 people in order to be considered for Community Event funding; even in that case, he said the City caps them at a \$10,000 non-cash expense, so they would not be charged for City services used. Councilor Remy explained that he was trying to correlate the services offered in being a social organization and helping to break the social isolation associated with seniors, stating it is similar for young people, with large percentages of both demographics not having someone to call. He cited the Senior Center's self-reported numbers, with 400 members, 100 of them requiring financial support. So, Councilor Remy said the \$16,500 request would be \$165/person, or \$40 for the entire membership at the funded amount, and his suggested reduction to \$10,000 would be \$100/person in financial need or approximately \$25 per total member. He thought his proposal would be more aligned with the volume of service provided to the City, which was why he suggested pulling from that line item. Mayor Kahn added that he took notes during the Senior Center's presentation, and they cited 468 members, which would cut down to

\$25/member with Councilor Remy's proposal. The Mayor said he was bothered by how close the federal and state Budget processes were to the municipal fiscal year.

Councilor Haas did not want to change the established protocols that brought the other Outside Agencies their funding and take away from another Agency that may have counted on what it thought the City was going to approve. He called Arts Alive a community service and the others Outside Agencies, stating the Council would get to that in the next proposed amendment—money for the arts, which was missing. He said it was not a Community Event or Outside Agency that replaces a social service the City would otherwise do. Councilor Haas agreed with Councilor Filiault, stating that he would not support any amendments to the Budget at this meeting although Councilor Remy tried to balance it out. However, Councilor Haas stated the Council knew the direction it wanted to go in supporting the arts.

Councilor Roberts did not support taking any money away from the Senior Center, suggesting looking at the statistics and demographics in the City of Keene. He cited the high rate of homelessness—including seniors in the Hundred Nights Shelter and others barely surviving in their homes because of increasing tax rates—as well as increased suicide rates for those over age 55 often due to loneliness. Without the Senior Center, Councilor Roberts said some of these people would not be here. He added that over the previous 20 years, Councilors had played a lot of back-and-forth about whether the Senior Center would become a part of the City's Budget; he said the City thought about selling the Senior Center for a long time and moving it into the Recreation Center. Councilor Roberts did not think the Senior Center should be recategorized as a Community Event or anything else and he did not think it should be losing any money. Councilor Roberts said the City of Keene needed to go back to deciding what kind of relationship it would have with its seniors.

Councilor Lake thanked Councilor Remy for his support in adding some funding for Arts Alive. However, Councilor Lake disagreed with the general substance of the motion and thought the upcoming two proposed amendments would better tackle the issue. So, he would not support this amendment.

Councilor Filiault acknowledged that his esteemed colleague and friend Councilor Roberts disagreed with his wording. However, Councilor Filiault said Councilor Roberts' point about the Senior Center was correct and he agreed with him, which was why Councilor Filiault said the Council should not be making last minute Budget changes. Councilor Filiault agreed that no funding should be cut from the Senior Center because its funding was based on the due process of logic, not emotion.

On a roll call vote of 2–12 the motion failed to amend Resolution R-2025-12-B to increase the Arts Alive allocation in the General Fund account 521815 from \$500 to \$7,000, and that the Outside Agency account 521330 for the Keene Senior Center be reduced by \$6,500 to offset. Councilors Remy and Workman voted in the affirmative. Councilor Bosley was absent.

A motion by Councilor Williams to amend the Budget by increasing the allocation to Arts Alive from \$500 to \$10,000 was duly seconded by Councilor Lake.

Councilor Williams stated that the arts were really hurting, with budgets slashed at the federal and state levels. He recalled the Public Hearing, when someone cited something like \$50,000–\$70,000 in grants were taken from the arts. So, he said the City needed to support this important activity in the community or it would hurt the economy, stating there had already been layoffs in the arts sector this week; his friend lost a job at a local arts institution due to lack of funding. Councilor Williams said it could be the first of many, which really concerned him, so he thought the City should do all it could. He thought \$10,000 would be appropriate based on how much the City funded the other initiatives. Councilor Williams hoped his colleagues would support the amendment.

Councilor Tobin thought everyone in the room would like to increase funding for arts, that everyone supported the arts, and that no one wanted to increase the budget. She said the first thing she kept thinking about was that a lot of the state and federal funding has been cut, meaning that if Keene wanted arts, they would need to be funded locally. Councilor Tobin noted that Keene has made arts the core of a lot of the things the City does—festivals, an Arts Corridor, and the Art Walk, which she called a hub for artists including writers and musicians. She recalled that when she started painting, every conversation she had, she found someone who was doing some form of art. She noted it is a powerful mental health tool, such as for addiction recovery. For example, Councilor Tobin visited Nova Arts—an organization Arts Alive is connected with—and purchased from an artist who created their art during recovery and purchased from another who made art for dealing with anxiety. She asked the artists the questions listed in the Budget as criteria for Outside Agencies such as, “Demonstrate efforts of cooperation” and “Avoid duplication with other agencies.” Councilor Tobin listed organizations Arts Alive had supported or partnered with in some way: Monadnock International Film Festival, Ashuelot Concerts, Monadnock Makerspace, The Walldogs Festival and installation, Hannah Grimes, the Chamber of Commerce, Monadnock Travel Council, Keene State College, the Art Walk, Elevate the Arts, Nova Arts, and more. She understood \$10,000 was a lot but said many of Arts Alive’s partner organizations were impacted by the same cuts at the same time so the Agency could not ask them to make up the difference. In a year going into the downtown construction when, Councilor Tobin thought it would be important to not lose that community and momentum of gaining Keene’s reputation as an art City. So, she said she would support the amendment.

Councilor Lake thanked Councilors Tobin and Williams for their words about why the arts are important. Councilor Lake spoke about the funding, stating that it was the important difference between the three amendments proposed. Having had a day to consider all three possibilities and different points of view, Councilor Lake decided that this amendment was the best way forward for Arts Alive, not his proposed amendment. He said he would support this amendment for Arts Alive and encouraged others to as well. He still planned to make other parts of his proposed amendment.

Councilor Filiault was opposed to changing the Budget. He agreed that Arts Alive is important to the City, but said all of the other Outside Agencies would probably also love a 2,000% increase—\$500 to \$10,000. He said it was not that Arts Alive was unworthy of more money, but that it should not be happening last minute; he imagined the Community Kitchen would like a 2,000% increase, too. He asked again: emotion or logic? He reiterated his agreement that Arts Alive is a phenomenal institution for Keene and a nonprofit worthy of getting money from

Keene. So, Councilor Filiault advised going back to the City Manager and staff and requesting to change the formula for Arts Alive due to the federal and state government cuts vs. this 2,000% increase.

Councilor Haas said the facts were that all the other organizations were regular Outside Agencies and this would just be a special allocation that comes from another direction within the budget. He was unsure what the correct number should be. He struggled with Arts Alive being one organization and he wondered about all the other arts supporting organizations in the City; he thought the difference was Arts Alive being broad to everything while the others were time/location specific. To the Councilor, Arts Alive fits under the category of all the other committees and commissions. Councilor Haas wondered how to compare \$5,000 allotted for Partner City work, for example, to an organization that promotes the arts across the board. Councilor Remy reminded the Council that Arts Alive did not have the same opportunity to request an increase that the other Outside Agencies did because Arts Alive had been miscategorized in the Budget under Boards and Commission.

Councilor Lake spoke about the idea of this happening on the whim—that these organizations already had their opportunity to come in person and request these funds before the Public Hearing. He agreed that Agencies had that opportunity at the very beginning of the year, then the Committee met a few times and made decisions based on information, which in some cases had changed significantly just over the previous few months; he attended several of those meetings. So, Councilor Lake said these amendments were not being made emotionally at the 11th hour as characterized. Rather, he called them reactions to changes in the political environment. Councilor Lake reiterated that these funding decisions were made quite a while ago, stating that the City Manager would testify to working on this Budget since the last Budget was adopted. So, Councilor Lake said the Council was present to finalize the Budget and make amendments as Councilors saw fit. He said these were good amendments, so he urged his fellow Councilors to vote in favor.

Councilor Roberts said that when he was a kid going to school in MA, everyone had to read a book called *Profiles in Courage*, which he said few politicians still read today. What struck the Councilor about Arts Alive was that Ms. Iris said she refused to file for a federal grant because it said she had to eliminate “diversity, equity, and inclusion”; it was more important to her to go without the money and refuse to sell her soul to the President. To Councilor Roberts, that was a logical profile in courage, not an emotional moment. So, he would support their request.

Councilor Madison said he would also support this amendment. One of his biggest concerns was not emotional but logical, considering the big downtown reconstruction project in the upcoming few years. He said a big part of Keene’s economy is the arts and they would need a lot of support during the project and the City could count on not state or federal government because he called them both “a mess” at this time. So, he said Keene needed to support its own arts economy and this was how, because Ms. Iris did not have a chance to request the increase during the formal process due to where her line was in the Budget. Councilor Madison called this logical progression to address her budget needs. That said, the Councilor asked Ms. Iris to reach out to other surrounding towns to also request support for the arts. Councilor Madison knew there was concern among many in the City and on the Council that some nonprofits only come to Keene to

looking for support and do not go to surrounding towns; either those surrounding towns will say no, which he said was true, or they were afraid of property tax increase for whatever reason. He shared the example of paving his shared driveway with his neighbor—paying 50/50, which neither would have been able to do on their own income. He said this region needed to adopt a similar mentality, stating that nonprofits and area organizations benefit the region as a whole, so surrounding towns and the County need to do more and step up to support those organizations. Councilor Madison said the City of Keene could not simply be a Piggy Bank. At this time, Keene citizens had roughly the state average median household income, while many surrounding towns had among the lowest property tax rates in the state and among the highest median household incomes. He said he was effectively asking the wealthy to pay their fair share, which he did not think was unreasonable. Nor did he think it was unreasonable to ask the organizations who come to Keene asking for funding to also go to neighboring counties—no matter how small—asking for their fair share in supporting regional activities. The Mayor said it was a good point.

Councilor Remy said he was partly glad his amendment was defeated, as much as he wanted to put forth an option for the Council that fairly balanced the bottom line. Ultimately, he thought Arts Alive was an important organization, providing a lot of services to many other organizations that are important to Keene; it is a backbone organization. So, Councilor Remy was glad to support this amendment and not take money from anywhere else.

Councilor Filiault said he would not argue with anything said about Arts Alive. He stood with his statement at the beginning that he would not approve any last-minute Budget changes. Councilor Filiault pointed out one nonprofit on the list, the taxpayers who would pay for the change.

On roll call vote of 8–6 the motion carried to amend Resolution R-2025-12-B by increasing the allocation to Arts Alive from \$500 to \$10,000. Councilors Filiault, Jones, Favolise, Workman, Powers, and Greenwald voted in opposition. Councilor Bosley was absent.

Councilor Lake stated that he already touched on why the amendment he was about to propose was important. He explained that three outside agencies did not receive an increase in the prior year's Budget. Councilor Lake wanted to clarify for the Council that the departmental requests listed in the Budget books on page 46 were the amounts recommended out of the FOP Committee performing the reviews earlier in the year, not the amounts actually requested by these organizations. So, Councilor Lake said he proposed amounts short of those requests; his proposals fell somewhere in between what that FOP Committee recommended, which was level funding from the prior year, and the request that those organizations made at the very beginning of the year. He thought it was an important clarification as to why he was proposing these increases. He thought all three Agencies deserved an increase. Councilor Lake said he tried to make the numbers as roughly in line with inflation as possible.

Mayor Kahn called a recess at 8:56 PM. The meeting reconvened at 9:01 PM.

Councilor Lake continued, discussing the Outside Agencies he suggested increasing. Because of the prior affirmative vote to increase Arts Alive's funding, he felt his suggested motion regarding Arts Alive and decreasing the Capital Reserve to fund it was now moot.

A motion by Councilor Lake was duly seconded by Councilor Workman to amend Resolution R-2025-12-B as follows: Increase Outside Agency account 521360 for the Keene Community Kitchen from \$110,000 to \$115,000, increase Outside Agency account 521470 for Keene Housing Kids Collaborative from \$12,500 to \$13,000, increase Outside Agency account 521330 for the Senior Citizens Center from \$16,500 to \$17,750, resulting in a net increase of \$6,750 in the amount of revenue to be raised by taxation.

Councilor Lake clarified that the amendments for all three agencies were being made as a package and in the same spirit. He was not singling out any one Outside Agency. He reiterated that these three agencies did not receive a suggested increase from the prior year's budget. Further, he said the Keene Senior Center had been level funded for several years.

Councilor Workman spoke, noting she had not commented on the previous amendments. She stated that she fully supported increasing funding for Arts Alive, which had just occurred, but she voted against the previous two amendments because she did not want to increase the bottom line of the overall Budget by \$10,000. So, Councilor Workman supported this proposal by Councilor Lake to increase the allocations to these three Agencies, who Councilor Workman called absolute lifelines to the most vulnerable populations in communities. She said constituents really relied on those services at an increasingly higher rate. While she did not want to increase the bottom line of the Budget, she said it would not be a \$10,000 increase, rather less than \$7,000, which she called for the greater good. Councilor Workman had worked in nonprofits, and been a grant manager, stating it is about maximizing minimum resources and spreading the wealth as much as possible, and being as fair and measured in that as possible. She thought Councilor Lake's proposal did just that. So, Councilor Workman supported the amendment.

Councilor Favolise said he intended at the outset of the night to support Councilor Lake's amendment because it would not be taking money from another line item or organization in this Budget; it would be adding a little bit to the bottom line, but not quite as much as the \$10,000 that was just approved for Arts Alive. Councilor Favolise clarified that he was very happy to see Arts Alive funded and thought several Councilors made compelling cases for support, specifically through the downtown project; he wished it did not come with the bottom-line impact. He thought there was some benefit to having these discussions/debates on the fly, on the Council floor because it allows Councilors to evaluate what is best for their constituents as they hear other Councilors raising points and counterpoints. He said these were organizations that were filling gaps in services in the community and without them, no one would be providing them, or the City would provide them at a higher overall cost for people who rely on the resources. Councilor Favolise was opposed to the \$10,000 increase on the bottom line but did not want to punish these organizations. He supported increased funding for them for the reasons Councilors Workman and Lake laid and would vote yes.

Councilor Filiault reiterated his position that he was not too worried about the addition to the bottom line because realistically it would be insignificant to the tax rate. He stated that it goes

back to the process. He referred to being a “duplicate provider,” stating that was a part of the protocol, and stating his feeling that some on the Council did not have a good grasp of the protocol. If this was still happening last minute, Councilor Filiault said the protocol needed to change somehow. He said perhaps Councilor Lake was correct—maybe the Outside Agencies were submitting their requests and presenting too early in the Budget process, for example. Councilor Filiault suggested again that the Council should reevaluate its process for assessing and funding nonprofits to avoid this 11th hour situation. He said the same argument could be made for all of the nonprofits needing increased funding and there would be no question, it would be correct they would be deserving of money. However, he reiterated that if the process is not working when the Budget is completed, then the process would need to be reworked with the City Manager and staff to make it better to avoid the last-minute discussions and fixes.

Councilor Tobin asked the impact of decreasing the Capital Reserve. Mayor Kahn clarified that because of the Council’s previously adopted amendment, that was no longer a part of the motion.

Councilor Roberts stated that this was when to really take emotion out and use a cost-benefit analysis. For example, what would happen if the City gave a little extra money to the Senior Center and it saved a Veteran from suicide? What would happen if \$15/day to the Community Kitchen kept someone from getting sick and needing Medicare or another Outside Agency. He mentioned \$500 to the Kids Collaborative, noting how minimal investment in children can change generations and save a lot of money later; he compared it to his childhood as one of 10 kids on welfare. So, Councilor Roberts said when doing the cost-benefit analysis of what would ultimately save the taxpayers money, he thought this would be spending a little to save more.

Councilor Greenwald clarified that his wife was previously on the Board of Directors of the Keene Housing Kids Collaborative but no longer. So, the Councilor stated that he had no remaining Conflict of Interest.

Councilor Haas was troubled that the Council was focusing on just these few Agencies. He understood when Councilor Lake had Arts Alive included in the proposal and was trying to find other Agencies to give to them and balance the Budget. Councilor Haas said there were other very significant contributors to the community such as Monadnock Crisis and Prevention Center, which helps with homelessness. He stated that he was having difficulty voting for token amounts to some of these Agencies, noting that every dollar makes a difference, and their budgets had already been set. Councilor Haas agreed with Councilor Filiault that other Agencies had followed the process and now the Council would be passing on them.

Councilor Lake addressed Councilor Haas’ final point, stating that the Council was giving increases to every other Outside Agency except these three (Councilor Lake also mentioned CASA, which had a previous significant upgrade that he felt would have been out of line on inflation, and perhaps one other like Arts Alive being a new Agency). Councilor Lake said these were three ongoing Agencies—cornerstones of the community—that the City had been funding for an extended period and he believed they should keep up at least with inflation. Councilor Lake clarified that was why he chose those three specific Agencies to fund.

On a roll call vote of 9–5, the motion carried to amend Resolution R-2025-12-B as follows: Increase Outside Agency account 521360 for the Keene Community Kitchen from \$110,000 to \$115,000, increase Outside Agency account, 521470 for Keene Housing Kids Collaborative from \$12,500 to \$13,000, increase Outside Agency account 521330 for the Senior Citizens Center from \$16,500 to \$17,750, resulting in a net increase of \$6,750 in the amount of revenue to be raised by taxation. Councilors Remy, Filiault, Haas, Jones, and Powers opposed. Councilor Bosley was absent.

Mayor Kahn called a recess at 9:19 PM to allow the Finance Director time to adjust the numbers to be accurate for the adoption of the Budget. The meeting reconvened at 9:23 PM.

The City Clerk read into the record the amended 2025/2026 Budget Resolution.

Resolution R-2025-12- C – A Resolution Relating to the 2025/2026 Fiscal Year Budget: *“Be it resolved by the City Council of the City of Keene as follows: That the sum of \$30,307,615 be raised by taxation during the current year, which together with \$45,888,796 for estimated operating revenues aggregating \$76,196,411 is hereby appropriated for the use of the several departments of the City of Keene City Government, and further that the sum of \$5,566,255 be appropriated for capital expenditures and capital reserve appropriations in the City proprietary funds, funded by the use of capital reserves, fund balance and current revenues, for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025, as attached hereto and made a part thereof.”*

The motion to adopt R-2025-12-C carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 14 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilor Bosley was absent.

TABLED ITEM - RELATING TO CLASS ALLOCATION AND SALARY SCHEDULE - ORDINANCE O-2025-18

Mayor Kahn removed from the table Ordinance O-2025-18 Relating to Class Allocation and Salary Schedule.

A motion by Councilor Powers to adopt Ordinance O-2025-18 was duly seconded by Councilor Remy. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 14 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilor Bosley was absent.

Mayor Kahn complimented the City Council for following the Budget process as it exists. He said Councilors raised good questions relative to what they might want to see in the future relative to process for considering outside agencies. The Mayor appreciated the dialogue and manner in which the Council reached the outcome.

TABLED ITEM - 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

Mayor Kahn removed the following Resolutions from the table: 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.

A motion by Councilor Powers to adopt Resolution R-2025-13 Relating to Appropriation of Funds for the Fire Apparatus Replacement Program was duly seconded by Councilor Remy. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 14 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilor Bosley was absent.

A motion by Councilor Powers to adopt Resolution R-2025-14 Relating to Appropriation of Funds for the Lower Winchester Street Reconstruction Project was duly seconded by Councilor Remy. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 14 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilor Bosley was absent.

A motion by Councilor Powers to adopt Resolution R-2025-15 Relating to Appropriation of Funds for the Roadway Preservation and Rehabilitation Project was duly seconded by Councilor Remy. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 14 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilor Bosley was absent.

A motion by Councilor Powers to adopt Resolution R-2025-16 Relating to Appropriation of Funds for the Stormwater Resiliency Program was duly seconded by Councilor Remy. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 14 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilor Bosley was absent.

A motion by Councilor Powers to adopt Resolution R-2025-17 Relating to Appropriation of Funds for the T-Hangar Apron Maintenance Project was duly seconded by Councilor Remy. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 14 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilor Bosley was absent.

A motion by Councilor Powers to adopt Resolution R-2025-18 Relating to Appropriation of Funds for the Sewer Improvements Program was duly seconded by Councilor Remy. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 14 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilor Bosley was absent.

A motion by Councilor Powers to adopt Resolution R-2025-19 Relating to Appropriation of Funds for the 3MG Water Tank Repairs was duly seconded by Councilor Remy. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 14 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilor Bosley was absent.

A motion by Councilor Powers to adopt Resolution R-2025-20 Relating to Appropriation of Funds for the Water Distribution Improvements Program was duly seconded by Councilor Remy. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 14 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilor Bosley was absent.

A motion by Councilor Powers to adopt Resolution R-2025-21 Relating to Appropriation of Funds for the Well Field Upgrade Program was duly seconded by Councilor Remy. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 14 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilor Bosley was absent.

Councilor Filiault publicly applauded the City Manager, Elizabeth Ferland, for developing a Budget less than the area inflation rate, calling it incredible. Councilor Filiault said it was probably the best Budget he had seen presented to the Council in his 27 years as a Counselor and applauded the City Manager again.

Councilors Greenwald and Powers left the meeting at 9:37 PM

RECESS MEETING FOR COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Mayor Kahn called a recess for collective bargaining at 9:37 PM. The meeting reconvened at 10:17 PM.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENTS – KEENE CITY EMPLOYEES ATF LOCAL #6288, ATF-NH, AFL-CIO; AFSCME COUNCIL #93, LOCAL 2973; AND KEENE POLICE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION, TEAMSTERS LOCAL 633

A motion by Councilor Remy that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to execute the negotiated contracts with Keene City Employees, ATF Local #6288, ATF-NH, AFL-CIO, and AFSCME Council #93, Local 2973 to be effective July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2028; and further that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to execute the negotiated contract with Keene Police Officers Association, Teamsters Local 633 to be effective July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2029 was duly seconded by Councilor Filiault. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 12 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilors Greenwald and Powers were absent for the vote. Councilor Bosley was absent.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mayor Kahn adjourned the meeting at 10:20 PM.

A true record, attest:



City Clerk