A regular meeting of the Keene City Council was held on Thursday, October 15, 2026. In the absence of the Mayor, the City Clerk called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM. Roll called: Randy L. Filiault, Michele A. Chalice, Catherine I. Workman, Bryan J. Lake, Jacob R. Favolise, Laura E. Tobin, Robert C. Williams, Philip M. Jones, Kris E. Roberts, Bettina A. Chadbourne, Edward J. Haas, Molly V. Ellis, and Thomas F. Powers were present. Councilors Laura E. Ruttle-Miller and Mitchell H. Greenwald were absent. A motion to elect Councilor Powers as Temporary Chair was made by Councilor Filiault and duly seconded by Councilor Chadbourne. The motion carried unanimously with 13 Councilors present and voting in favor. Chair Powers took his seat at the dais. Councilor Filiault led the Pledge of Allegiance.

MINUTES OF THE PRECEDING MEETING

A motion by Councilor Filiault to adopt the October 1, 2026, meeting minutes as presented was duly seconded by Councilor Chadbourne. The motion carried unanimously with 13 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilors Ruttle-Miller and Greenwald were absent.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Powers announced upcoming dates of interest in October and November 2026:

- October 17: Keene Pumpkin Festival
- October 18–October 24: New Hampshire History Week
- November 3: State General Election Day. Polls are open in Keene from 8:00 AM to 7:00 PM. Contact the City Clerk with any questions about elections, voting, or absentee ballots, or visit the City website (KeeneNH.gov). There is an online sign-up for those wanting to volunteer

PROCLAMATION - FRIENDS OF THE KEENE PUBLIC LIBRARY FALL BOOK SALE

Chair Powers welcomed former Mayor Kendall Lane. Chair Powers read into the record and presented Mr. Lane with a Proclamation declaring October 23 to October 25, 2026, as Friends of the Keene Public Library Days and urged citizens of the Monadnock Region to visit the Fall Book Sale at the Keene Public Library in support of continued excellent Library programs and facilities.

Mr. Lane said the Book Sale is the largest single fundraiser that the Friends of the Public Library, and in effect the Public Library, do on an annual basis to support the Library. He strongly encouraged anybody watching this to participate in the Book Sale. The last Book Sale, in April 2026, set a record for the most revenue that they had ever taken on a single sale: he said there is a lot of demand for books out there. He commented on people looking at their devices and thinking that is the future. Well, he said books have not gone away, and the Friends of the Public Library strongly encouraged people to visit the Book Sale. He noted there is a wide variety of books, thousands that are available. He pointed out that over the past year the Friends of the Library gave $55,000 to the Library to support Library programs; spent $10,000 on museum passes; spent $7,500 supporting Reading for Ribby and set aside $80,000 for the Light Program at the Library. So, he said the funds raised at the Book Sale over the years have been going to a very useful purpose at the Library. Mr. Lane strongly encouraged everyone to visit the Book

Sale. Mr. Lane also mentioned the November 3, 2026, Election and urged participation, stating that it is critically important to support democracy through literacy and civic participation.

PROCLAMATION - NATIONAL PHARMACY WEEK

Chair Powers welcomed Katheryn Fisher of Cheshire Medical and representatives. The Chair read into the record and presented Ms. Fischer with a Proclamation declaring the third week of October as National Pharmacy Week, encouraging all residents to recognize and celebrate the pharmacists, pharmacy technicians, student pharmacists, and pharmacy teams whose expertise, compassion, and commitment contribute to health, safety, and well-being of our community.

Ms. Fisher recognized all the pharmacy people in the City of Keene during this pharmacy week, noting that the representatives present were just a small example of it. She is a licensed advanced pharmacy technician at Cheshire Medical Center. She was joined by Park, a certified pharmacy technician who went through an apprenticeship program, Amanda, and Tyler, who is Cheshire Medical Center's first pharmacy resident and just starting his pharmacy career. During the next week, she encouraged everyone to go out and thank pharmacy personnel across the City for all their hard work, because it is hard work.

PUBLIC HEARING - ORDINANCE O-2026-09-A - RELATING TO SHORT-TERM RENTAL USES

Chair Powers opened the Public Hearing at 7:15 PM and the City Clerk read the Notice of Hearing. The Chair welcomed Senior Planner, Mari Brunner and Community Development Director, Paul Andrus. Chair Powers called forward item C.2., a Communication from Cole Mills in opposition to proposed Ordinance O-2026-09-A, Relating to Short-Term Rental Uses. Chair Powers accepted the communication as informational.

Ms. Brunner explained that the intent of the Ordinance is to fill a gap in the City's regulations that was created when the City changed its definition of family in order to comply with recent changes to state law. She explained that short term rentals have been operating in Keene for a long time without any local regulation. However, with this new "family" definition in place, this use is no longer allowed because it is considered to be a transient use, which means that the guests stay for durations of less than 30 days. Therefore, this Ordinance proposed to formally recognize short-term rental uses by creating a use definition in Article 8 under the category of Commercial Uses. The proposed definition is, "a dwelling, or any portion thereof, that the owner or the lessee of the dwelling offers for occupancy for a fee for fewer than 30 consecutive days. Short term rentals can be hosted, where the dwelling is the primary residence of the owner or lessee, or non-hosted, where the dwelling is not the primary residence of the owner or lessee." Along with this definition, Ms. Brunner explained that there were two use standards proposed. The first would require that any short-term rental property located in a residential district maintain the appearance of a residential property. The second is specific to non-hosted short-term rentals and it would require them to post the contact information for the owner or their agent; if the owner or agent does not live within one hour of the property, they have to post the contact information for somebody who does live within one hour, who can handle emergency situations.

Ms. Brunner said staff were also asked to take another look at the zoning districts where these uses are allowed and to look into the pros and cons of creating a rental registry. So, staff did quite a bit of research into this topic and came back with more information at the next workshop, which was held on September 14, 2026. Two people spoke at the second workshop, but both were mostly asking clarifying questions and not necessarily in favor or opposed. Ultimately, the Joint Committee of the Planning Board and Planning, Licenses and Development Committee voted unanimously to amend the Ordinance to allow short-term rentals in the downtown growth and the downtown core districts. Then, the Planning Board voted unanimously to find the Ordinance, as amended, to be consistent with the Master Plan, and the PLD Committee voted to refer this Ordinance back to Council for this Public Hearing. Ms. Brunner summarized that discussion from the Public Workshop. She said that when staff were looking into this, they did quite a bit of research into the different ways that short-term rentals can be regulated, noting there are a lot of pros and cons to this regulation. So, they tried to investigate what was actually happening on the ground in Keene at this time and came to the conclusion that right now, short-term rentals are not a big problem. So, staff's recommended approach is to take this as an incremental approach to figuring out the correct balance between regulating this use and spending City resources wisely. Staff did a report through AirDNA, which found that in the last 12 months, there were only 80 active short-term rentals, which represents less than 1% of Keene's housing supply. To provide a sense of scale: in more touristy destinations, short-term rentals can take up anywhere between 10% to 40% of the housing supply. So, Ms. Brunner said one thing staff were planning to do is continue to monitor and watch the numbers in the community and if there were any concentration in a certain area, they would keep an eye on that and come back to the Council to report changes. For now, staff recommended starting with simple, low cost, easy to enforce regulations, which would essentially be maintaining the status quo, and then coming back for future modifications if it becomes necessary.

Chair Powers opened the floor to public comments.

Hearing no comments, the Chair closed the Public Hearing at 7:23 PM, except that written comments would be accepted up until 1:00 PM on Tuesday, November 10, 2026. This would be before the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee at their regular meeting on November 12. No additional public comments would be accepted at that meeting.

A true record, attest: Jessi Hood
City Clerk

PUBLIC HEARING – RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY REVITALIZATION ZONE (RPRZ) APPLICATION 128–130 SCHOOL STREET

Chair Powers opened the Public Hearing at 7:24 PM and the City Clerk read the Notice of Hearing. Chair Powers welcomed an introduction from Community Development Director Paul Andrus, who was joined by the applicant, Mr. Evan Ray, owner of the property at 128–130 School Street. Mr. Andrus said the City's Committee for the Residential Property Revitalization Program (RPRZ) reviewed the application and determined it was complete. Mr. Andrus reminded the Council that the RPRZ Program was approved in December 2025 to encourage reinvestment in existing residential properties and support additional housing opportunities. He said tonight's

Public Hearing process was the Council's opportunity to get an overview of the project and for the public to review it as well and provide any comments. Following the Public Hearing, the application would be referred to the Finance, Organization and Personnel (FOP) Committee for their review and recommendation whether to approve it and if so, what the length of the duration of the tax abatement would be. Then, the application would come back to Council for final approval. Mr. Andrus welcomed Mr. Ray to describe the specifics of the project before Mr. Andrus would review the eligibility criteria and specific questions the Council may have.

Mr. Ray provided a brief overview, noting that the project involves converting an existing underutilized barn on his property into an approximately 646-square-foot, one-bedroom apartment, increasing the property value from two residential units to three. This investment will repurpose the existing structure to create additional housing in Keene, while preserving the building and maintaining its residential use. Mr. Ray said that the 79-E Tax Relief Program was definitely a motivating factor in the decision to pursue this project just because of the financial incentive.

Mr. Andrus reviewed the high-level criteria for the 79-E Program in terms of the project being reviewed for completeness. Mr. Andrus said this is an existing housing unit/structure that is currently two units. It is connected to the structure that is proposed to be renovated and repurposed into one housing unit: 646 square feet. The approximate investment is $76,250. The property meets the eligibility criteria for age, at least 40 years old; the main structure was built in 1880, and the barn structure was built afterward, but meets that 40-year criteria. The property is on municipal water and sewer. In terms of meeting the criteria for the number of units, it is below four units on the site. It exceeds the threshold of $50,000 for the project. As far as public benefit is concerned, it is creating one additional unit of housing, so Mr. Andrus said it would be increasing housing supply without developing a new principal building, which is a part of the RPRZ program. Mr. Andrus said it is consistent with the Comprehensive Master Plan to expand housing opportunities. He said it is also efficient reuse and reinvestment: conversion of an existing underused barn/garage and investment in an older residential property. Its improvements are intended to support safe, functional residential use. Mr. Andrus described the next steps. First, would be to receive public testimony tonight. Then, the application would be referred to the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee, which would consider the application's eligibility, public benefits, and duration if it is approved for tax relief.

Chair Powers opened the floor to public comments.

Hearing no comments, the Chair closed the Public Hearing at 7:30 PM, except that written comments would be accepted up until 1:00 PM on Tuesday, November 10, 2026. This would be before the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee at their regular meeting on November 12. No additional public comments would be accepted at that meeting.

A true record, attest: Jessi Hood
City Clerk

NOMINATIONS - ENERGY AND CLIMATE COMMITTEE

Mayor Kahn renominated Catherine Koning and Matthew Bolton to move from Alternate to Regular members of the Energy and Climate Committee, with terms to expire December 31, 2028. Chair Powers tabled the nominations until the next regular meeting.

CONFIRMATION - HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE

Mayor Kahn nominated Mackenzie Perkins to serve as an Alternate member of the Human Rights Committee, with a term to expire December 31, 2028. A motion by Councilor Filiault to confirm the nomination was duly seconded by Councilor Chadbourne. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 13 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilors Ruttle-Miller and Greenwald were absent.

COMMUNICATION - COUNCILOR JONES - REQUEST FOR PROCLAMATION HONORING AND EXPRESSING GRATITUDE TO ALL VETERANS FOR THEIR SERVICE

A communication was received from Councilor Philip Jones, requesting that the City Council suspend its Rules of Order to act on his request that the Mayor present a Proclamation at the next City Council meeting honoring and expressing gratitude to our veterans for their service.

Councilor Jones noted that in his discussions with the Mayor, he would like to present this Proclamation at the next City Council meeting on November 3, 2026, so this was time sensitive.

A motion by Councilor Jones to suspend Section 26 of the Rules of Order was duly seconded by Councilor Chadbourne. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 13 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilors Ruttle-Miller and Greenwald were absent.

A motion by Councilor Jones to adopt the wording of the presented Proclamation was duly seconded by Councilor Chadbourne. The motion carried unanimously with 13 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilors Ruttle-Miller and Greenwald were absent.

PLD REPORT - KIWANIS CLUB OF KEENE - REQUEST TO USE CITY PROPERTY - TREE LIGHTING CEREMONY

A Planning, Licenses and Development Committee report was read, unanimously recommending the Keene Kiwanis Club be granted permission to use downtown City rights-of-way on Friday, November 27, 2026, to conduct the 2026 Tree Lighting Festival, subject to the licensing requirements identified in the staff report including associated road closures and authorization of free parking. All permissions granted herein are subject to compliance with the City-approved safety protocol document, which becomes a part of this license. Approved event footprint, road closures, and areas of use may be amended based upon the status and conditions of active downtown construction, including allowing event activities within or adjacent to construction areas when conditions safely permit, provided such adjustments are consistent with public safety and the general scope of the approved event. A motion by Councilor Filiault to carry out the intent of the Committee report was duly seconded by Councilor Workman. The motion carried

unanimously with 13 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilors Ruttle-Miller and Greenwald were absent.

PLD REPORT - REQUEST TO CONSIDER RESTRICTING THE SALE OF 7-HYDROXYMITRAGYNINE (7-OH) AND CONCENTRATED KRATOM PRODUCTS

A Planning, Licenses and Development Committee report was read, unanimously recommending that the City Attorney be directed to create a draft Ordinance restricting the sale of kratom products to individuals under the age of 21. A motion by Councilor Filiault to carry out the intent of the Committee report was duly seconded by Councilor Jones.

Councilor Williams noted that he first wrote the letter about this in July 2026 after the legislature had failed to pass legislation in 2025. He said that the very day after he wrote the letter to City Council, the federal government announced that they were finally going to think about doing something. That is exciting, however, moving on the federal government's pace, it had not happened yet. At the state level, he noted that kratom legislation was being reintroduced, but it would probably be well into 2027 when that passes. So, he said the Council considered what it could do about this, bearing in mind what the federal and state governments may be doing; the City did not want to develop a definition that the state would then supersede and the City would have to resolve it, so the thought was to give the state some time to get it right. In the meantime, he said the PLD Committee had a very good presentation from a couple of representatives of the youth community, who had done quite a bit of research and outreach, exploring where this is sold in Keene. Councilor Williams commended the work they had done, and he thought they made a really good case that the Council could at least raise the age to 21 to keep it out of the hands of high school kids, for example. Councilor Williams said he thought that was a good idea. So, he said the thought from the Committee was to raise the age of sales to 21, which would be something pretty simple to do now, and to wait and see what the State of New Hampshire comes up with, acknowledging that the City may need to adjust this later. Councilor Williams urged the other Councilors to support this.

Councilor Haas wanted to thank the City's Health Officer for the research they did looking into this. He said that raising the age to 21 seemed to be in accordance with any of the merchants who are selling it in the City already. So, he said it would not impact them. However, it would raise awareness of this as a health issue. So, Councilor Haas said the City would be in a good place here.

The motion carried unanimously with 13 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilors Ruttle-Miller and Greenwald were absent.

CITY MANAGER COMMENTS

First, City Manager Elizabeth Ferland announced the commencement of Fall Leaf Collection. The Public Works Department sent out a notice that they are going to start November 9, 2026. Look at the City of Keene's website (KeeneNH.gov) to find your street and it will list the week for collection. Residents are asked to place their leaves on the edges of their lawns, not to push them into the streets, and to leave them loose (i.e., do not bag the leaves). The City Manager

understood that it could be a challenge because if there is a snowstorm, pickup may be delayed, but she said they will be there, so place the leaves at the edges of your lawns.

Next, Councilors were provided with a Workforce Demographics Report that was created by HR Director, Darcy Newport. The Report highlights some important trends in our City workforce and why we need to continue planning for the future. Nearly half of our employees have been with the City for less than five years, while 51 employees have 20 or more years of service. The City Manager said it is important to recognize that much of the turnover we have experienced over the last several years has been driven by retirements, resulting in a significant transition in our workforce. The report also identifies employees who are retirement eligible. That does not mean they are going to retire, but they can any day if they want to. They are eligible, and so that is something the City monitors in each department. This has been a significant focus of Deputy City Manager, Andy Bohannon's, work, particularly in the areas of employee retention, leadership development, succession planning, and knowledge transfer. She said the City had been intentional about preparing for the next generation of employees and leaders, and that includes data, reinforcing the work, and the ability to transfer that information when someone who has been with us for a very long-time leaves. So, as we look ahead, particularly with our Compensation Study currently underway and future budgets, the City Manager said the City continues investing in its employees, developing its future leaders, and preserving the institutional knowledge necessary to maintain the quality of services we have here at the City of Keene. She called it good data for the Council to take a look at.

The City Manager provided an update on the City's revaluation. The Assessing Department was finishing up the 2026 revaluation with our contractor Vision Government Solutions. The final values were set and had been submitted to the New Hampshire Department of Revenue. Any property owner who attended an informal hearing with Vision should be getting a notice of final value as a result of their hearing. The letters were expected to be mailed Friday, October 16, 2026, and may take a week or so to get to the owners. The next step for property owners who wish to challenge their assessments would be for them to go through the abatement process after the tax bills have been received. Abatement information will be available on the Assessing Department website after bills go out. The City Manager stated that the City did not know the tax rate at this time, which everyone wanted the answer for; the state was still working with the City and School to have their final numbers before the New Hampshire Department of Revenue would set the tax rate. The City Manager said the City anticipated that the tax rate would drop significantly, but it would not be final until they have all those numbers.

The City Manager also reported that the US Army Corps of Engineers New England Division had been working on a study for the Beaver Brook Watershed that was nearing completion. The City Manager anticipated a presentation to the Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee in January 2027. The preliminary draft findings indicated limited cost-effective mitigation options, which she called disappointing because a lot of effort went into this study, with the most viable near-term measures being maintenance of existing flood control systems, ongoing monitoring, and emergency systems. When this report is brought forward, staff would also present how the study's findings connect to the City's Hazard Mitigation Plan and identify estimated costs for some of the lower hanging fruit projects in that Plan. That will be brought

forward also through the next update of the Capital Improvement Plan. The City Manager knew this was something Councilor Haas had been following very closely.

City Manager Ferland also mentioned a staff-referred item from a few weeks prior. The Council had received a letter from a resident of the Edgewood neighborhood regarding trash along the Appel Way path earlier in October 2026. The City Manager said the trash appeared to be associated with abandoned encampments. The City identified the property owner as a part of a much larger parcel located behind the Hannaford Plaza, with which the Council is familiar from past conversations. Ownership of the property may be changing, and staff were working to identify a practical solution for addressing the cleanup. It is an abandoned encampment: it is not one where anyone is currently residing.

Lastly, the City Manager shared that she had tasked the Community Development Department with developing a more consistent way to track the City's progress on housing development and to provide annual updates to the Council. These are the housing goals that the Council has established as a part of its long-range plans but also as a part of its Council Goals. With some of the new technology the City has implemented, she said they should be able to collect and report this information more easily. She said she is looking for dashboards but at this point would take a report that tells the City how much progress it has made since adopting these goals. She said staff were also looking at ways to track financial impacts of the City's housing and economic incentives; they know 79-E and some of the other incentives work but it would be great to be able to track the number and value of the projects, the amount of assessed value receiving tax relief, and when those benefits expire. The City Manager said staff were improving some of the technology they were using and should be able to do this, with the goal to provide the Council with meaningful data to evaluate whether these programs are helping the City to achieve its housing and economic development goals, while also understanding financial impact. Once they have developed a consistent reporting format, she would report back to the City Council.

REPORT – CITY OFFICERS AND DEPARTMENTS - FISCAL YEAR 2025 STAFFING FOR ADEQUATE FIRE AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE (SAFER) GRANT AWARD ACCEPTANCE – FIRE CHIEF

A memorandum was received from Fire Chief Gregory Seymour, recommending that the City Council suspend its Rules of Order and authorize the City Manager to do all things necessary to accept the Fiscal Year 2025 Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant awarded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to support the hiring of eight (8) additional full-time firefighters for the Keene Fire Department. Authorization to expend grant funds and approve associated budgetary amendments will be brought forward separately through the Finance, Organization and Personnel (FOP) Committee.

Chair Powers welcomed comments from the City Manager, who said this was on the Council's agenda to accept a SAFER Grant for just over $1.6 million to hire up to eight firefighters. This is a grant that the City had applied for at least three times. She was very excited the City had been successful and Fire Chief Gregory Seymour was present to talk about it. There is a timeline for accepting the Grant, so this would require a suspension of the Council's Rules. Once notified of the award, there are 30 days to accept the Grant. This evening, the Council was talking about

accepting the Grant. Next would be additional conversations at the FOP Committee about the match and how the City would fund that match, the long-range plan, and the financial impacts over the next four years of implementing the Grant. The City Manager recognized Chief Seymour, who she said deserved a lot of credit for the City being awarded the Grant.

A motion by Councilor Chadbourne to suspend Section 26 of the Rules of Order to act on this time sensitive matter was duly seconded by Councilor Lake. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 13 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilors Ruttle-Miller and Greenwald were absent.

Chair Powers welcomed Chief Seymour, who said the City Manager provided an incredible introduction. The Chief said they were present requesting that the City Council suspend its Rules to authorize the City Manager to do all things necessary to accept the fiscal year 2025 Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response, or SAFER, Grant award to the Keene Fire Department by FEMA, with a total federal share of $1.676 million. The SAFER Grant is a federal program designed to increase the number of frontline firefighters available to respond to emergencies, improve firefighter safety, and help communities achieve appropriate emergency response staffing. Our department has been awarded funding for eight additional firefighters, representing two additional members on each of our four shifts. This award offers an opportunity to address several long-standing operational challenges, including the cross staffing of apparatus, overlapping emergency incidents, increasing call volumes, and the demands placed on our existing personnel. He said that additional staffing would improve our ability to deploy Fire and EMS resources, strengthen our initial emergency response, and better protect both our firefighters and the residents of Keene. The grant provides federal funding toward eligible personnel costs at a rate of up to 75% during the first two years and 35% during the third year. The City will be responsible for the required non-federal share, along with other costs not covered by the federal grant. Chief Seymour wanted to emphasize that tonight's request was for grant acceptance only. They were not seeking authorization to expend the grant funds or approve necessary budget amendments; they would return via FOP for those portions. The reasoning for the request tonight was suspension of the Rules for the federal government's 30-day deadline, which would be October 25, 2026. Chief Seymour said this Grant represents an important opportunity for the City of Keene to improve its emergency response capabilities while receiving substantial federal assistance toward those improvements.

A motion by Councilor Chadbourne was duly seconded by Councilor Lake to authorize the City Manager to do all things necessary to accept the Fiscal Year 2025 Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant awarded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to support the hiring of eight (8) additional full-time firefighters for the Keene Fire Department.

Councilor Filiault wanted to stand to applaud the City Manager, Former Chief Martin, and Chief Seymour for their efforts getting this Grant, stating third time is the charm and kudos to everybody involved. Councilor Filiault wanted to point out that during his 28 years on the City Council, the Council had always supported the Keene Fire Department (FD), not only in words but in action and funding: always. Despite some recently misleading comments in the media, Councilor Filiault stated that the Council’s support for the Keene FD had never changed nor

wavered. He said this Council is currently doing and always will support the Keene FD in words and actions. He said to hold them accountable by their actions, but you would see the Council's actions always support the Keene FD.

The motion carried unanimously with 13 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilors Ruttle-Miller and Greenwald were absent.

REPORT – CITY OFFICERS AND DEPARTMENTS - ACCEPTANCE OF DONATIONS - FINANCE DIRECTOR

A memorandum was received from the Finance Director/Treasurer, Kari Chamberlain, recommending that the City Council accept donations totaling $5,750, and the City Manager be authorized to use each donation in the manner specified by the donor. A motion by Councilor Chadbourne to accept the donations with gratitude, and that the City Manager be authorized to use these funds in the manner specified by the donor was duly seconded by Councilor Lake.

- $4,250 in donations to honor nature photographer, Lee Porter, who recently passed away. Lee enjoyed capturing wildlife photos at Ashuelot River Park. The first $2,000 in donations will be used toward an existing granite bench engraving at Ashuelot River Park, and additional donations in his memory will be used for ongoing care and maintenance of the park. Donations received from:
    - Douglas & Charlene Baxter - $100
    - Stephen & Denise Bell - $100
    - David Bulger - $100
    - Joanne Cochi & Clifford Bull, Jr. - $50
    - Geoffrey & Mary Burke - $50
    - Robert & Gayle Donahue - $50
    - William & Regina Kieckhafer - $100
    - Barry & Roberta Kirshner - $250
    - Daniel & Janet LaFleur - $50
    - Linda's Closet - $50
    - Thomas & Susan Masiello - $50
    - Phyllis Pownall - $200
    - Bill Riley & Liz Simon - $100
    - Timothy & Diane Roberts - $50
    - David Schwartz - $50
    - Jerry Slavet - $100
    - Charles & Marcy Southgate - $50
    - Charles & Sharon Stone - $100
    - Richard & Lorry Taylor, Jr. - $100
    - Michael & Jeanne Thieme - $200
    - Garry Weiner - $2,000
    - Thomas & Marcia Wessels - $50
    - Lisa Wharff - $100
    - Steven & Kimberly Willens - $200
- $500 from Cersosimo Industries, Inc. for the 2026 Keene International Festival

- $1,000 from Hamblet Electric Charitable Foundation for the 2026 Keene International Festival

Councilor Chadbourne extended her sincere appreciation to the donors on behalf of the City for their generosity and support of our community. She said we are very lucky to live in a community, which cares so much and wants to contribute in all ways, including monetary.

The motion carried unanimously with 13 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilors Ruttle-Miller and Greenwald were absent.

REPORT – CITY OFFICERS AND DEPARTMENTS - GILBO AVENUE PLANNING CHARRETTE - REQUEST FOR LETTER OF SUPPORT – SENIOR PLANNER

A memorandum was received from Senior Planner Mari Brunner, recommending that the Mayor be authorized to submit a letter of support for the Gilbo Avenue Planning Charrette Application to Plan New Hampshire by November 3, 2026.

A motion by Councilor Filiault to suspend Section 26 of the Rules of Order to act on this time sensitive matter was duly seconded by Councilor Favolise. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 13 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilors Ruttle-Miller and Greenwald were absent.

Chair Powers welcomed comments from City Manager Elizabeth Ferland. She recalled that the City had talked about doing a study of Gilbo Ave., which is something that the residents had talked about as well. She said there was an opportunity for the City to apply for a Plan New Hampshire charette. The application was due the prior Friday, October 9, 2026. She thanked Senior Planner Mari Brunner for taking the lead and submitting that application on behalf of the City. Now, she said City staff were looking for letters of support from the City Council and Planning Board. The reason for suspending the Rules of Order was because the letters were due by October 30, 2026. She added that the typical fee is usually $6,500 but she thought they may be able to have most or all of that covered through the Housing Opportunity Program (HOP), which is a benefit of the City being a Housing Champion. So, she said there was a lot of work to be done for the future of Gilbo Avenue and the timing of this was really good.

A motion by Councilor Filiault that the Mayor be authorized to submit a letter of support for the Gilbo Avenue Planning Charrette Application to Plan New Hampshire by November 3, 2026 was duly seconded by Councilor Favolise. The motion carried unanimously with 13 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilors Ruttle-Miller and Greenwald were absent.

MORE TIME - DRAFT ORDINANCE AMENDMENT REGULATING DOGS AT DOWNTOWN EVENTS

A Planning, Licenses and Development Report was read, unanimously recommending that this item [Draft Ordinance Amendment Regulating Dogs at Downtown Events] be placed on More Time to allow additional input from the public. Chair Powers granted More Time.

ORDINANCE FOR FIRST READING - RELATING TO WELLS GARAGE LOWER LEVEL PUBLIC PARKING - ORDINANCE O-2026-16

A memorandum was received from Parking Operations Manager Chelsea North, recommending that Ordinance O-2026-16 be referred to the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee. Chair Powers referred Ordinance O-2026-16 to the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee.

ORDINANCE FOR SECOND READING - RELATING TO ZONING MAP AMENDMENT - 0 HOWARD STREET - MEDIUM DENSITY TO CONSERVATION - ORDINANCE O-2026-13

A Planning, Licenses and Development Report was read, unanimously recommending the denial of Ordinance O-2026-13. Chair Powers filed the report. A motion by Councilor Filiault to adopt Ordinance O-2026-13 was duly seconded by Councilor Jones. On a vote with one Councilor voting in favor and 12 Councilors voting in opposition, the motion to adopt Ordinance O-2026-13 failed. Councilor Chalice voted in the minority. Councilors Ruttle-Miller and Greenwald were absent.

RESOLUTION - RELATING TO THE ALLOCATION OF FUNDS FOR CONSTRUCTION OF THE MONADNOCK VIEW CEMETERY EXPANSION PROJECT- RESOLUTION R-2026-42

A memorandum was received from City Engineer, Bryan Ruoff, and Parks and Recreation Director, Carrah Fisk-Hennessey, recommending that Resolution R-2026-42 Relating to the Allocation of Funds for Construction of the Monadnock View Cemetery Expansion Project be referred to the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee. Chair Powers referred Resolution R-2026-42 to the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee.

NON-PUBLIC SESSION

A motion by Councilor Filiault to go into non-public session for consideration of the release of non-public minutes pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II(m) was duly seconded by Councilor Chadbourne. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 13 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilors Ruttle-Miller and Greenwald were absent.

The session began at 8:04 PM. The regular session reconvened at 8:11 PM.

A motion by Councilor Filiault 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 Chadbourne. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 13 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilors Ruttle-Miller and Greenwald were absent.

A motion by Councilor Filiault to retain the following non-public minutes because the reason the minutes were originally sealed still applies was duly seconded by Councilor Chadbourne: discussion items 2. and 3. from September 4, 2025, discussion item 1. from November 6, 2025, and discussion item 1. from March 19, 2026. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote

with 13 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilors Ruttle-Miller and Greenwald were absent.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chair Powers adjourned the meeting at 8:12 PM.

A true record, attest: Jessi Hood
City Clerk