

City of Biddeford

City Council

September 16, 2025 at 6:00 PM

City Hall Council Chambers & Zoom

1. Roll Call

Council President LaFountain - present
Councilor Lessard - present
Councilor Ortiz - present
Councilor Emhiser - present
Councilor Whiting - present
Councilor Beaupre - present
Councilor Gross - present
Councilor Belanger - present
Councilor Doughty - excused

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Adjustment(s) to Agenda

We will read 5.b now and then Councilor Ortiz will speak.

Councilor Ortiz read the Hispanic Heritage Week Proclamation.

Councilor Ortiz read her letter of resignation to the Council.

Motion by Councilor Belanger to accept her resignation.

Second: Councilor Lessard

Vote: Unanimous in favor.

4. Recognition

4.a UNE Cheer National Champions

The UNE cheer team was recognized for winning the national championship this year.

5. Proclamation

5.a September National Recovery Month

Mayor Grohman read the proclamation.

5.b Hispanic Heritage Week Proclamation

Councilor Ortiz read the proclamation.

6. Appointments

6.a 2025.128 Maine Municipal Association Voting Delegates Ballot

Motion: Councilor Emhiser to delete “Mayor Martin Grohman” and add “City Manager Truc Dever.”

Second: Councilor Whiting

Vote: Unanimous in favor.

Motion passed.

7. Public Addressing the Council

One citizen spoke requesting an SRO at the primary school for arrival and departure times.

One citizen spoke about creating a nonprofit using apple pies to raise money for the unhoused.

8. Consideration of Minutes

8.a Council Minutes 9-2-25

Motion: Councilor Beaupre

Second: Councilor Lessard

Vote: Unanimous in favor.

Motion passed.

8.b Council Site Walk 9-9-25

Motion: Councilor Beaupre

Second: Councilor Lessard

Vote: Unanimous in favor.

Motion passed.

9. Orders of the Day

9.a 2025.123 Eastern Fire/EMS Substation Phase I Update and Authorization for New Phase I-B

Motion : Councilor Emhiser

Second: Councilor Lessard

Fire Chief Best explained the history of the site and the data he has collected for possible alternatives.

Councilor Emhiser explained how long this process has taken, the location is ideal, the lot has challenges. He asked the council to continue to push this forward in the future.

Vote: Unanimous in favor.

Motion passed.

9.b 2025.125 Approval/Purchasing Policy Amendments, Ch 2, Article V, Division 2

Motion: Councilor Emhiser

Second: Councilor Lessard

Councilor Belanger explained the work that the Policy Committee has done on this proposal, the goal is to streamline the process.

Vote: Unanimous in favor.

Motion passed.

9.c 2025.126 Approval/ Transfer of ownership of JFK School

Motion: Councilor Belanger

Second: Councilor Lessard

Public comment – one citizen asked about the insurance.

City Manager Truc Dever explained the coverage. She also pointed out the costs for utilities and the liability for the asbestos.

Councilor LaFountain requested a safety audit of the playground to see if it can be kept in use until further decisions are made about the property.

Vote: Unanimous in favor.

Motion passed.

9.d 2025.129 Resolve — Board, Committee, Commission Ordinance Template

Motion: Councilor Belanger

Second: Councilor Lessard

Councilor Lessard – motion to amend to remove section I

Second: Councilor Beaupre

After further discussion about the importance of subcommittees Councilor Lessard was willing to adjust his motion.

Councilor Lessard – motion to amend to remove “or other experts as needed”

Second: Councilor Beaupre

Public Comment: one citizen asked if it would make sense to require full membership of the committee for any votes creating subcommittees.

Vote on the amendment: 6 yeas – Councilors Lessard, Gross, Beaupre, Whiting, Emhiser and LaFountain.

1 nay – Councilor Belanger.

Amendment passed.

Vote on Resolve as amended: Unanimous in favor.

Resolve passed.

9.e 2025.132 Approve/Change of Property Tax Deadline

Motion: Councilor Whiting

Second: Councilor Belanger

Vote: 6 yeas – Councilors Belanger, Gross, Beaupre, Whiting, Emhiser and LaFountain.

1 nay – Councilor Lessard.

Motion passed.

9.f 2025.130 Approval/Date Change of November 4, 2025 Regularly Scheduled Meeting

Motion: Councilor Belanger

Second: Councilor Lessard

Vote: Unanimous in favor.

Motion passed.

9.g 2025.131 Approval of Code of Ethics Redraft to be Sent to Policy Committee

Motion: Councilor LaFountain

Second: Councilor Beaupre

Councilors discussed the timing and if there was enough time for the Policy Committee to give this a careful review and get it back to the Council in time.

Councilor Belanger – motion to amend to delete: “for consideration no later than November 18, 2025”

Second: Councilor LaFountain

Vote on the amendment: 2 yeas – Councilors Emhiser and Belanger
5 nays – Councilors Lessard, Gross, Beaupre, Whiting and LaFountain.
Amendment failed.
Vote on the original order – Unanimous in favor.
Motion passed.

10. Public Addressing the Council

One citizen asked about the Jake Brake ordinance passed earlier this year and expressed concern for the safe operation of his trucks.

11. City Manager Report

City Manager Truc Dever praised the great job by the Public Works Department at the recent hazardous waste collection day, almost 800 people participated.

Fall Clean Up days have been scheduled and are posted on the website.

The recruitment for the Economic Development Director position is moving forward to the next stage of interviews.

The Public Works Director has submitted prices for the Hill Street fencing; it came in under the amount approved.

There will be a Town Hall on October 14th at the Community Center to discuss the upcoming bonds.

12. Committee Updates by Council

Councilor Emhiser gave an update on a residence on South Street that has not been hooked up to the system, it will be looked into.

Mayor Grohman thanked Councilor Emhiser for his years of work on this committee and the others.

13. Other Business

None

14. Council President Addressing the Council

Council President LaFountain asked for an update on the ZBA training process and details about the firm that might be selected.

15. Mayor Addressing the Council

Mayor Grohman thanked the school bus drivers for a great start to the school year.

The construction on Biddeford Primary has begun, is going well and is targeted for an April 2026 completion.

The incoming students will be in the class of 2038.

The high school is hosting Biddeford Rising this Thursday.

He will bring an appointment to Council for approval to replace Council Ortiz for the remainder of her term which expires in November 2025.

16. Executive Session

16.a Executive Session 1 MRS 405 (6) e Legal Matters

Motion to enter by Councilor Belanger at 7:58 pm

Second: Councilor Whiting

Vote: Unanimous in favor.

Motion passed.

Motion to exit by Councilor Whiting at 8:41pm

Second: Councilor Belanger

Vote: Unanimous in favor.

Motion passed.

17. Adjourn

Motion at 8:41 pm by Councilor Whiting

Second: Councilor Belanger

Meeting adjourned