

City of Biddeford

City Council

December 17, 2024 at 6:00 PM

City Hall Council Chambers & Zoom

1. Roll Call

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

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Adjustment(s) to Agenda

The Mayor held a tribute for Police Sergeant Jake Wolterbeek

4. Proclamation

4.a December Holidays Proclamation

Mayor Grohman read the proclamation

5. Appointments

5.a 2024.191 Approval / Mayoral Appointments to Citizen Committees

Motion: Councilor Emhiser

Second: Councilor Lessard

Vote: Unanimous in favor.

Motion passed.

5.b 2024.198 Approval / Mayoral Appointment

Motion: Councilor Emhiser

Second: Councilor Lessard

Vote: Unanimous in favor.

Motion passed.

6. Presentation

6.a Jim Godbout gave an update on the Seeds of Hope Project

6.b Parking Financials Update

Charlie Grab from Premium Parking gave an update.

7. Public Addressing the Council

2 people gave input on the Premium Parking presentation and ideas.

1 person spoke about an empty building on Beacon and Main.

8. Consideration of Minutes

8.a Council Minutes 12-3-24

Motion: Councilor Emhiser

Second: Councilor LaFountain

Vote: Unanimous in favor.

Motion passed.

9. Orders of the Day

*9.a 2024.196 Approval/Authorize Staff to Serve as the General Contractors for the River
Wall Project*

Motion: Councilor LaFountain

Second: Councilor Whiting

Several Councilors spoke in favor of the proposal and had high confidence in the ability of the staff to do the work with efficiency and cost savings.

Code Enforcement Officer Roby Fecteau said they will be back before Council soon with a proposal.

Vote: Unanimous in favor.

Motion passed.

9.b 2024.197 Approval Resolution for General Nutting Bridge support

Motion: Councilor Emhiser

Second: Councilor LaFountain

Councilor Beaupre spoke about the work that the Veteran's Committee did to bring this forward.

The family of General Nutting spoke and were appreciative of the honor.

Councilor Belanger – motion to amend the first Now Therefore statement to remove “Mayor’s Ad Hoc Veterans Committee hereby recommends to” and add “Biddeford City Council Recommends” and on the second resolve remove “The Committee further recommends”

Second: Councilor LaFountain

Vote on the amendment: Unanimous in favor.

Vote on the resolution as amended: Unanimous in favor.

Motion passed

9.c 2024.199 Refer Zoning Map Amendment to Planning Board for Review

Motion: Councilor Emhiser

Second: Councilor LaFountain

A citizen spoke about the reasons for the request.

Councilor Lessard would like the setbacks to be reviewed by the Planning Board, some are 5 feet, and some are 10 feet.

Councilor Belanger – motion to amend “request the Planning Board review the side and rear setback limits in the RSD2 Zone”

Second: Councilor Emhiser

Vote on the amendment: Unanimous in favor.

Amendment passed.

Vote on the order as amended: Unanimous in favor.

Motion passed.

9.d 2024.200 Approval Selection of Search Firm for City Manager

Motion: Councilor Belanger

Second: Councilor Emhiser

The Mayor discussed the timeline. Several councilors have reviewed the proposals and researched their work and would like to vote on this tonight. Several councilors recommended Strategic Government Resources.

Vote: Unanimous in favor.

Motion passed

9.e 2024.202 Approval/Permission to Use City Land for Boardwalk

Motion: Councilor Emhiser

Second: Councilor Lessard

Councilor Emhiser explained the easement.

Vote: Unanimous in favor.

Motion passed.

9.f 2024.201 Approval remaining ARPA funds

Motion: Councilor Belanger

Second: Councilor Lessard

Councilor LaFountain is supportive of this item but would like answers to his financial questions.

Vote: Unanimous in favor.

Motion passed.

10. Public Addressing the Council

One person asked questions about budgets and prior purchases.

One person said that having events on the roof of the parking garage is a great idea.

11. City Manager Report

City Manager Jim Bennett said there would be a special council meeting on Monday, December 23rd to review a bid for the heating system at the Rec Center.

He also has sent 2 drafts of the budget schedule for the Council to review.

12. Other Business

None.

13. Council President Addressing the Council

Council President LaFountain has researched economic methods to track rental vacancy rates.

14. Mayor Addressing the Council

Mayor Grohman had a positive meeting with our legislative delegation to discuss state funding. Superintendent Ray attended as well.

15. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn by Councilor Belanger at 8:15 pm

Second: Councilor Lessard.

Vote: Unanimous in favor.

Meeting adjourned.