

At a meeting of the Town Council holden in and for the Town of Gloucester on January 18, 2024

I. Call to Order

The meeting was Called to Order at 7:30 P.M. by Councilor W. Worthy , Town Council President.

II. Roll Call

Members present: Cheryl A. Greathouse; Jonathan E. Burlingame; Walter M. O. Steere, III; Stephen W. Arnold, Vice President; William A. Worthy, Jr., President

Also Present:

Jean Fecteau, Town Clerk; David Igliazzi, Town Solicitor; Christine Mathieu, Deputy Town Clerk; Jane Steere, Interim Finance Director; G. Mosca, EMA Director ; Gary Treml , DPW Director; Chief Delprete ( arrived at 7:45 PM); Karen Scott, Town Planner; Melissa Bouvier, Senior Center Director

III. Councilor W. Worthy asked everyone to please stand and join us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

IV. Open Forum - For Agenda Items

Councilor W. Worthy stated that anyone wishing to speak on an agenda item, is welcome to speak now. Councilor W. Worthy stated those wishing to speak should step to the microphone and state their name for the record.

None

V. Council Presentation - 250th Commission

Councilor W. Worthy stated that tonight we have Mr. Rob Rock, Deputy Secretary of State / Director of Administration, here to speak to us about the RI 250<sup>th</sup> Commission's plans.

Mr. Rock thanked the Council and stated that the task of the 250<sup>th</sup> Commission is make 2026 special. Mr. Rock stated that they were visiting each city and town to explain about the Commission and how each may want to participate in order to honor the anniversary. Mr. Rock stated the examples of several other communities and how they may be participating. Mr. Rock explained that many towns are forming specific 250<sup>th</sup> committees to handle the participation. Mr. Rock stated that other cities and towns are utilizing existing committees as a way to incorporate the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

Mr. Rock presented the Council with copies of historical documents that related to Gloucester. Mr. Rock state his appreciation for the opportunity to speak and stated that he or Lauren Fogarty can be contacted with any questions.

D. Igliazzi, Town Solicitor, recommended this matter be placed on an agenda in order for the Council to consider whether there was an existing committee that could take on this responsibility or if a new committee may be formed as well as how and when the town could participate.

R. Rock stated that he could send samples of other cities and towns resolutions to the town clerk as examples for Council in response to Councilor W. Worthy's question.

R. Rock stated that the state is trying to get the tall ships to return as part of the state celebration .

R. Rock stated that the state would also like to give each city and town a tree to plant as a commemoration of the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

R. Rock also stated that he has worked with the Clerk's office for his entire time in state government on the elections side and that the town's office is top notch. R. Rock stated he wanted to acknowledge the office and state it was a tremendous team and it is a pleasure working with them.

R. Rock thanked the Council for their consideration.

No action taken

VI. Consent Items - Discussion and/or Action

A. Approval of Town Council Minutes: Regular meeting of January 4<sup>th</sup> & January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024

B. Tax Assessor Additions & Abatement - December 2023

C. Finance Director's Report - December- 2023

MOTION was made by Councilor S. Arnold to APPROVE the Town Council minutes of January 4<sup>th</sup>, & January 10<sup>th</sup>; to APPROVE the ADDITION to the 2023 Tax Roll in the amount of \$2,070; No ABATEMENT to the 2023 Tax Roll; and to ACCEPT the Interim Finance Director's Report for December 2023; seconded by Councilor J. Burlingame

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- C. Greathouse, J. Burlingame, W. Steere, S. Arnold , W. Worthy  
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

VII. Unfinished Business

A. Boards & Commissions

1. Appointments - Discussion and/or Action

a. Economic Development Commission -

Position #7, Unexpired term to expire 12/31/2024

Councilor W. Worthy stated that the Chair does not have a recommendation at this time and the Chair requests the Council table.

MOTION was made by Councilor C. Greathouse to TABLE the appointment to Position #7, Economic Development to the Town Council meeting of February 1, 2024; seconded by Councilor J. Burlingame

Discussion: Councilor W. Worthy asked Councilor J. Burlingame if he had spoken to anyone

about this matter. Councilor J. Burlingame stated that they did not have anyone to recommend.

VOTE: AYES- C. Greathouse, J. Burlingame, W. Steere, S. Arnold , W. Worthy  
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

B. Personnel

1. Tax Assessor Appointment-Discussion and/or Action  
2- year Term to expire 12/31/2025  
Position #7, Unexpired term to expire 12/31/2024

Councilor W. Worthy stated that this is an off year appointment per Rhode Island Public Law.

MOTION was made by Councilor S. Arnold to REAPPOINT Jessica Parker to the position of Tax Assessor for a 2-year term to expire 12/31/2025 ; seconded by Councilor J. Burlingame.

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- C. Greathouse, J. Burlingame, W. Steere, S. Arnold , W. Worthy  
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

VIII. New Business

A. Code of Ordinance

1. Proposed Amendments - Approval for 1<sup>st</sup> Readings  
Discussion and Vote to Authorize Town Planner & Solicitor to submit proposed amendments for 1<sup>st</sup> Readings, as soon as prepared, to work towards compliance with R.I.G.L. effective 1/1/2024

Councilor W. Worthy stated that Council has received a request from the Town Planner and the Solicitor requesting approval to hold first readings, on proposed Code amendments, as needed to expedite changes necessary due to 2023 General Laws regarding Land Use and Housing which he read as follows:

To: Town Council Members

From: Karen Scott, Town Planner

Date: January 11, 2024

Re: Proposed Amendments to the Gloucester Code of Ordinances related to Housing and Land Use

The Town of Gloucester, along with all Rhode Island municipalities, is required to amend their local land use regulations in response to enabling legislation that has recently been passed by the General Assembly, which provided a very short time frame for implementation. Links to the specific bill language and summary of bills is available here - <https://www.rihousing.com/mtap-templates/>. We anticipate several categories of amendments:

**1. Sections of state law, which must be included in the local regulatory framework as written in the enabling legislation**—Some of the legislative updates include definitions, processes, procedures, and provisions that do not allow for interpretation and must be adopted into local regulations as they exist in state law.

**2. Amendments at the local level, which allow for some customization**—Some of the legislative amendments direct municipalities to amend their local regulations and ordinances but do not specify exactly how those changes are to be made. For these provisions, Weston and Sampson, the consultant we hired using the Municipal Technical Assistance grant will provide best practices, examples from other communities, and recommended language that the Town can consider and work with staff and the Planning Board to tailor these sections to the Town’s needs.

**3. Amendments at the local level to enable affordable housing construction in compliance with the Town’s Comprehensive Plan.** Focusing on the Village District, a consultant will work with staff and the Planning Board to modernize and update the Village Overlay District as a whole and look for opportunities to better integrate opportunities for scattered site affordable housing. We will also review other zoning districts to look for similar opportunities to better enable to construction of scattered site affordable housing.

We had previously agreed to prioritize these required amendments into phases.

Phase 1 – These changes would prevent any immediate negative local impact that would take effect on January 1, 2024.

Phase 2 —These bills will require significant immediate local attention because there is tailoring necessary at the local level. The consultant will take the lead on these changes. We anticipate beginning to present these amendments very early in 2024.

Phase 3—Those bills where there is little opportunity to tailor language at the local level and where state enabling legislation language needs to be directly inserted into the local regulatory framework.

Phase 4 – These amendments, which are not specific to the new legislation, are not on as tight a time-frame but will assist the Town in reaching its affordable housing goals as outlined in the Comprehensive Plan.

Even within each phase, all necessary ordinance amendments will not be completed at the same time and these changes are time sensitive. Therefore, we would like to adopt each set of ordinance amendments as soon as they are ready. These amendments must also work in concert with companion amendments to the Subdivision Regulations which the Planning Board will oversee.

In order to ensure that this process continues to move forward, I am requesting authorization to submit ordinance amendments required for compliance with the state law that became effective 1/1/2024 as they are prepared as these changes are time sensitive. These amendments will be reviewed by staff, the Town Solicitor and the Planning Board prior to placement on an agenda for

first reading.

The code amendments I will present tonight for first reading represent additional Phase 1 changes. Thank you for your consideration.

(End of memo)

Discussion: None

MOTION was made by Councilor C. Greathouse to AUTHORIZE 1<sup>st</sup> Readings be added to future agendas, on proposed Code of Ordinance amendments relating to 2023 Rhode Island legislation regarding Housing and Land Use , as prepared and reviewed by the Town Planner, Planning Board and the Town Solicitor, as completed; seconded by Councilor J. Burlingame

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- C. Greathouse, J. Burlingame, W. Steere, S. Arnold , W. Worthy  
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

B. Code of Ordinance - 1<sup>st</sup> Reading for Proposed Amendment - Discussion and/or Action

1. Chapter 350, Article III, Section 66.B Substandard lots of record

Councilor W. Worthy stated that for a first reading the proposed amendment can be read in full or a description can be provided by the Planner and/or Solicitor.

Councilor W. Worthy stated that first reading documents are available for the public.

Discussion: K. Scott, Town Planner, stated that the recent ordinance amendments tried to catch all changes that would have a negative impact due to the land use legislation that went into effect on January 1, 2024. K. Scott stated that she is before the Council tonight because one item was missed in those recent amendments. K. Scott stated that a new state law relates to substandard lots of record in the requirement of shrinking the setbacks and increasing the lot coverage in proportion with the minimum lot size of the zone to the actual lot size. K. Scott stated the example of a 2 acre lot in an A4 zone would have the setbacks reduced by half and the lot coverage increased by half. K. Scott stated that the setback of 50 feet would be reduced to 25 feet. K. Scott stated that the changes work on a sliding scale based on the minimal lot size of the zone and the actual size of the lot.

K. Scott stated that the current ordinance actually has more generous setbacks for substandard lots of record and increases in lot size. K. Scott stated that our ordinance already addressed smaller setbacks and increased lot coverage for substandard lots of record. K. Scott stated that the new law adds proportion on top of the reduction already provided. K. Scott stated that the effect of the new law on our code would be a reduction on top of a reduction. K. Scott stated that this first reading will take out the reductions the Code already has and replace with what the state adopted in January 2024. Councilor J. Burlingame asked if the current ordinance remained if the effect of the state law would

be a further reduction. K. Scott stated that would be the effect: a reduction on a reduction. K. Scott stated her opinion that the state legislature did not take into consideration that many cities and towns already had ordinances addressing substandard lots of record.

D. Igliazzi, Town Solicitor, stated that this will be the first reading and that a public hearing date can be scheduled.

MOTION was made by Councilor S. Arnold to DECLARE the first reading of a proposed amendment to Chapter 350, Article III, Section 66.B complete and to set a public hearing for February 15, 2024; said public hearing to be advertised per the Code of Ordinance; seconded by Councilor W. Steere

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- C. Greathouse, J. Burlingame, W. Steere, S. Arnold , W. Worthy  
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

2. Chapter 350, Attachment 2, Table of Dimensional Regulations

Discussion: K. Scott stated that this table contains the reductions and lot coverages so the explanation just given also applies herein.

MOTION was made by Councilor S. Arnold to DECLARE the first reading of a proposed amendment to Chapter 350, Attachment 2, Table of Dimensional Regulation complete and to set a public hearing for February 15, 2024; said public hearing to be advertised per the Code of Ordinance seconded by Councilor W. Steere

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- C. Greathouse, J. Burlingame, W. Steere, S. Arnold , W. Worthy  
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

C. Authorization for Signature

1. Rhode Island Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (RIPDES)  
Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems Annual Report 2023 - Discussion  
and/or Action

Councilor W. Worthy stated that in accordance with the Rhode Island Pollution Discharge Elimination System (RIPDES) program general permit for Storm Water discharges from small municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4s) and from industrial activities at eligible facilities operated by regulated small MS4s, we are required to complete a Phase II Storm Water Annual Report for submission to RIDEM. Councilor W. Worthy stated this Annual Report is available on the Town's website and in the Planning Department for public comment

MOTION was made by Councilor C. Greathouse to AUTHORIZE the Town Council President to sign the Phase II Storm Water Annual Report 2022 for submission to RIDEM after the Public Comment period has ended; seconded by

Discussion: J. Fecteau, Town Clerk, stated that the Report date should be 2023 and not 2022.

C. Greathouse withdrew her motion. No second had been made .

MOTION was made by Councilor C. Greathouse to AUTHORIZE the Town Council President to sign the Phase II Storm Water Annual Report 2023 for submission to RIDEM after the Public Comment period has ended; seconded by Councilor J. Burlingame

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- C. Greathouse, J. Burlingame, W. Steere, S. Arnold , W. Worthy  
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

D. Authorization to apply: Municipal Public Safety Infrastructure Grant - Discussion and/or Action

Discussion:.

G. Mosca, EMA director, stated that he and Karen Scott are here asking for authorization to apply for a municipal public safety infrastructure grant. G. Mosca stated that the grant is to be for the building or improvement of a public safety infrastructure. G. Mosca stated the grants run from one million to five million. G. Mosca stated the one million is for the town's use and that it could go up to five million if it can be shown that the building could be used regionally. G. Mosca stated that the application will be for the five million because the plans will have a large emergency operation center which could handle Scituate, Foster and Burrillville. Councilor W. Worthy asked if these are the same grants other cities and towns are applying for. G. Mosca stated these grants are for public safety. G. Mosca stated that the grant will be submitted through the state website and that the deadline is next week.

Councilor W. Steere asked if it mattered if it was for a new building or for an addition. G. Mosca stated that he does not know if it matters and that he is putting the grant through as an addition. G. Mosca stated that if the Council makes a decision as to a new building then he would amend the grant application. G. Mosca stated that there is a match for the grants but that the state has not provided the match amount.

K. Scott stated that the grant does state the majority of funding must be sources available to the town outside of this grant.

Councilor S. Arnold asked if G. Mosca was comfortable applying for the grant with the addition. G. Mosca stated he did feel comfortable. K. Scott stated that the purpose of the grant is for an investment in public safety infrastructure tied to police, fire and emergency services. K. Scott stated that there is no reference in the grant as to addition or new build . K. Scott stated that the grant, if

awarded, must be obligated by the end of 2024 and spent by 2026. G. Mosca stated the amounts can be anywhere from one million to five million.

Chief Delprete stated that the federal grant from FEMA is still in play and any award will be based on the renderings given of the addition. Chief Delprete stated the grants may be able to be piggybacked on one another. G. Mosca stated that one is state and one is federal. G. Mosca stated that at right now they are asking for authority to apply for the grant.

MOTION was made by Councilor W. Steere to AUTHORIZE the Municipal Public Safety Infrastructure Grant application submission for up to five million dollars by the Town Planner; seconded by Councilor J. Burlingame

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- C. Greathouse, J. Burlingame, W. Steere, S. Arnold , W. Worthy  
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

E. Board and Commissions - Discussion and/or Action

1. Appointments

a. Conservation Commission -

1. One Alternate term to Expire 1/31/2025

Councilor W. Worthy stated that the Chair has recommended the current Alternate, Bruce Payton, be reappointed as Alternate.

MOTION was made by Councilor C. Greathouse to REAPPOINT Bruce Payton to the position of Alternate on the Conservation Commission for a term to expire 1/31/2025; seconded by Councilor W. Steere

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- C. Greathouse, J. Burlingame, W. Steere, S. Arnold , W. Worthy  
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

b. Land Trust -

1. One Member at Large - Conservation Comm. Term to expire 1/31/2025

Councilor W. Worthy stated that the Conservation Commission has voted to request Roy Najecki, current member at large to the Land Trust, be reappointed.



MOTION was made by Councilor S. Arnold to REAPPOINT Roy Najecki to the Land Trust as member at large from the Conservation Commission for a term to expire 1/31/2025; seconded by Councilor W. Steere

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- C. Greathouse, J. Burlingame, W. Steere, S. Arnold , W. Worthy  
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

2. One Member at Large - Planning Board Term to expire 1/31/2025

Councilor W. Worthy stated that the Chair has indicated that this appointment would be voted on in early February and is asking this item to be tabled.

MOTION was made by Councilor C. Greathouse to TABLE the appointment to the Land Trust, Member at Large from the Planning Board, to the February 15, 2024 Town Council Meeting; the current member shall serve until appointment is made; seconded by Councilor J. Burlingame

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- C. Greathouse, J. Burlingame, W. Steere, S. Arnold , W. Worthy  
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

- F. Citizen potential donation - Trolley - Discussion and/or Action  
Councilor W. Worthy stated Council was contacted about a potential donation.

Discussion: Councilor W. Worthy stated that the individual is out of state. Councilor W. Worthy asked that this item be tabled until the first meeting in February.

MOTION was made by Councilor S. Arnold to TABLE Item F. To the first meeting in February; seconded by Councilor J. Burlingame

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- C. Greathouse, J. Burlingame, W. Steere, S. Arnold , W. Worthy  
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

- G. Citizen recommendation “dry fire hydrants in areas near water throughout town” - Discussion and/or Action

Councilor W. Worthy stated that Council was contacted about an idea of “dry fire hydrants” being placed in Chepachet Village.

Discussion: Councilor W. Worthy asked that this item be tabled as the individual is currently out of state.

MOTION was made by Councilor S. Arnold to TABLE Item G. To the first meeting in February; seconded by Councilor J. Burlingame

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- C. Greathouse, J. Burlingame, W. Steere, S. Arnold , W. Worthy  
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

- H. Union Correspondence: Request to begin successor agreement between Town of Gloucester and Gloucester DPW/NAGE Local 798 - Discussion and/or Action  
1. Appoint Negotiating Team

Councilor W. Worthy stated that Council received correspondence from NAGE stating their intention to begin negotiations for their next successor agreement. Councilor W. Worthy stated that at this time, Council can appoint their negotiating team and that team can contact the union steward to set up a meeting time.

Discussion: Councilor W. Worthy asked Councilor S. Arnold as the DPW liaison if he would be willing to be part of the negotiating team. Councilor S. Arnold stated he would be willing if the Council agrees. Councilor J. Burlingame also stated he would be willing to be on the team in response to Councilor W. Worthy’s question.

MOTION was made by Councilor W. Steere to APPOINT Councilor S. Arnold and Councilor J. Burlingame as the Town Council negotiating team to work with the Gloucester DPW, also known as NAGE Union, on a successor agreement for July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2027; seconded by Councilor C. Greathouse

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- C. Greathouse, J. Burlingame, W. Steere, S. Arnold , W. Worthy  
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

I. 2014/2015 Budget Schedule - Discussion and/or Action Regarding Setting of Dates  
Councilor W. Worthy stated that the Clerk has been working with the Interim Finance Director on the remaining dates to be set for the 2024 Financial Town Referendum.

Councilor W. Worthy stated that Councilor Arnold will address a possible workshop with the Budget Board.

Discussion: Councilor S. Arnold stated his opinion that a workshop between the Council and the Budget Board would be beneficial. Councilor S. Arnold feels that a meeting would provide the Budget Board with what the Council is thinking for the coming year. Councilor S. Arnold stated that it would make the process more efficient.

Councilor W. Steere stated that he would be in favor of a workshop before the Budget Board. Councilor S. Arnold stated that the purpose would be to discuss the general parameters and direction. Councilor S. Arnold stated that the Budget Board is talented and made up of committed people.

D. Igliazzi stated that he recommends that if the quorum of the Council is present then it should be a joint workshop.

MOTION was made by Councilor S. Arnold to have a joint workshop with the Budget Board on Wednesday, January 24, 2024 at 6:30 PM; seconded by Councilor J. Burlingame

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- C. Greathouse, J. Burlingame, W. Steere, S. Arnold, W. Worthy  
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

Discussion:

J. Fecteau, Town Clerk, stated that the referendum date was set but that she wanted to check with the Interim Finance Director about the preliminary date of April 22, 2024 @ 7:00 p.m. for the Public Hearing. J. Fecteau stated that Jane Steere, Interim Finance Director, feels that hearing date will give her enough time to have the advertisement approved by the State so therefore, Council can consider setting the Public Hearing date of April 22<sup>nd</sup>.

MOTION was made by Councilor J. Burlingame to SET April 22, 2024 @ 7:00 p.m. as the Town Council Public Hearing for a hearing on the budget for FY 2024/2025; seconded by Councilor W. Steere

Discussion: Councilor W. Steere asked if this date would give enough time to schedule another hearing if one was needed. J. Fecteau stated that this date was purposely chosen in order to have time to schedule and post properly another hearing if needed.

VOTE: AYES- C. Greathouse, J. Burlingame, W. Steere, S. Arnold, W. Worthy  
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

J. Gloucester Board of Canvassers - Discussion and/or Action

1. Nomination and Vote on temporary appt of Alternate BOC member

Councilor W. Worthy stated that the Town Clerk has been working with the Gloucester Board of Canvassers to obtain a quorum of the board for a mandatory meeting to certify signatures on Presidential Candidate Nomination Papers for the PPP. Councilor W. Worthy stated that a few members had to be absent from the deadline meeting leaving a shortage of members for a quorum. Councilor W. Worthy stated that per Rhode Island law there is a process in place to appoint an alternate member for a specific meeting. Councilor W. Worthy stated that the Clerk has followed that procedure and therefore has obtained a list of five registered voters, from the Republican Town Committee Chair, of potential registered voters to fill the position for this meeting. Councilor W. Worthy stated that the process is such that the Town Council President must now nominate one of the five and the Council will vote on nominations until an alternate is chosen. Councilor W. Worthy nominated Roy Najecki as he has been very involved in the election process to serve in this position.

MOTION was made by Councilor W. Steere to NOMINATE Roy Najecki to serve as an alternate member of the Gloucester Board of Canvassers for a meeting of the board to be held on January 22, 2024; seconded by Councilor J. Burlingame

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- C. Greathouse, J. Burlingame, W. Steere, S. Arnold , W. Worthy  
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

K. Adoption of Memorandum of Agreement - Discussion and/or Action

1. Between Town of Gloucester (on behalf of Gloucester Schools) & Laborers International Local 1322

Councilor W. Worthy stated that the acting Human Resources Director has prepared a Memorandum of Agreement between the Town of Gloucester and the Laborers International Local 1322 (Clerks Union). Councilor W. Worthy stated that the Memorandum is the result of the addition of clerk duties, for Gloucester Schools, to an existing Clerk union position, the DPW Administrative Aide.

Councilor W. Worthy stated that Council needs to ratify the agreement with Council President's signature and then the agreement will be presented to the Unions Business Manager for signature. Councilor W. Worthy stated that when signed by all that date will be the effective date of contract.

Discussion: Councilor J. Burlingame asked if this had been voted upon or agreed to by the union. Councilor S. Arnold stated that it had, the votes were in. D. Igliozi also stated that was correct.

MOTION by Councilor S. Arnold to AUTHORIZE the Town Council President to sign the Memorandum of Agreement between the Laborers' International Union of North America, Local

1322, ("the Union), and the Town of Gloucester, effective upon signature of both parties; once effective, terms of Memorandum shall be retroactive back to July 1, 2023; seconded by Councilor J. Burlingame

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- C. Greathouse, J. Burlingame, W. Steere, S. Arnold , W. Worthy  
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

2. Between Town of Gloucester (on behalf of Gloucester Schools) & National Assoc. Of Gov. Employees (NAGE)

Councilor W. Worthy stated that the acting Human Resources Director has prepared a Memorandum of Agreement between the Town of Gloucester and the National Association of Government Employees (NAGE)

Councilor W. Worthy stated that the Memorandum is the result of certain maintenance and supervisory services for the Gloucester School Department being assigned to the Building and Grounds Supervisor, a position in the NAGE bargaining unit.

Councilor W. Worthy stated that Council needs to ratify the agreement with Council President's signature and then the agreement will be presented to the union for signature. Councilor W. Worthy stated that when signed by all that date will be the effective date of contract.

MOTION was made by Councilor S. Arnold to AUTHORIZE the Town Council President to sign the Memorandum of Agreement between the Town of Gloucester and the National Association of Government Employees (NAGE), effective upon signature of both parties; once effective, terms of Memorandum shall be retroactive back to July 1, 2023; seconded by Councilor C. Greathouse

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- C. Greathouse, J. Burlingame, W. Steere, S. Arnold , W. Worthy  
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

#### IX. Town Council Correspondence/ Discussion

Councilor W. Worthy stated that Council has received the following correspondence:

1. Council has received the Conservation Commission's plan for an Earth Day celebration for April 2024.
2. Council has received correspondence from a resident with concerns about Beach Road and Lee's Lane.

3. Council has received a resolution passed by the Chariho Regional School District Committee in Support of Full Funding of Categorical Transportation Aid as outlined in RIGL § 16-7.2-6
4. Councilor C. Greathouse stated that she received correspondence from a resident on Joe Sweet Road regarding an issue with water on the road and icy conditions when the water freezes. Councilor C. Greathouse stated that there are two concerns. Councilor C. Greathouse stated that the first concern is the pool of water that was at the top of the hill near the Land Trust parking lot that runs downhill on the road. Councilor C. Greathouse stated that when this water freezes it makes the conditions on the road icy which is a concern especially for the residents that have to leave for work in the early morning hours. Councilor C. Greathouse did state that the DPW has done a great job in trying to address the issue.

Councilor C. Greathouse stated that the second concern is that water has been diverted from one private person's property to another private person's property by a pipe under the road. Councilor C. Greathouse stated that the water is causing flooding and erosion and described the erosion. Councilor C. Greathouse stated she does not know when or why the pipe was installed. Councilor C. Greathouse stated that she does not know why water would be diverted from one private person's property to another private person's property. Councilor C. Greathouse stated she would like answers, a solution and for the matter to be placed on the next agenda.

#### X. Department Head Reports/Discussion

Councilor W. Worthy asked if any department heads have anything to report or does Council have any questions for dept. heads.

1. Councilor W. Worthy asked G. Treml, Director DPW, to address the water issue brought up by Councilor C. Greathouse.

G. Treml stated that this area was developed in the 80's and 90's and before that development the water would run down the road and into the field. G. Treml stated that the pipe was put in before he started with the town and he started 17 years ago. G. Treml stated that water always flowed downhill from the top even before the Land Trust put in their parking lot. G. Treml stated that his predecessor tried a catch basin to try and send the water the other way but it did not work due to the elevations and ledge. G. Treml stated the only direction for the water to flow is downhill.

G. Treml stated the solution would be to install a 1400 foot pipe down the road and direct the water into the swamp. G. Treml described the solution as building two catch basins on either side of the road to direct water down a 1400 foot pipe that would be installed as well as repaving of the road. G. Treml stated that the cost would be \$130,000 for materials. G. Treml stated he has a call into a blasting company as that area has a lot of ledge. G. Treml stated that blasting would need to be done to get through the ledge deep enough to properly lay the pipe.

G. Treml stated that he does try to have the road salted and sanded early but that there are many streets in town with similar issues especially if residents are pumping water from their land onto the road.

Councilor J. Burlingame asked if there was money in the budget. G. Treml stated that the decision would have to be made if the town wanted roads paved or this pipe put in as it will probably cost \$200,000 to \$230,000. G. Treml stated he would have more specific numbers for the next town council meeting.

Councilor W. Worthy stated that this would be on the next agenda.

Councilor S. Arnold stated that this would take up a big part of the budget but it would be good to have concrete numbers.

Councilor W. Worthy asked G. Mosca, EMA director, if this matter may come under the FEMA money . G. Mosca stated that it may and that the residents were sending him information.

Councilor C. Greathouse asked about addressing the issue of the water going from one person's property to another causing erosion. (Unknown ) resident asked about what would happen if her driveway eroded and the garage collapsed. G. Treml stated that the pipe was there before any of the houses were built. Councilor C. Greathouse asked when the pipe was put in. G. Treml stated that it was probably put in when Moonraker Farm was developed.

Councilor C. Greathouse asked if the water could be directed to another property such as the woods further down the road. G. Treml stated he would not send water from one person's property onto another person's property. Councilor C. Greathouse stated that this resident's land was being massively eroded. G. Treml stated that he totally understood but he can't take water from one person's property and direct it to another person's property. Councilor C. Greathouse stated that a solution was needed. G. Treml stated he had just given a solution but it won't happen right now because it is winter. Councilor C. Greathouse stated that G. Treml should go and see the property. G. Treml stated he has gone to see the property on multiple occasions including recently. Councilor S. Arnold stated that he and G. Treml had also been out to the property last spring. Unknown resident stated his concern of his driveway cracking. Councilor J. Burlingame asked if the solution of the pipe will prevent water from this resident's property. G. Treml stated that if the solution as he described is done then all the water will be going down hill . G. Treml stated again that he understands the problem but he can't take water from one person's property and put it on another.

Councilor W. Worthy stated that the item will be on the next agenda where there will be more specific numbers for a discussion.

2. G. Mosca, EMA Director, stated that the storm in September 2023 was declared a federal disaster by FEMA. G. Mosca stated that FEMA is planning on visiting in Gloucester as to the September 2023 storm as well as the December 2023 storm ( which has not been declared a federal disaster but may be) .

G. Mosca is asking that if anyone has any names or addresses of people effected by these storms to send him the information. G. Mosca stated that FEMA will go to the addresses and help the residents with the applications.

G. Mosca stated that damage covered by insurance is not applicable. G. Mosca stated he is meeting with FEMA tomorrow . G. Mosca stated he will put out a message on Code Red, the website and social media as to when FEMA will be in Gloucester.

Councilor S. Arnold asked if G. Mosca received responses from the last CodeRed as to the September storm and FEMA. G. Mosca stated that he had.

#### XI. Bds. and Commissions Reports/ Discussion

Councilor W. Worthy asked if any boards or commissions had anything to report or if any Councilors had any questions for boards or commission members.

None

#### XII. Open Forum

Councilor W. Worthy asked if anyone has anything to discuss on any other subject and if so ,to please state your name when you come to the microphone.

1. B. Brown, Gloucester Historical Cemeteries, stated he has been speaking to many taxpayers about his proposal to add the Historical Cemeteries as a separate town department. B. Brown stated that the taxpayers he has spoken to want to know more about how that department would work; the purpose, how it would be budgeted , the cost and the effect on them as taxpayers. B. Brown stated he wants to sit down with the Council and draft a narrative to be able to give out explaining all of these issues and for it to be included as a vote in the 25/26 FY budget.

Councilor W. Worthy asked if the amount B. Brown is asking for is the \$280,000 as mentioned at a prior meeting. Councilor W. Worthy stated this matter would need to be a question on the Referendum for voters. B. Brown stated the voters should decide and this shouldn't get "swept under a rug".

B. Brown stated that the amount would cost each taxpayer \$54 and he based that on 5500 taxpayers. B. Brown stated that when he met with A. Muccino, former Finance Director, that A. Muccino told him that it would be \$70,000 per employee and with four employees it would total \$280,000. B. Brown stated that the employees could be laid off in the winter or work for the DPW.

Councilor W. Steere asked if B. Brown had met with the Budget Board yet. B. Brown stated he has not but was scheduled for next Wednesday . B. Brown questioned why he should speak to the budget Board about this when that meeting is for his request for 4 cemeteries only. Councilor W. Steere stated that B. Brown should bring his entire proposal to the Budget Board. Councilor J. Burlingame stated that the reason to do so was because the



Budget Board made recommendations to the Council. Council member indicated that the Budget Board is the first stop.

B. Brown stated again that he wants to sit down with Council and draft a narrative for those taxpayers who want more information about this proposal. Councilor S. Arnold stated that it is too early to give taxpayers information and that Mr. Brown needs to start with the Budget Board. Councilor S. Arnold stated that he feels the work B. Brown and his volunteers do is noble and appreciated in town. Mr. Brown stated he knew that.

J. Fecteau, Town Clerk and taxpayer, stated that the question of a new department should be for the taxpayers and not just added by the budget board as a line item in a budget. J. Fecteau stated that she feels the \$280,000 proposal is too low for a department. J. Fecteau stated that she is not saying this is not a noble cause or that she is not interested but rather that there may be taxpayers who do not want this department and that perhaps it should be a question on the Referendum ballot. J. Fecteau stated that people don't read the budget and she has never seen a line item of \$280,000 just appear in a budget. J. Fecteau stated that having a line item like this could jeopardize then entire budget. J. Fecteau stated the question now is how this question, should it be approved for presentation, could best be presented to the voters

Councilor Worthy stated that Council now needs a motion to convene to Executive Session:

MOTION was made by Councilor Steere to CONVENE to Executive Session pursuant to R.I.G.L. 42-46-5(a)(2) Potential Litigation; seconded by Councilor Burlingame.

Councilor W. Worthy asked the Clerk to Call the Roll

Councilor Greathouse- Aye  
Councilor Steere- Aye  
Councilor Burlingame- Aye  
Councilor Arnold- Aye  
Councilor Worthy- Aye

Discussion: None

MOTION PASSED

XIII. MOTION was made by Councilor Steere to RECONVENE Open Session; Disclose no votes were taken in Executive Session; and to SEAL the Minutes of Closed Executive Session; seconded by Councilor Greathouse.

Discussion: none

VOTE: AYES- C. Greathouse, J. Burlingame, W. Steere, S. Arnold , W. Worthy  
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

XIV. Adjourn

MOTION was made by Councilor Steere to ADJOURN at 9:30 p.m.; seconded by Councilor Arnold

Discussion: none

VOTE: AYES- C. Greathouse, J. Burlingame, W. Steere, S. Arnold , W. Worthy

NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED