

At a meeting of the Town Council holden in and for the Town of Gloucester on March 21, 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, Tax Collector and Interim Finance Director; Jessica Parker, Tax Assessor; Gary Treml, Director Public Works; Gerry Mosca, EMA Director; Capt. M. Fague, Gloucester Police; Robert Shields, Recreation Director

III. Pledge of Allegiance

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

IV. Open Forum - For Agenda Items

Councilor W. Worthy asked if anyone wished to speak on an agenda item to please step to the microphone and state your name when called on.

None

Councilor W. Worthy requested a motion to move New Business- item D.- Tax Exemption Ordinance (request by resident) to this point on agenda .

MOTION was made by Councilor J. Burlingame to move New Business, Item D. Exception to Tax Exemption Ordinance request by resident for discussion and or action; seconded by Councilor S. Arnold

Discussion: None

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

MOTION PASSED

VIII. New Business

D. Exception to Tax Exemption Ordinance request - by Resident - Discussion and/or Action

Discussion: Councilor W. Worthy stated that he asked for this item to be on the agenda at the request of a resident regarding the time period to return to Gloucester after having moved out to be eligible for the "over 65" tax exemption.

M. Benoit, resident, stated that she purchased a home in 2006 and moved out to Smithfield in 2016. M. Benoit stated that she moved back to Gloucester in 2019 and the residence is in her husband's name only. Councilor S. Arnold asked M. Benoit if she bought a different house when she returned to Gloucester. M. Benoit stated that she did buy a different home when she moved back to Gloucester. Councilor S. Arnold asked M. Benoit when she would be eligible for the tax break based on the town's ordinance. M. Benoit stated that she did not understand the question. Councilor W. Steere stated that the question asked by Councilor S. Arnold was how long has M. Benoit been back in town. M. Benoit stated she has been back in town for five years.

Councilor W. Steere stated that she needs to wait another five years in order to be eligible to receive the tax exemption. Councilor J. Burlingame stated that the town ordinance requires ten years of residency in order to receive the tax exemption and that the ordinance states that there are no exceptions.

Councilor W. Steere gave a brief history of the ordinance. D. Iglizzi, Town Solicitor, stated that the Council does not have the authority to grant the exception and that the only way for an exception to be granted by Council would be if the Council went through the process to amend the ordinance. Councilor S. Arnold stated that he is sympathetic but that he is not in favor of the exception or of changing the ordinance. Councilor J. Burlingame agreed and stated that the ordinance states that the move back must be within a two year time frame and that no exceptions are allowed. Councilor W. Worthy stated that the resident needs to wait a few more years to be eligible for the exemption.

No Action Taken by Council

V. Public Hearing

A. NEW LIQUOR LICENSES -

Continued from Public Hearing of November 16, 2023

1. CLASS B-V LIMITED- Discussion and/or action

- a. Knight Farm, LLC, Joseph Iacofano, d/b/a Knight Farm,
Farmers Omelette, 1 Snake Hill Road

Councilor W. Worthy stated that this public hearing was opened on November 16, 2023 and continued to this meeting. Councilor W. Worthy stated that the applicant at the time the hearing was opened needed more time to fulfill the completion of his application and notification of abutters. Councilor W. Worthy stated that the applicant has not completed the application process and abutters have not been notified. Councilor W. Worthy stated that Council can continue this application to another date if they chose.

Discussion: Councilor J. Burlingame asked if the applicant was present. J. Fecteau, Town Clerk, stated that she believes the applicant is in Florida. J. Fecteau stated that there many abutters in his area that need to get notice. J. Fecteau stated that her office has been reaching out to him but they have not heard from him in a few weeks. J. Fecteau stated that applicant knows this is coming up and is asking for the matter to be continued. J. Fecteau stated that if the matter is not continued the applicant would have to start the whole process all over again. J. Fecteau stated that applicant is still actively pursuing the matter in response to Councilor J. Burlingame's question. Councilor W. Steere asked if a few months would be sufficient. J. Fecteau stated that she thinks that would be time. Councilor J. Burlingame stated his opinion that to continue for a few months would be the right thing to do.

MOTION was made by Councilor W. Steere to CONTINUE the Public Hearing to May 2, 2024; seconded by Councilor S. Arnold

Discussion: None

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

MOTION PASSED

B. Gloucester Code of Ordinance- Discussion and/or Action

1. Chapter 63 Canvassing Authority - Bi-Partisan

Proposed Amendment: To add the appt. of Two Alternate members to the Gloucester Board of Canvassers

Councilor W. Worthy DECLARED the Public Hearing OPEN.

Councilor W. Worthy stated that there are copies available for the public. Councilor W. Worthy stated that this Public Hearing was advertised in the Valley Breeze /Observer the week of March 4, 2024.

Councilor W. Worthy stated that this proposed amendment was introduced via first reading on February 15, 2024. Councilor W. Worthy stated that there are public copies available. Councilor W. Worthy stated that the Clerk has worked with the Solicitor and the only change from the first reading document being proposed tonight is the term length. Councilor W. Worthy stated that the Solicitor has requested terms of office be the same for both Regular members and Alternates as state law only allows for Board of Canvassers to serve for six years.

Councilor W. Worthy stated that anyone wishing to speak, to please step to the microphone and give your name when called on.

None

Councilor W. Worthy DECLARED the Public Hearing CLOSED

MOTION was made by Councilor C. Greathouse to ADOPT the amendment to the Code of Ordinance, Chapter 63 Canvassing Authority - Bi-Partisan: To add the appointment of Two Alternate members, to serve for six year terms, to the Gloucester Board of Canvassers; the amendment shall be effective upon passage; seconded by Councilor S. Arnold

Discussion: D. Iglizzi, Town Solicitor, stated that the change in the final version from the first reading version is to bring it in compliance with state law.

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

C. Proposed Utility Easement - Discussion and/or Action

1. Joanne L. Lavengood Revocable Trust

For the purpose of installing a sanitary sewer line under a Town Road, known as Lake Washington Drive, at the request of a resident
Plat LW , Lots 86 + 181

Councilor W. Worthy DECLARED the Public Hearing OPEN.

Councilor W. Worthy stated that this Public Hearing was advertised in the Valley Breeze Observer on March 4th, 11th, & 18th.

Councilor W. Worthy stated that this proposed Easement was brought before the Town Council in October 2023 and after discussion there was a positive consensus to have the property owner submit all documents requested by and then approved by the Solicitor for Council approval.

Discussion: D. Ursillo, attorney for applicant, stated a summary of the reason the easement is being requested , a description of the easement , and the responsibilities accepted by the applicant if the town agrees . D. Ursillo stated that he is asking the Council to grant the easement but to consider waiving the bond and instead have the ability to place a lien on the property in the event the owner does not fix a future problem and the town does at its expense.

Councilor S. Arnold asked the length of time the road would be disturbed. D. Ursillo stated 1 day. M. Raimondi, surveyor, stated it would be about half a day and that the company who will be doing the work is very experienced.

Councilor W. Steere questioned that the work could be done in such a short amount of time . M.Raimondi stated that he did expect the work to be completed in a few hours but perhaps not paved in that time but travelable. Councilor W. Steere asked if test pits had been done as he was concerned about ledge. M.Raimondi stated that all test pits had been done on both sides of the road with depths of 10-12 feet and there was zero percent that ledge was present.

Councilor W. Worthy asked if the bond issue is part of the Code. D. Igliazzi stated that he would need to check. D. Ursillo stated that the bond type he was referring to was that which is typically found in land subdivision regulations and development. Councilor S. Arnold stated that he is not in favor of a lien on the house instead of a bond or an escrow account of the cost of the project till finished. Councilor S. Arnold stated that he wants to help and the proposal seems reasonable but he has concerns as to whether this opens a precedent. Councilor J. Burlingame stated that the bond being referred to was for future problems.

Councilor S. Arnold stated he is not in favor of waiving the bond. Councilor J. Burlingame asked what the amount of the bond would be. Councilor S. Arnold stated that at least the cost of the project.

D. Ursillo described how a bond is set in a subdivision project. D. Ursillo stated he is not sure if the applicant could do a cash bond but probably a surety bond.

D. Igliazzi stated that there are two types of bonds. D. Igliazzi described a construction or performance bond as one that is a surety or insurance bond and not cash which is for a short term during construction and released once construction is completed and satisfactory. D. Igliazzi stated the other type of bond is a repair bond so it is a surety bond for future work in case there is a problem. D. Igliazzi stated that the DPW Director or the engineer would be better suited to give a cost to repair or put the road back together if something went wrong.

G. Trembl, Director DPW, stated that the job would involve backfilling, compacting and paving. G. Trembl stated it would not be a big job .

M. Raimondi described the work that the contractor would do and it was similar to that described by G. Trembl. D. Ursillo stated that applicant would be willing to use a paver that the town has used if that would help put the town at ease.

Councilor W. Worthy asked if the cost would be several thousand.

Councilor S. Arnold stated that the proposal is reasonable but that he wants to make sure there is a “just in case” plan and that the excavator being used for the project has a great reputation.

Councilor J. Burlingame stated that the cost of the project is not great and suggested a bond of about \$1,000. Councilor C. Greathouse stated that she was in favor of the bond especially as the applicant homeowner will be responsible for future problems. Councilor J. Burlingame stated he was in favor of the project and asked if D. Igliazzi had looked at the easement agreement.

D. Igliazzi stated he drafted most of the of the easement and included language of the concerns of Council as to conditions and protections. D. Igliazzi stated his satisfaction from a legal perspective that the town is protected.

D. Ursillo stated the plan will be recorded with the easement so it is on record and easy to be located.

Councilor W. Steere stated he is not in favor of the easement as it opens the door for other requests in spite of the thought and work put into this request.

Councilor W. Worthy asked if anyone else wanted to speak.

Councilor W. Worthy DECLARED the Public Hearing CLOSED.

MOTION was made by Councilor J. Burlingame to APPROVE and AUTHORIZE the Town Council President to sign a Utility Easement under Lake Washington Drive, approximate location Plat LW, Lots 86 & 181 for the purpose of installing a sanitary sewer line, for the property owner’s use, under Lake Washington Drive; the granting of this easement is contingent upon: 1) Approval by the Gloucester Technical Review Committee, to include the Director of Public Works approval, of the survey entitled “Boundary Survey of Land of The Joanne K. Lavengood Revocable Trust, Assessor’s Plat LW Lots 86 & 181, 370 Lake Washington Drive Gloucester, Scale 1" = 30' Date: June 6, 2023 Revision Date: November 20, 2023, Project No: SS2529.02 Drawing No.: SS5053 Drawn by J.D. Raimondi, Sheet 1 of 1"; 2) Town Solicitor approval of documents, 3) signing by Town Council President of said utility easement, and 4) recording of said survey, as described above,

and Utility Easement in the Land Evidence Records of the Town of Gloucester; seconded by Councilor C. Greathouse

Councilor W. Worthy asked the Clerk to Call the Roll

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

Discussion: None

MOTION PASSED

VI. Consent Items- Discussion and/or Action

- A. Approval of Town Council Minutes: Regular meeting of February 15th, Special Meeting of March 6th, and Regular meeting March 7th, 2024
- B. Tax Assessor's Additions & Abatement - February 2024
- C. Interim Finance Director's Report - February 2024

MOTION was made by Councilor C. Greathouse to APPROVE the Town Council meeting minutes of February 15th, March 6th, and March 7th, 2024; to APPROVE the Tax Assessor's Additions and Abatements for February 2024: NO Additions to the 2023 Tax Roll; Abatements to the 2021 Tax Roll in the amount of \$3,127.79, the 2020 Tax Roll in the amount of \$3090.48, the 2019 Tax Roll in the amount of \$3,617.88, and the 2018 Tax Roll in the amount of \$3,369.40; and to ACCEPT the Interim Finance Director's Report for February 2024; 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. Consideration of Observation of Juneteenth Holiday (6/19/2024) - Discussion and/or Action

Councilor W. Worthy stated that at the last meeting, the Town Council received a memo from the acting HR Director explaining the new law which designated this holiday as a state holiday. Councilor W. Worthy stated that Council needs to determine if this holiday is to be added to employee holidays.

Discussion:

Councilor W. Steere stated the issue is about paying employees. Councilor W. Steere stated that if the employees have to work the holiday then they will get paid time and a half. Councilor W. Steere stated that if the employees get the holiday off then they get paid their regular wages.

Councilor J. Burlingame asked if a holiday could be removed in exchange. J. Fecteau stated that the issue would need to go to the unions. Councilor S. Arnold stated that there are four different unions with four different contracts. Councilor S. Arnold asked if this would be for all employees. Councilor J. Burlingame stated a suggestion to get a memorandum from each union.

D. Igliazzi stated that Council as the governing body decides if the town is open or closed for state holidays. D. Igliazzi stated that if the town is open on a state holiday then the employees would get paid time and a half. D. Igliazzi stated that the unions can't make the town be open as that is a Council decision.

Councilor W. Worthy asked for the financial impact if open. Councilor W. Steere stated that Council should do what is in the best interest of the taxpayers.

MOTION was made by Councilor S. Arnold to AUTHORIZE the acting HR Director to update the employee handbook, Holidays, with the addition of Juneteenth National Freedom Day, effective immediately, as a paid holiday for all eligible employees; said HR Director shall be authorized to inform each of the Town employee Unions of the addition of a paid holiday and invite said unions to contact the HR Director if they had any opposition and/or questions; and addendums to Union Contracts shall be forwarded to Union representatives for signature and inclusion in current contracts; seconded by Councilor C. Greathouse

Discussion: None

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

MOTION PASSED

B. Political Signage/Campaigning - Discussion and/or Action

Councilor W. Worthy stated there is information in Council's packet regarding political signs.

Discussion: Councilor S. Arnold stated that he is in favor of a framework but admitted he has not had a chance to look at it over the last two weeks. Councilor W. Steere agrees that some type of guidelines would be good especially for any new people running for elected office . Councilor W. Steere stated a suggestion to table this item to a future meeting. J. Fecteau stated an offer to do a draft of a policy for Council.

MOTION was made by Councilor S. Arnold to TABLE the discussion regarding political and campaign signs to the meeting of April 19; seconded by Councilor J. Burlingame

Discussion: None

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

MOTION PASSED

Councilor S. Arnold corrected the date to April 18th.

C. Police Station Renovation/Replacement Updates - Discussion and/or Action

Discussion: Councilor W. Steere stated that a decision needs to be made soon. Councilor W. Steere stated that anyone with questions should get the questions to the appropriate person as soon as possible. Councilor W. Steere stated that D. Igliazzi was able to get some information on the impact of a bond from a financial person who is available next week for a special meeting. Councilor S. Arnold stated that the financial impact is necessary and agrees that a decision needs to be made soon. D. Igliazzi stated that Mr. Maceroni is available next week for a special meeting. Councilors agreed that they were available for a special meeting on Wednesday March 27 at 6:00 pm. D. Igliazzi will check with the financial person for his availability on Wednesday.

Councilor W. Worthy asked for a Code Red to inform the public of the meeting. J. Fecteau stated that Council has said that they would start having public hearings once a decision has been made as to direction to take.

D. Igliazzi stated to wait to send out a Code Red until after confirming with the financial person that he was available.

MOTION was made by Councilor S. Arnold to have a special meeting on March 27, 2024 at 6:00 PM regarding the police station renovation or replacement; seconded by Councilor J. Burlingame

Discussion: None

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

MOTION PASSED

Discussion: Councilor W. Steere asked a question about the grant that has been applied for with the state. G. Mosca stated he was told the grant awards would come out in the middle of March but he has not heard anything yet. G. Mosca stated that he gets weekly calls from FEMA as to whether or not Council has made a decision because the grant award must be spent within a set time. G. Mosca stated his advice that Council not go beyond April 4th in making their decision.

D. Disposition of Memorandum of Agreements relative to certain maintenance and clerical services related to school maintenance for the Gloucester School Department:

Councilor W. Worthy stated that Council has two Memorandums with union groups. Councilor W. Worthy stated that if agreements are no longer needed then Council may want to terminate the agreements and notify each union.

1. Between DPW (NAGE) ("the Union") and the Town of Gloucester approved by Town Council on 1/18/2024 - Discussion and/or Action

MOTION was made by Councilor S. Arnold to terminate the Memorandum of Agreement between the Town of Gloucester and DPW Union, NAGE, which was adopted to provide certain maintenance and supervisory services to the Gloucester School Department, to be done by the Building and Grounds Supervisor, a position in the NAGE bargaining unit; said agreement was authorized for signature by the Town Council on January 18, 2024; seconded by Councilor J. Burlingame

Discussion: Councilor J. Burlingame stated a summary of this agreement . Councilor J. Burlingame stated that the Gloucester School Committee voted at their meeting last week to return to the Region for this position so it isn't necessary for the town employee to continue with this job.

G. Trembl, DPW Director, asked when the agreement ends because the school has continued to call the DPW both last week and this week to take care of issues at the school. Councilor J. Burlingame stated that the school committee voted to return to the Region so they are responsible and it should be immediately in his opinion. G.Trembl stated he needs to know who would be doing the work so he can call the Region and tell them what the issue is at the school when his office gets the calls. Councilor S. Arnold stated that he wished the Superintendent were at this meeting and he thought this matter was clarified last week .

Councilor S. Arnold stated his displeasure that the matter is not clarified. Councilor S. Arnold stated that the superintendent should have informed the two elementary schools of the change last Wednesday the day after the school committee meeting. G.Trembl stated that the calls are still coming in and there can't be a lapse in the care of the schools. Councilor S. Arnold read a text he received from the superintendent today that stated that both schools are not to call the DPW for work to be done at the schools. G. Trembl stated that DPW was at the elementary school today. G.Trembl stated that if the Council says the work stops then he will stop. Councilor S. Arnold stated that is what should have happened last Wednesday.

Councilor J. Burlingame stated his opinion that the agreement with the DPW could be terminated but that the agreement with the Clerk from Local 1322 could continue . Councilor W. Steere stated he agrees with the Clerk continuing but only to a date certain. G.Trembl described some of the issues DPW has handled at the schools over the last week because it was the right thing to do. Councilor S. Arnold stated the communication he received today is inconsistent with what G. Trembl has stated. G. Trembl stated that the Clerk will contact the Region if there is a problem going forward. Councilor J. Burlingame stated that it is the responsibility of the Region. G. Trembl stated that the clerk will continue with administrative aspects under the agreement. Councilor S. Arnold stated his opinion that the problem is that DPW employees have been doing work at the school where they are not authorized.

D. Igliazzi, Town Solicitor, suggested Council hold a special meeting next Wednesday or to at least send a letter to the school that has a date certain when services are done. D. Igliazzi offered to draft the letter . D. Igliazzi suggested that Council authorize a Councilor to contact the superintendent.

Councilor J. Burlingame withdrew his second and Councilor S. Arnold withdrew his motion. Councilor J. Burlingame offered to be the contact person and will let D. Igliazzi know the outcome .

Councilor J. Burlingame asked for a copy of the agreement with this school. D. Igliazzi stated that there was a vote to this matter. J. Fecteau stated there was no written agreement between the school and the town.

MOTION was made by Councilor W. Steere to authorize Councilor J. Burlingame to speak with the Superintendent of Schools and the Chair of the School Committee to work out this situation; seconded by Councilor S. Arnold

Discussion: None

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

MOTION PASSED

2. Between the Laborers' International Union of North America, Local 1322, ("the Union), and the Town of Gloucester approved by Town Council on 1/18/2024 - Discussion and/or Action

MOTION was made by Councilor W. Steere to TABLE the Memorandum of Agreement between the Town of Gloucester and Local 1322 , intended to provide certain clerical services related to school maintenance for the Gloucester School Department, by the Administrative Aide in the Town's Department of Public Works, a position in the Union bargaining unit; said agreement was authorized for signature by the Town Council on January 18, 2024 to a special meeting on Wednesday ,March 27, 2024; 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. Consideration of Special Event Application

1. Sprint Enduro Bike Race- Discussion and/or Action Proposed event scheduled to be held at 104 Bungy Road on April 6th, 2024

Councilor W. Worthy stated that Council agreed to consider this application for a special event without a public hearing, per the Code of Ordinance, because the event is a repeat event at the same location.

Discussion: Councilor W. Worthy asked if there had been any issues with the event held last year. Captain Fague, Gloucester Police, stated that there were no issues at the event last year. Captain Fague stated the concern to make sure that there were emergency services available so the town departments are not taxed. Captain Fague stated that there were no parking issues last year.

MOTION was made by Councilor S. Arnold to GRANT the Special Event for Applicant: Hans Neff, on behalf of Future Aces by Hans, for the Sprint Enduro Races to be held on April 6, 2024 at 104 Bungy Road with the following stipulations:

- 1) The race shall be conducted between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.
- 2) No alcoholic beverages of any kind shall be consumed or allowed on the premises.
- 3) No overnight camping shall be allowed on the premises other than primitive camping for race participants.
- 4) Anyone selling non-alcoholic beverages or food, that is not pre-packaged, on the premises shall obtain necessary licensing from the Town, with approval from the Rhode Island Department of Health when necessary.
- 5) Adequate porta johns shall be available.

- 6) An area on the premises to accommodate the parking of all vehicles of visitors and participants, etc. shall be available, such as to avoid the parking of such vehicles on nearby roads.
- 7) Adequate liability insurance coverage, at applicant's expense, of at least \$1,000,000, shall be provided with the Town of Gloucester, its functionaries and all abutting property owners included as named insured. Such policies, or certification thereof, shall be submitted to the Town Solicitor for approval. The Town Solicitor may ask for an additional amount of liability insurance cover after review of the Interlocal Trust's recommendation at any time prior to the event.
- 8) The Town of Gloucester and its functionaries shall be included among those individuals and entities released in any release, waiver of liability and indemnity agreements secured by the applicants.
- 9) Applicant shall comply with applicable requirements and rules of the A.M.A., N.E.T.R.A., and insurance carriers.
- 10) At the Police Chief discretion, a patrol officer detail may be assigned to the premises at the applicant's expense, to assist in traffic control, the maintenance of good order, and compliance with these conditions.
- 11) An ambulance or rescue vehicle, in addition to two (2) Emergency Medical Technicians, shall be available on the premises at the applicant's expense.

Seconded by Councilor J. Burlingame

Discussion: None

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

MOTION PASSED

B. Economic Development Commission

1. Review ARPA Funds availability and consider/approve allocation for proposed project for EDC - Place Branding - Discussion and/or Action

Councilor W. Worthy stated that the EDC has done a few presentations to Council on the "Place Branding" concept that the Commission would like to implement. Councilor W. Worthy stated that in July 2023, after a presentation by members of the Commission the Council approved the EDC seeking RFP's for a company with place branding expertise. Councilor W. Worthy stated that funds were "penciled" in but no motion was made to formally reserve funds. Councilor W. Worthy stated that the amount discussed was \$25,000. Councilor W. Worthy stated that after the RFP process, it was determined that all qualified bids were higher than the amount discussed as a possibility from ARPA funds.

Councilor W. Worthy stated that the Commission would like to rebid this project but would like to have funds formally committed before considering moving forward.

Discussion: B. MacArthur, EDC Chair, summarized the reasons for the proposed request for ARPA funds as being it is aligned with the EDC charge, the need stated in the Chepachet Village

Revitalization Plan for marketing, and it is in line with the spirit of ARPA. B. MacArthur stated the value branding would work in Gloucester by controlling the narrative of who Gloucester is, solidify and memorialize the rural character of the town, and to show to Gloucester and others what the town has to offer.

W. Steere, resident, stated his appreciation for the hard work done by EDC but feels that there are better places to spend the money.

B. MacArthur stated that the bids came in high and because the RFP lacked a limit on the cost and that all RFP's received seemed to be the "Disney" version.

Councilor W. Worthy stated his opinion that there is a misconception that the branding proposal is just a sign or a logo. Councilor W. Worthy stated that the branding is much more than a sign or logo and the point is to bring people to Gloucester to shop. Councilor W. Worthy stated that EDC is trying to let people know all things that are available in Gloucester.

Councilor C. Greathouse asked B. MacArthur to share the ideas the companies came up with in the branding. B. MacArthur stated that the RFP's submitted contained a lot of research, community engagements, focus groups, survey development, digital media, all to coordinate a direction and then guidance on marketing plans.

Councilor S. Arnold thanked EDC for all their hard work and stated he understands what they are trying to do but he does not want to obligate any ARPA funds until after the town has a budget.

Councilor J. Burlingame asked J. Steere, Interim Finance Director, for the balance of ARPA funds. J. Steere stated that there is \$115,339 of unobligated funds and 2.2 million that is obligated. Councilor J. Burlingame asked if there were funds that have been obligated for EDC and J. Steere stated no. Councilor C. Greathouse stated that she would like to wait. Councilor C. Greathouse asked B. MacArthur if EDC could get services for the \$25,000 even though all the bids came in much higher. B. MacArthur stated that EDC could obtain services.

Councilor W. Steere asked B. MacArthur as to the "hit" rate on the EDC website. B. MacArthur stated that the number varies depending upon the time of year and event. Councilor W. Steere stated that he was thinking of the return on investment for this project. B. MacArthur stated an example of a town in New Hampshire that attributed their town branding to be the reason the town received a lot of grant money. Councilor S. Arnold asked B. MacArthur if the EDC would accept less money. B. MacArthur stated that the \$25,000 would provide research, the brand and a plan to move forward.

MOTION was made by Councilor S. Arnold to TABLE the set aside of \$25,000 of APRA Funds for Economic Development, Place Branding project to May 2, 2024 ; seconded by Councilor J. Burlingame

Discussion: None

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

MOTION PASSED

C. Proposed budget for FY 2024/25

- 1. Accept Proposed Budget from Budget Board for Public Hearing (to be held April 22, 2024) - Discussion and/or Action

Councilor W. Worthy stated that per the Town Charter, the Budget Board presents to Council its proposed budget the second meeting of March.

Discussion: M. Robinson, Budget Board chair, stated that he was here to present the budget to Council . M. Robinson stated that this year was incredibly difficult because there is no Finance Director who is the usual point person for the budget. M. Robinson stated the makeup of the volunteer Budget Board . M. Robinson stated that the Board owes gratitude to Jane Steere and Beth Beltram for their help as well as the Councilors who gave their support.

M. Robinson stated that copies of the budget are available from the Finance Office.

Councilor W. Steere thanked all members of the Budget Board as well as Jane Steere and Beth Beltram.

MOTION was made by Councilor W. Steere to ACCEPT the FY 2024/25 proposed budget from the Gloucester Budget Board for a Public Hearing to be held on April 22, 2024; seconded by Councilor C. Greathouse

Discussion: None

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

MOTION PASSED

Discussion: Councilor S. Arnold stated his thanks to the Budget Board.

- D. Exception to Tax Exemption Ordinance request - by Resident - Discussion and/or Action

Moved to after Open Forum for Agenda Items

E. Boards & Commissions

- 1. Resignation - Discussion and/or Action
 - a. Economic Development Commission - One Ad-hoc non voting member, term to expire 12/31/2024

Councilor W. Worthy the Clerk has received the resignation of ad hoc member, Dan Lawton, from the EDC.

MOTION was made by Councilor C. Greathouse to ACCEPT, with thanks, the resignation of Dan Lawton from the Economic Development Commission; seconded by Councilor J. Burlingame

Discussion: None

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

MOTION PASSED

2. Appointment - Discussion and/or Action

- a. Economic Development Commission - One Ad-hoc non voting member, term to expire 12/31/2024

Councilor W. Worthy stated that there is no recommendation from the Chair at this time. Councilor W. Worthy stated that Council can review the talent bank list and appoint or table.

MOTION was made by Councilor S. Arnold to TABLE the appointment to the Economic Development Commission for one Ad-hoc non voting member position; seconded by Councilor C. Greathouse

Discussion: None

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

MOTION PASSED

- b. Parade Committee Appointment - One non voting Ad-hoc member

Councilor W. Worthy stated that the Parade Committee Chair has requested the appointment of a non voting Ad-hoc member. Councilor W. Worthy stated that Council has a talent bank application in their packet,

MOTION was made by Councilor C. Greathouse to APPOINT Glen Reynolds to the Parade Committee to an Ad-hoc, non-voting position; seconded by Councilor J. Burlingame

Discussion: None

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

MOTION PASSED

- F. Consideration and/or Authorization of Contract between Town of Gloucester and George E. Sansoucy, P.E., LLC d/b/a Sansoucy Associates

Councilor W. Worthy stated that Council has received and reviewed an agreement from Sansoucy Associates to continue working with the Town of Gloucester by providing annual valuation updating, revaluation services, general consulting, and, as necessary, follow up work relating to FM Global Research Campus, for a 5-year period.

MOTION was made by Councilor S. Arnold to AUTHORIZE the Town Council President to sign a contract, between the Town of Gloucester and George E. Sansoucy, P.E., LLC d/b/a Sansoucy Associates for annual valuation updating, revaluation services, general consulting, and , as

necessary, follow up work relating to FM Global Research Campus for the period January 1, 2024 – December 31, 2028 (5-years), said contract compensation shall be based on a time and material basis pursuant to a rate sheet made part of contract; seconded by Councilor C. Greathouse

Discussion: None

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

MOTION PASSED

G. Bids & Purchases

1. Bid Extensions - Discussion and/or Action

Councilor W. Worthy stated Council has received a request from the DPW Director which he read he read as follows:

March 12,2024

To: Honorable Town Council

From: Gary Trembl

Public Works Director

Re: Bid Extensions

Bid extensions were requested from the vendors on the following two bids:

IFB 2001-10 Low Sulfur Diesel & Gasoline

IFB 2024-01 Hot Mix Asphalt

Both vendors have agreed to extend the bids at original pricing and conditions (See attached bid extension agreements).

I am requesting that these bid extensions be approved

Thank you,

Gary Trembl, DPW

(End of memo)

a. IFB 2001-10 Low Sulfur Diesel & Gasoline

MOTION was made by Councilor S. Arnold to EXTEND IFB 2001-10 Low Sulfur Diesel & Gasoline at the original bid price of (89octane) at a price of \$0.085/gal over cost to May 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

b. IFB 2024-01 Hot Mix Asphalt

MOTION was made by Councilor J. Burlingame to EXTEND IFB 2024-01 Hot Mix Asphalt at the original bid price of Hot Mix Asphalt, 3" compacted at a price of \$ 119.00 and 4" compacted at a price of \$119 per ton in place, tack coat \$0.65 per sq yd and \$8.00/linear ft for berm to June 30, 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. Authorization to seek Bids - Discussion and/or Action
 - a. RFP for Payroll Services

Councilor W. Worthy stated that Council has received a request from the Interim Finance Director to seek bids for payroll services. Councilor W. Worthy stated that the Director has indicated that the current contract's expiration is coming up this year.

MOTION was made by Councilor S. Arnold to AUTHORIZE the Acting Finance Director to begin the RFP process of obtaining pricing for payroll services; seconded by Councilor W. Steere

Discussion: None

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

MOTION PASSED

3. Authorization for EDC to Re-bid "Place Branding" - Discussion and/or Action

Councilor W. Worthy stated that as discussed earlier, the Economic Development Commission has requested permission to re-bid their Place Branding project. Councilor W. Worthy stated that the bids received in the first bid process exceed cost expectations.

MOTION was made by Councilor J. Burlingame to TABLE the authorization to re-bid RFP 2024-01 Place Branding until May 2, 2024; seconded by Councilor S. Arnold

Discussion: None

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

MOTION PASSED

- H. Personnel
 1. Appointments - Discussion and/or Action
 - a. Senior Center - Substitute Meal Site Coordinators

Councilor W. Worthy stated that the Council has received a request to appoint Pearl Benoit as a fill in Meal Site Coordinator. Councilor W. Worthy stated that the Director has indicated that this candidate is a member of the center and has 7 years of recent food service experience.

MOTION was made by Councilor C. Greathouse to APPOINT Pearl Benoit to the position of Substitute Meal Site Coordinator on an as needed basis to be paid at the hourly rate of \$16.00; said position is not eligible for benefits; effective March 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

I. Disposition of structure on Town Property, 1272 Putnam Pike -
Discussion and/or Action

Councilor W. Worthy stated that this item was previously tabled with no action taken.

Discussion: Councilor W. Worthy stated that he requested this item for the fact that the building is possibly unsafe.

Councilor S. Arnold stated that he requested this item on the agenda several months ago. Councilor S. Arnold stated that the item was tabled because several people spoke at the meeting about preserving the building. Councilor S. Arnold stated that no one has brought any ideas to Council about preserving the building since that meeting. Councilor S. Arnold stated that a decision needs to be made and if anyone has any proposals to let Council know. Councilor J. Burlingame stated that the Solicitor suggested that a public hearing may be needed for a decision of how to dispose of the property. Councilor W. Steere stated that a date certain be given for anyone to come to the Council with ideas. Councilor C. Greathouse stated she thought the Historical Committee is looking into the matter. D. Iglizzi stated a recommendation that Council place a notice on the town website that Council is accepting all ideas regarding the disposition of the property.

MOTION was made by Councilor J. Burlingame to put a notice on the town website that the Council will consider all options for the property at the first council meeting in August; seconded by Councilor C. Greathouse

Discussion: None

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

MOTION PASSED

J. Legislative Updates - Discussion and/or Action

Councilor W. Worthy stated that the Clerk has been forwarding legislative updates to the Council and Department Heads as they have been received and is department heads to share their input with

Town Council.

Councilor W. Worthy stated that Council can chose to include this as a monthly addition to the agenda; or chose another option to stay connected to legislative introductions.

Discussion: Councilor W. Steere stated that there is a lot of information and it is an important matter so he stated his opinion that it should be an agenda item. Councilor W. Worthy and J. Burlingame stated their agreement. Councilor S. Arnold stated that the Town Planner did a great job summarizing a lot of the proposals. Councilor S. Arnold stated that the legislation is different for different cities and towns. Councilor W. Steere stated that it would be good to add to the agenda to be able to discuss and take action if need be.

MOTION was made by Councilor S. Arnold to AMEND the Town Council regularly scheduled agenda by adding the following item: Legislative Updates - Discussion and/or Action; seconded by Councilor J. Burlingame

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 asked if any Councilors had any correspondence to discuss.

Discussion: Councilor W. Steere stated that he was disappointed in the turnout at the Regional meeting for the school budget last Tuesday. Councilor W. Steere stated that there were 11 people from Foster which included the pollworkers and the school committee members. Councilor W. Steere stated that there were about 57 people total. Councilor S. Arnold stated there were 56 people total and 35 people voted from Gloucester and that also included the pollworkers . Councilor W. Steere stated his opinion that people may not realize how important this meeting is to the town because once the budget is set it can't be changed. Councilor W. Steere stated that \$21,000 was removed from the budget. Councilor W. Steere stated his opinion that he did not approve of \$150,000 being taken from the general fund and used for school operations . Councilor W. Steere stated that he hopes people will understand if there are cuts to the town budget.

Council Correspondence:

1. Resolution from Exeter-West Greenwich Regional School in support of full funding of categorical transportation aid.
2. From citizen expressing "High Praise for the Gloucester Police Department and Officer Andrew Uriati"
3. FEMA notice of flood hazard determination review period
4. Notice for posting of events for R.I. Historical Cemeteries Awareness and Preservation Weeks in April and May 2024
5. Funding request from the Blackstone Valley Tourism Council - 2nd letter

X. Department Head Reports/Discussion

Councilor W. Worthy asked for reports or discussion.

1. J. Parker, Tax Assessor, stated that she is asking the Council for an appeal hearing date on behalf of resident, P. Fiori . J. Parker stated her opinion that state law allows that absent a board of assessor's or panel of assessors that the Council can step in and hear the appeal. J. Parker stated she has gotten a lot of feedback from the Board of review so she is requesting a date. Councilor S. Arnold stated he was fine with that. Councilor W. Steere stated that no action can be taken tonight. Councilor W. Worthy stated that will work towards adding to an agenda.

2. G.Kain, stated he is speaking on behalf of J. Luszcz, Director of Human Services, to announce that a food drive will be held Sunday from 10 am to 2 pm at Dino's under the combined efforts of the Police Dept. and the Human Services Dept.

3. R. Shields, Recreation Director, stated he was contacted by a member of the Foster Town Council seeking confirmation that we would continue the Memorial Day Services. R. Shields asked if Council would like him to do what he did last year and then there needs to be a discussion on funding.

Councilor W. Steere asked the budget from last year. R. Shields stated that he remembered the buses were about \$1200 and the wreaths cost \$500 - \$800. R. Shields stated that he thought the budget was capped at \$2500. Councilor W. Steere asked if R. Shields included funds for the parade in his current budget. R. Shields stated he did not. Councilor W. Steere stated he thought Council contingency fund was used last year. Councilor S. Arnold stated to put on the next agenda.

4. G. Mosca, EMA Director, stated that FEMA has informed him that the President signed a disaster declaration for the flooding that occurred in December and January. G. Mosca stated that FEMA will be manning disaster recovery centers for people to file a claim. G. Mosca stated that he is hoping to learn tomorrow where and when the centers will be. G. Mosca stated that he will put out a notice as to where and when once he knows so any residents may be able to file a claim.

G. Mosca also stated that he wanted Council to be aware of a proposed Senate bill # S2405 which would , if passed, require a town , under the purview of EMA, to open a 24 hour per day shelter if the state says there is a Code Blue. G. Mosca stated the proposed bill is an effort to work on homelessness but has not been thought out. G. Mosca stated that if a Code Blue is announced then the town would have to open and man a shelter until the Code Blue has ended including all supplies. G. Mosca is asking the Council to consider opposing this proposed bill. Councilor W. Steere stated that this is another example where the the state is trying to make one size fits all for the towns and cities. Councilor W. Worthy stated that he believes the proposed bill has been tabled for further review.

XI. Bds. and Commissions Reports/ Discussion

Councilor W. Worthy asked if any Board or commission had anything to report to Council or if Council had any questions for any board or commission.

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.

W. Steere, resident, stated that he was following up on Councilor W. Steere's comments about the financial meeting. W. Steere stated that Councilor W. Steere discovered a \$39,000 mistake in the budget which he could have asked for a motion to reduce by that amount in the budget. W. Steere stated that the school committee stated they would make the adjustment to the budget. W. Steere stated this is an example of why it is important to go to meetings.

W. Steere asked the status of Factory Mutual. Councilor W. Steere stated that the tax bills will include a bill for FM when they go out. W. Steere asked for the year that will be included in the tax bill. Councilor W. Steere stated the year is included in the new budget. W. Steere asked if the amount being paid by FM will be at least as much as they were paying before. D. Iglizzi stated that the tax rate has not been set. Councilor J. Burlingame stated that there is a valuation and the town is sending FM a tax bill based on that valuation.

MOTION was made by Councilor W. Steere TO ADD AN EXECUTIVE SESSION, FOR DISCUSSION ONLY: Seek to Convene to Closed Executive Session Pursuant to: R.I.G.L. 42-46-5(a)(2) Sessions pertaining to collective bargaining or litigation, or work sessions pertaining to collective bargaining or litigation; seconded by Councilor J. Burlingame

Discussion: None

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

After Executive Session

Seek to Reconvene to Open Session - Disclose the votes taken in Executive Session & to Seal the minutes of Closed Executive Session;

MOTION was made by Councilor W. Steere to Reconvene Open Session - Disclose that no votes were taken in Executive Session & to Seal the minutes of Closed Executive Session; seconded by

Councilor J. 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. Adjourn

MOTION was made by Councilor W. Steere to Adjourn at 11:06 p.m.; seconded by Councilor J. Burlingame

Discussion: None

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

MOTION PASSED