

At a meeting of the Town Council holden in and for the Town of Gloucester on December 21, 2017:

I. Call to Order

The meeting was Called to Order at 7:30 p.m.

II. Roll Call

Members Present: George O. (Buster) Steere, Jr., President; Edward C. Burlingame, Vice-President; Walter M. O. Steere, III; William E. Reichert and Patricia Henry.

Also present: Jean M. Fecteau, Town Clerk; Timothy Kane, Town Solicitor; Gary Treml, Director of Public Works; Diane Brennan, Finance Director; Ken Johnson, Building/Zoning Official; Karen Scott, Town Planner; Joseph DelPrete, Chief of Police; Lori DeSantis, Tax Assessor; Judy Branch, Human Services Director; Melissa Bouvier, Senior Center Director; Gerald Mosca, EMA Director; and Robert Shields, Recreation Director.

III. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

IV. Open Forum - For Agenda Items

Lauren Niedel, resident, spoke regarding her interest in Agenda Item VII. E.1.

V. Consent Items - Discussion and/or action

- A. Approval of Town Council meeting minutes of December 7, 2017
- B. Tax Assessors Additions and Abatements for November, 2017
- C. Finance Director's Report for November, 2017

MOTION was made by Councilor Reichert to APPROVE the Town Council meeting minutes of December 7, 2017; to APPROVE the ADDITIONS to the 2012 Tax Roll in the amount of \$153.00; the 2013 Tax Roll in the amount of \$152.93; the 2014 Tax Roll in the amount of \$121.91; the 2015 Tax Roll in the amount of \$123.87; the 2016 Tax Roll in the amount of \$125.72; the 2017 Tax Roll in the amount of \$828.82; the ABATEMENTS to the 2017 Tax Roll in the amount of \$961.94; and to ACCEPT the Finance Director's Report for November, 2017; seconded by Councilor Burlingame.

Discussion: None.

VOTE: AYES- G. Steere, Burlingame, W. Steere, Reichert and Henry
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

VI. Unfinished Business

- A. Boards & Commissions
 - 1. Appointments - Discussion and/or action
 - a. Zoning Board of Review

One Alternate #2 Term to expire 1/2018 (now 1/2019)

Councilor G. Steere stated that the Council has received a new request from the Zoning Board Chair and a talent bank application has been filed with the Town Clerk.

MOTION was made by Councilor Reichert to APPOINT Ray Lombardi to the Zoning Board of Review for the alternate #2 term to expire 1/2019; seconded by Councilor Burlingame.

Discussion: None.

VOTE: AYES- G. Steere, Burlingame, W. Steere, Reichert and Henry
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

- b. Senior Center Board of Directors
- One expired five year term to expire 11/2022

Councilor G. Steere stated that this item has been tabled a few times.

MOTION was made by Councilor Burlingame to REMOVE FROM THE TABLE the appointment to the Senior Center Board of Directors until ready to move forward; seconded by Councilor Reichert.

Discussion: None.

VOTE: AYES- G. Steere, Burlingame, W. Steere, Reichert and Henry
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

- 2. Boards & Commissions - Discussion and/or action
 - a. Inactive Boards & Commissions -(Community Resource Commission & Economic Development) - Status & Action

Councilor G. Steere stated the Council has resolved the Affordable Housing and Personnel Boards, and the boards listed are still on for discussion.

Economic Development: Councilor Henry stated she has offered to write and submit a charge that could be used for an Economic Development Board. Councilor Henry also stated that she has reached out to the GBA Chair for input regarding this board and they will be meeting soon to discuss. Councilor Henry asked Council to table this item until some time in January.

MOTION was made by Councilor Henry to TABLE the discussion concerning the Economic Development Commission until an undetermined meeting date in January, 2018; seconded by Councilor Reichert.

Discussion: None.

VOTE: AYES- G. Steere, Burlingame, W. Steere, Reichert and Henry
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

Community Resource Commission: Councilor G. Steere stated the Ordinance and charge for this board is in Council's packet. Councilor G. Steere questioned if Council would like to amend that charge before going forward. Councilor G. Steere stated the Board appeared to go off course. Councilor Burlingame stated we should probably table for further study. Councilor Henry questioned who the liaison of this commission was. Councilor W. Steere stated he was and further stated that all Councilors should be involved in further study. Councilor Burlingame felt that between this board and Economic Development there may be some duplication of efforts. Councilor G. Steere and Councilor W. Steere reviewed some of the positive projects of the commission. Councilor Burlingame stated maybe the commission has served its purpose. Councilor W. Steere suggested all Councilors read the ordinance and charge and determine if they need to be amended to either change or to limit the scope.

MOTION was made by Councilor W. Steere to TABLE the discussion concerning the Community Resource Commission until the second Council meeting in January 2018; seconded by Councilor Burlingame.

Discussion: None.

VOTE: AYES- G. Steere, Burlingame, W. Steere, Reichert and Henry
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

VII. New Business

- A. Appointment: Tax Assessor - Discussion and/or action
One - two year term to expire 12/2019

Councilor G. Steere stated that the Council has received the following request:

Dear Honorable Council Members,

I would like to be re-appointed to my current position of the Tax Assessor for the Town of Gloucester.

Thanks,

Lori DeSantis

Town of Gloucester, Tax Assessor

(End of memo)

MOTION was made by Councilor Reichert to REAPPOINT Lori DeSantis to the position of Gloucester Tax Assessor for a two year term to expire 12/2019; seconded by Councilor Burlingame.

Discussion: Councilor Burlingame explained the “alternate year” appointment as being a part of the Charter.

VOTE: AYES- G. Steere, Burlingame, W. Steere, Reichert and Henry
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

B. Pavilion access/property protection plan - Discussion and/or action

Councilor W. Steere stated he added this to agenda because he wasn't aware of the reason why the pavilion access was blocked off. Discussion followed on future ways to block access. Councilor Henry agreed that the cement blocks are a little “rough” and gave ideas of other ways to block access if needed. Councilor W. Steere asked G. Treml for his input. G. Treml stated he will do what Council wants and asked that Council tell him exactly what they want. Council discussed options. Councilor W. Steere stated his concern is there is no access for safety equipment and the over all lack of accessibility. Councilor W. Steere stated we need to make everything more visible. Councilor Burlingame felt it shouldn't be plowed in the winter and blocked. Councilor G. Steere questioned whether we could put wooden rail in the back as we put in the front. G. Treml explained his plan for other pieces to be added, such as a bike rack. Discussion followed on solutions and it was agreed to give this subject more thought. Councilor W. Steere asked G. Treml if he wanted to come up with some ideas and submit to Council.

C. Personnel

1. Finance Office: Wage adjustment: Tax Collector Discussion/Action

Councilor Burlingame stated during the budget process Council put \$50,000 in the budget for salary adjustments. Councilor Burlingame stated these adjustments were not defined at the time and it was agreed that Council would implement at budget time. Councilor Burlingame stated the Finance Director had reminded him of her recommendation for a certain amount for the Tax Collector. Councilor Burlingame stated the amount was calculated into the \$50,000 put aside. Councilor Burlingame stated a number was reached after comparisons with other cities and towns. Councilor Burlingame stated some of our positions are significantly lower. Councilor Burlingame stated he has been with the Council for many years and commended the management “team” the town currently has in place. Councilor Burlingame stated you need to pay money to have a top notch operation and he further stated we have that. Councilor Burlingame recognized the Tax Collector, Jane Steere's, contribution and recommended an increase.

MOTION was made by Councilor Burlingame to adjust the salary of Jane Steere, Tax Collector, with an increase of \$4,000 annually, retroactive to July 1, 2017; seconded by Councilor Henry

Discussion: Councilor W. Steere questioned if a Councilor recuses from a vote on this item can they speak to the subject. Atty. Kane replied in the negative.

Councilor G. Steere agreed with Councilor Burlingame and stated that he believes this is in line and compares to other towns with comparable size.

VOTE: AYES- G. Steere, Burlingame, Reichert and Henry

NAYS-0
RECUSAL-W. Steere

MOTION PASSED

2. Police Dept.: School Resource Officer assignment to the Foster-Glocester Regional School District - Discussion and/or action

Councilor G. Steere stated that the Council has received a request from the Chief:

TO: Honorable Town Council
FROM: Joseph S. DelPrete, Chief of Police
DATE: December 19, 2017
SUBJECT: School Resource Officer Assignment

Over the past several years, the Foster-Glocester Regional School District and the Glocester Police Departments have maintained a healthy and close working relationship with the emphasis on school safety.

Both departments have worked together to place a School Resource Office referred to as SRO in the Ponaganset High School and Middle School. The SRO will be a resource for school department personnel, including teachers, administrators, as well as all students. The SRO will be used to provide increased security at the schools, reduce the fear of crime, and serve as a mentor and role model for students.

The Foster-Glocester Regional School District has agreed to fund and reimburse this position to include all senior patrol officer salary and benefits per from January to June of the 2018 School Calendar year. At the end of the school calendar year the officer will return back to the police department for shift assignment. The school district will reimburse the Town of Glocester at the end of each school quarter.

I am requesting that the Glocester Town Council authorize and approve this school resource officer assignment starting in January of 2018.

Respectfully Submitted,
Joseph DelPrete
(end of memo)

Discussion: Chief DelPrete stated the officer in question would be Brian D'Amato and the Chief explained that Officer would relinquish the rank of sergeant and take senior patrol so that he can take this assignment. Chief DelPrete state he sees this as a win/win for the town. Councilor Henry questioned if the Officer has been through all the necessary training for an SRO position. Chief DelPrete explained the process for training that he will use for all the training necessary. The Chief stated they are working towards national certification which is a one week training.

MOTION was made by Councilor Reichert to AUTHORIZE the assignment of Officer (Brian D'Amato) to the position of School Resource Office (SRO) at the Ponaganset High School and

Middle School. Funds for the salary and benefits for the senior patrol officer position will be reimbursed by the Foster-Glocester Regional School District at the end of each quarter; assignment is effective January to June of the school calendar year at which time the officer will return back to the police department for shift assignment; effective January 2, 2018; seconded by Councilor Henry.

Discussion: Councilor G. Steere questioned if this will be continue into the next school year. Chief DelPrete stated the intention is to go forward and further stated it is part of the consideration for the next agenda item.

VOTE: AYES- G. Steere, Burlingame, W. Steere, Reichert and Henry
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

3. Police Dept.: Ratify the search process for Probational Police Officer - Discussion and/or action

Councilor G. Steere stated that Joseph DelPrete, Chief of Police, has started the search process for a new probational police officer and now requests the Council ratify approval to advertise and move forward with the process.

MOTION was made by Councilor Burlingame to RATIFY the APPROVAL for the Chief of Police to begin the process to search for a new probational police officer for the Gloucester Police Department; seconded by Councilor Reichert.

Discussion: Councilor Henry questioned if we are adding another full time officer. Chief DelPrete stated because we are losing one to the school this would even us out. The Chief stated there may be some overlap.

VOTE: AYES- G. Steere, Burlingame, W. Steere, Reichert and Henry
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

- D. Gloucester Code of Ordinance: Proposed Amendment- Discussion and/or action
 1. 1st reading - Deletion of Part 1, Admin. Legislation. Chapter 101. Personnel Board

Councilor G. Steere explained that this item is on to introduce an amendment to the Code of Ordinance. Councilor G. Steere stated that the Council has previously discussed the deletion of the Personnel Board from the Code. Councilor G. Steere stated the intention is to delete the entire section and not replace with new text at this time.

Discussion: Councilor Burlingame stated he has asked for this amendment in light of previous discuss regarding whether there was a need for the Personnel Board.

MOTION was made by Councilor Burlingame to SET a Public Hearing for January 18, 2018 to

consider the proposed amendment to the Gloucester Code of Ordinance: Deletion of Part 1, Admin. Legislation, Chapter 101, Personnel Board; seconded by Councilor Reichert.

Discussion: None.

VOTE: AYES- G. Steere, Burlingame, W. Steere, Reichert and Henry
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

E. Authorization of Correspondence Signatures:

1. To Governor (and others)

RE: Energy Facility Siting Board ruling - Discussion and/or action

Councilor G. Steere stated that Councilor Henry has composed correspondence to the EFS expressing Council's displeasure at the language used in the EFS's ruling which dismisses all expressions of support made by cities and towns. Councilor G. Steere stated the correspondence is in Council's packet and if Council is ok with the letter it can now be authorized for Council President's signature.

Councilor Henry read the letter into the record as follows:

December 21, 2017

The Honorable Gina M. Raimondo
Office of the Governor

Dear Governor Raimondo,

We, the Town Council of Gloucester Rhode Island, are writing to you to voice our disappointment and strong objection to the Energy Facility Siting Boards ruling of October 17, 2017. The EFSB ruling to suppress the resolutions of our municipality, along with 33 others, that stated our opposition to the proposed Invenenergy power plant and to argue that our resolutions were "irrelevant" and to have them fully considered by the EFSB would be a "waste of time" are unacceptable to us.

We value the process of Democracy in our Community and we would expect no less from our leaders in Rhode Island. To trivialize and disregard our voice and the people of our Community is of great concern to us. We ask, "where is the process in all of this"?

We would like to believe that as our Governor your concerns for the environment and the right for towns and communities to govern for the best of their communities are in your utmost interest. Surely you will consider the Northwest corner of Rhode Island as valuable as the whole of the State you govern.

Sincerely,
George O. Steere, Jr., President
Gloucester Town Council
(end of memo)

MOTION was made by Councilor Reichert to AUTHORIZE the signing of correspondence to Governor Raimondo, John F. Pacheco, President Burrillville Town Council; Margaret Curran, Chair, Public Utilities Comm. & EFSB; Senator Paul Fogarty; Representatives Chippendale, Winfield, Keable; and all other 38 city & towns regarding the Town Council's objection to language used by the Energy Facility Siting Board in their ruling of October 17, 2017; seconded by Councilor Burlingame.

Discussion: none

VOTE: AYES- G. Steere, Burlingame, W. Steere, Reichert and Henry
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

2. National Grid

RE: Request for schedule of tree work - Discussion and/or action

Councilor G. Steere stated that Councilor Henry has composed correspondence to National Grid requesting the schedule for tree work to be done in Gloucester. Councilor G. Steere stated it is hoped that regular maintenance on trees, particularly near wires, could diminish power outages in our town. Councilor G. Steere stated the draft correspondence is in Council's packet, if ready Council could authorize Council President's signature.

MOTION was made by Councilor Reichert to AUTHORIZE the signing of correspondence to National Grid requesting the 3-4 year plan for scheduled tree trimming maintenance in Gloucester; seconded by Councilor W. Steere.

Discussion: none

VOTE: AYES- G. Steere, Burlingame, W. Steere, Reichert and Henry
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

F. Amendment to Policy for Town of Gloucester, Controlled Substance and Alcohol Testing for Employee - CMV Drivers, adopted August 17, 2017 - Discussion and/or action

Councilor G. Steere stated that the Personnel Director has received an amendment to the Controlled Substance and Alcohol Testing for Employees - CMV Drivers Policy adopted by the Council earlier this year. Councilor G. Steere stated this amendment is mainly for the addition of specific opioid drugs.

Discussion: Councilor Reichert questioned if someone takes one of these medications, prescribed, for a back ache, for example, and is tested what would happen. Atty. Kane stated at the time of their physical they could disclose that information. D. Brennan, HR Director, stated this is just a revision of a policy previously adopted. D. Brennan stated the Trust needs this document in place by January 1, 2018 to meet federal compliance.

MOTION was made by Councilor Burlingame to ADOPT the amendment to the Town of Gloucester, Controlled Substance and Alcohol Testing for Employee - CMV Drivers Policy , adopted August 17, 2017, to include amendments to page 15 & 20 regarding the addition of testing for specific opioid drugs; effective January 1, 2018; seconded by Councilor Henry.

Discussion: None.

VOTE: AYES- G. Steere, Burlingame, W. Steere, Reichert and Henry
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

VIII. Town Council Correspondence /Discussion

- A. Councilor G. Steere stated notification of a grant offered by D. E.M. in cooperation with the United States Forest Service and the Rhode Island Tree Council, entitled America the Beautiful - Tree Rhode Island 2018-2019 was received and grant applications are due by January 31, 2018.
- B. Councilor G. Steere stated there is a memo from the Planning Board stating they have reviewed the 2018-19 Capital Improvement Request and have found all requests to be “not in-consistent” with the Comprehensive Plan.
- C. Councilor G. Steere stated Council has received a request from resident, Joe Hugenin, thanking the Council for their chose of the new Senior Center Director.
- D. Councilor G. Steere stated Council has received correspondence from D.O.T. regarding an environmental assessment of the state toll gantry project and identification of truck diversion routes as well as the traffic impact on communities. Councilor Henry asked for this item to be placed on the next agenda for further discussion and/or action.
- E. Councilor G. Steere stated Council has received notification from the Rhode Island Tree Council of an award for the Town entitled “The Helen Walker Raleigh Champion Tree Program” in recognition of the Silver Maple located at 15 Dorr Drive. Councilor G. Steere stated the award states this is one of the biggest trees of its kind and is an important part of Rhode Islands heritage. Councilor G. Steere stated the tree measures 290" in circumference and 92' high. Councilor G. Steere stated he believes this tree borders town property.
- F. Councilor W. Steere stated while walking in the village prior to the Council meeting tonight he learned that a representative from D.O.T. was questioning what time the Candlelight Shopping event would be over as there was a large trailer waiting to come through from Connecticut. Councilor W. Steere stated he determined there was no notification to the town or the local police. Councilor Henry stated that between the tolling project and the potential for power

plant traffic she has concerns for traffic safety.

Councilor Reichert stated that through town is an approved “truck route” to move equipment to and from Connecticut. Councilor G. Steere agreed and further stated the intention is to keep truck traffic away from Route 6, as it is in a watershed. Councilor G. Steere stated with the new round about possibly some of these oversized loads may have to be diverted.

- G. Councilor Henry stated she had recently attended a School Committee sub-committee meeting where full regionalization of Foster/Glocester schools was the topic. Councilor Henry stated the sub-committee included members of both school committees and the administration. Councilor Henry stated she was asked to attend and went to gather information. Councilor Henry stated when asked about what she perceived the “cons” to be she stated that transparency should be there. Councilor Henry stated she stated to the sub-committee they are already meeting to discuss this issue and neither Council has been made aware. Councilor W. Steere questioned when the phrase “pros” is used, is the committee considering what the pros are for the school committee or for the town. Councilor W. Steere stated the current charter needs to be changed. Councilor Henry stated the group is talking about revisions to the current charter. Councilor Henry stated she discussed with the group that there is a lack of trust when the school committee comes into the budget process, throws their budget down, and does not ask for or consider any input. Councilor Henry stated she believes the sub-committee is looking at this issue open mindedly and stated that Council members were invited to attend.

IX. Department Head Reports/Discussion

- A. Councilor Burlingame asked Lori DeSantis, Tax Assessor, if the large abatement noted in her monthly report, year to date, was a result of motor vehicle abatements. L. DeSantis stated in the affirmative.
- B. Karen Scott, Planner, discussed the town working with Grow Smart in relation to proposed amendments to the Zoning Ordinance regarding farm uses. K. Scott stated Grow Smart is ready to meet with the public at a Planning Board workshop of January 22, 2018 and invited Council members. Councilor W. Steere asked if this piggy-backed with new state laws that eliminate the towns involvement with controlling their own ordinances. K. Scott stated she doesn't feel it is related to that legislation. K. Scott stated the Planning office will be sending notice to those that have participated in the past.
- C. Melissa Bouvier, Senior Center Director, reported the center had 150 people attend their recent Christmas party. M. Bouvier thanked Judy Branch and DPW for their assistance.
- D. Chief DelPrete stated the department's annual toy drive was a huge success.

E. Gerry Mosca updated Council on icing conditions possible over the weekend. Councilor Burlingame stated the EMA Directors monthly report was a “good” report.

X. Bds. and Commissions Reports/ Discussion

A. E. Croft, Budget Board (spoke from his seat) stated the board had its organizational meeting.

B. W. Steere, Jr., School Committee member, spoke regarding a sub-committee that has been formed for the consideration of full regionalization. W. Steere stated the committee’s meeting was preliminary but that they plan to have this question on the ballot for 2018. W. Steere stated the Superintendent stated all the facts have to be ready by April or May, and W. Steere stated he believes a vote of full regionalization is going to be on the “fast track”.

Councilor G. Steere asked what the “track” was to get this on the ballot.

W. Steere, Jr. stated that was to be discussed at their next meeting, January 2nd, which will be before the regular regional meeting. Councilor Henry stated she got the sense that it was Foster that was trying to rush the question of full regionalization.

W. Steere, Jr., stated there was a meeting of the budget committee (for the region) and felt perhaps the Region would come in with a 3% increase this budget round and the local school budget may come in with a 3.5% (or a little more) increase. Councilor Henry asked what happened to last years promise of a zero percent increase for this year. Councilor Henry will check on last year’s minutes. Councilor G. Steere asked what happened with all the revenue from tuitioned in students. W. Steere, Jr. stated those facts are hard to come by. Councilor Burlingame stated this all goes with the transparency question.

Councilor Burlingame questioned the procedure for a question to be included on the ballot. Councilor Burlingame asked if that is a requirement that Councils would have to approve a ballot question or is the intent to “go around” and get signatures. W. Steere, Jr., stated he believes Councils would have to approve a question but there may be a signature process that would eliminate anyone’s approval. Councilor Henry asked the Solicitor what the deadline would be for ballot placement. Atty. Kane stated he will provide that information at the next meeting. Councilor Burlingame questioned why the committee would do an “end run” to get signatures as opposed to bringing the question to both Councils and if so, Councilor Burlingame stated that would “poison the well”. Councilor Burlingame stated that should be a question to ask the sub-committee.

W. Steere stated he has only heard that unofficially that they may do the signature process.

Councilor Burlingame stated there is every incentive for Foster to want to regionalize and every reason for us (Glocester) not to want to do this. Councilor Burlingame stated our local schools have been high performing, with good transparent management, and questioned why we would want to turn over our high quality schools to the region.

Councilor Burlingame stated the performance of the Glocester School Committee has been outstanding, running surpluses, fiscally responsible and any questions are answered by the local Business Manager which is 180 degrees different from “smoke and mirrors” we get from the regional business office. Councilor Henry stated that when the Regional Business Manager is asked a question there appears to be an unsettling nervous response.

Councilor Burlingame stated when the pathway program was started he questioned the business manager about where the revenue coming in from transistioning students, approx. \$450,000, was to go and no one could answer and that is frustrating. Councilor G. Steere stated they did eventually answer us that they were spending those funds. W. Steere, Jr. stated that we are always a year behind so we will budget for the same number of students even though we know there are more. Councilor Burlingame again questioned where revenue from students coming into our system went. W. Steere stated the Superintendent does not want to put all the facts out there as to where our revenue is spent because he doesn't want the districts sending students in to see we may be spending tuition money on things other than educating these students, as they may complain. Councilor Henry again questioned transparency and noted her concern that the Superintendent is the Foster Superintendent as well as full time Regional Superintendent.

W. Steere, Jr. stated there may be a .5% increase in the budget for the new Resource Officer.

XI. Open Forum

- A. Lauren Niedel stated she was 100% in favor of the letter being sent regarding the Energy Facility Siting Board ruling and asked for a copy of the correspondence.
- L. Niedel updated the Council on the current activity of the EFSB, in regards to funding as it relates to National Grid rate increases, and that they will be holding a meeting on January 30th.

XII. Adjourn

MOTION was made by Councilor Burlingame to ADJOURN at 8:37 p.m.; seconded by Councilor Reichert.

Discussion: None.

VOTE: AYES- G. Steere, Burlingame, W. Steere, Reichert and Henry

NAYS-0
MOTION PASSED