

At a meeting of the Town Council holden in and for the Town of Gloucester on January 16, 2020

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; Walter M. O. Steere, III, Vice-President; William E. Reichert; Patricia Henry; and Julian (Jay) Forgue.

Also Present: Jean Fecteau, Town Clerk; Tim Kane, Town Solicitor; Susan Harris, Deputy Town Clerk; Joseph DelPrete, Chief of Police; Diane Brennan, Finance Director; Karen Scott, Town Planner; Jane Steere, Tax Collector; Lori DeSantis, Tax Assessor; Gerald Mosca, Emergency Management Director; Melissa Bouvier, Senior Center Director; Judy Branch, Human Services Director; Ken Johnson, Bldg./Zoning Official; and James Wolfgang, HR Administrator

III. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

IV. Open Forum - For Agenda Item

Judy Rix, 12 Glasko Way, addressed Council regarding agenda items V. Public Hearings & IX. Town Council Correspondence. Regarding item V. Ms. Rix asked the Council not adopt/amend any more ordinances or add uses until the Town enforces current ordinances. Regarding item IX. Ms. Rix stated she wanted to file a complaint regarding signage at Glad Tiding Church and didn't feel she should have to spend \$200 for a Zoning Board Review and is asking Council to look into the issue. Ms. Rix went on to complain about a sign she stated was 7' wide by 10' that was purple with yellow letters. It was Ms. Rix's opinion that the sign should only be 12 sq. feet and it is 70 sq. feet. Ms. Rix stated the church did not consult with her on their plans and asked Council, again, to enforce current ordinance. Councilor Forgue asked Ken Johnson, Zoning Official, if the church received a special variance for the sign. K. Johnson stated he has offered to talk with Ms. Rix regarding the ordinance, and his interpretation. **(Both were allowed to speak at once, out of order, no notes)** K. Johnson stated that procedure was followed even to the point that first sign proposed by the church was denied as it was too big and was not allowed. Ms. Rix stated she doesn't think it meets code. K. Johnson stated the code is clear and available on line but he will mail it Ms. Rix. Councilor Henry asked Ms. Rix if she tried speaking to church, neighbor to neighbor, with her concerns. Ms. Rix stated she spoke to them when she felt they were in violation of the light ordinance but they didn't respond so she has not spoken to them regarding the sign issue.

V. PUBLIC HEARINGS - Discussion and/or action

Councilor G. Steere stated that in the ad for this public hearing the public hearing for the amendment to Hunting on Town Recreation Areas was included for hearing tonight but was omitted on agenda. Councilor G. Steere stated the clerk will re-advertise and the public hearing will be held on February 6<sup>th</sup> 2020 and further that if anyone is here to speak to this item they can speak in open forum.

- A. Gloucester Code of Ordinances - Proposed Amendments- Discussion and/or Action
  - 1. Part 1, Administrative Legislation, Chapter 48, Town Road Map
  - 2. Part 3, General Legislation, Chapter 145-2 & 145-3, Building Permits, Article II, Permits for Construction of New Building,
  - 3. Chapter 350, Zoning: Article II, Section 350-11, Attachment I, Table of Use Regulations - To include proposed additional land uses
  - 4. Chapter 350, Zoning: Article I, Section 350-5 Definitions - To define proposed additional land use definitions

Councilor G. Steere stated these Public Hearings were advertised in the Valley Breeze-Observer on December 19, 26<sup>th</sup> and January 2<sup>nd</sup> for Zoning Chapter Amendments; January 2, 2020 for items #1 & 2 General Code amendments and the first reading of all proposed amendments was held on December 5, 2019.

Councilor G. Steere **DECLARED the Public Hearing OPEN.**

Councilor G. Steere asked if there are any questions or discussion on any of the 4 ordinance amendment proposals.

Discussion: None

Councilor G. Steere **DECLARED the Public Hearing CLOSED.**

**MOTION was made by Councilor Forgeue to AMEND the Gloucester Code of Ordinance as stated above, affective upon passage; seconded by Councilor Reichert**

Discussion: none

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

MOTION PASSED

- VI. Consent Items - Discussion and/or Action
  - A. Approval of Town Council Regular meeting minutes of December 19, 2019
  - B. Tax Assessor's Additions & Abatements - December 2019
  - C. Finance Director's Report - December 2019

**MOTION was made by Councilor Reichert to APPROVE the Town Council Regular meeting minutes of December 19, 2019; to APPROVE the ABATEMENT to the 2019 Tax Roll in the amount of \$1,197.79; NO ADDITIONS for December; and APPROVE the Finance Director's report for December 19, 2019; seconded by Councilor Forgeue**

Discussion: none

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

MOTION PASSED

VII. Unfinished Business

- A. Bds. And Commissions
  - 1. Appointments - Discussion and/or Action
    - a. Gloucester Housing Authority
      - (1) Five year term to expire 7/2020

Councilor G. Steere stated that there was no recommendation from the Chair but there is an interested candidate, Judy Branch. There was discussion as to whether a resident of the Housing Authority's property and/or elected official could serve on the board. After discussion, it was agreed that it would be allowable. Atty. Kane advised Ms. Branch to err on the side of caution and be aware when it is appropriate to recuse from voting while serving on the board.

MOTION was made by Councilor Reichert to APPOINT Judy Branch to the Gloucester Housing Authority, for a five year term to expire 7/2020 ; seconded by Councilor Forgue

Discussion: none

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

MOTION PASSED

VIII. New Business

- A. IT Department
  - 1. Policy Adoption - Discussion and/or Action
    - a. Incident Response and Data Breach Notification Plan
    - b. Town of Gloucester - Acceptable Use Policy  
Computer Network Access Rights and Obligations

Councilor G. Steere stated that Matt Floor, representing our IT Department, has prepared two policies that need to be adopted by the Town Council: the Incident Response and Data Breach Notification Plan and the Acceptable Use Policy. Councilor G. Steere stated these are documents that need to be in place, per the Trust.

MOTION was made by Councilor Forgue to ADOPT the Incident Response and Data Breach Notification Plan, updated as of December 2019, seconded by Councilor Henry

Discussion: none

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

MOTION PASSED

MOTION was made by Councilor Henry to ADOPT the Town of Gloucester, Acceptable Use Policy, Computer Network Access Rights and Obligations, to be dated January 16, 2020. Copy of said policy to be signed, as received, by all town employees with computer access; seconded by Councilor Forgue

Discussion: Matt Floors hard work was acknowledged with thanks.

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

MOTION PASSED

B. Personnel

1. Appointments - Discussion and/or Action

a. Planning Dept. - Planning Board Recording Clerk

Before discussion, Councilor G. Steere stated that both he and Councilor W. Steere would recuse themselves from discussion and/or voting on this item. (Recusal forms filed with Town Clerk)

Councilor Forgue read the following request by the Town Planner:

To: Town Council Members  
From: Karen Scott, Town Planner  
Date: January 6, 2020  
Re: Planning Board Clerk

The Town received several applicants for the position of Planning Board Clerk. Three (3) interviews were conducted by James Wolfgang, Human Resources Administrator and Karen Scott, Town Planner.

Our recommendation is to appoint Katie Steere to the position of Planning Board Clerk. This decision was unanimous. Katie has word processing experience and is familiar with the operation of the Planning Board. The board looks forward to working with Katie as the Planning Board Clerk. The recommended appointment date is January 16, 2020 in time for the next planning board meeting. This position is not eligible for benefits. The salary for the position is \$150 per meeting upon approval of the minutes, with an additional \$50 stipend for all meetings that exceed two (2) hours.

(End of memo)

Discussion: none

MOTION was made by Councilor Reichert to APPOINT Katie Steere to the position of Planning Board Clerk, effective January 16, 2020, at the rate of \$150.00 per meeting upon approval of the minutes with an additional \$50 stipend for all meetings that exceed two hours. Said position is not eligible for benefits; seconded by Councilor Henry

Discussion: none

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

MOTION PASSED

b. Town Clerk's Office - Deputy Town Clerk Position

Councilor G. Steere stated that Council has received a recommendation from the Town Clerk regarding this position:

DATE: January 13, 2020  
TO: Town Council  
FROM: Jean Fecteau, Town Clerk  
RE: Deputy Town Clerk Appointment

Council

This memo is a request to appoint Christine Mathieu, of 208 Long Entry Road, to the position of Deputy Town Clerk in the Town Clerk's Office.

During the search process many applications were received. Along with the help of the HR Administer and Dept. Heads Diane Brennan & Jane Steere the top candidates were interviewed.

We agree that Ms. Mathieu has the best to offer the town in regards to experience and education. This candidate has worked with Land Evidence, Probate Courts, and has had extension interaction with the public in her previous job experiences.

Due to her experience, I request that we start this employee, at a minimum, the salary of the current Deputy Town Clerk.

If appointed, I would request an effective date of January 21, 2020 with a standard benefit package; a starting salary of \$49,115 and, if approved by Council, the budgetary increase for non union employees on July 1, 2020.

Thank you for your consideration. It is important that we fill this position as soon as possible to seamlessly continue to serve the community.

(End of memo)

MOTION was made by Councilor Reichert to APPOINT Christine Mathieu to the position of Deputy Town Clerk, effective January 21, 2020, at an annual salary of \$49,115 with the budgetary increase given to non union employees) on July 1, 2020; seconded by Councilor Forgeue

Discussion: Councilor Henry questioned years of experience. It was explained there is a collective experience history. T. Kane stated, in his opinion, this was a top notch candidate for the Town.

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

MOTION PASSED

2. Benefits - Discussion and/or Action

a. Town Clerk's Office - Senior Clerk - Clarify benefits

Councilor G. Steere stated this item is to clarify, for the Finance Office, the benefits to the appointment made on December 19, 2019 of Susan Harris.

Council rec'd a memo from the Town Clerk:

DATE: January 13, 2020  
TO: Town Council  
FROM: Jean Fecteau  
RE: Senior Clerk position

This memo is a request to clarify the benefits that Susan Harris will receive as she fills the position of Senior Clerk, Liz Randall.

It is our understanding that her hourly wage would be the current Senior Clerk wage, and progress according to the current collective bargain agreement. Also, as Susan is not a new hire she would still continue to receive an annual longevity check based on her salary. If an appointment is made, as requested for the Deputy Town Clerk, the effective date of these benefits would be the same date. To ensure a smooth transition, a motion is needed to clarify this employees benefits.

Thank you.

Jean

(end of memo)

Discussion: J. Wolfgang and Council discussed longevity outlined in handbook. The consensus was this appointment is not considered a "new hire" as Ms. Harris has been a long standing employee.

MOTION was made by Councilor Henry to state the benefits for clarification for employee, Susan Harris, appointed to Senior Clerk on December 19, 2019 effective January 21, 2020, shall be at the Senior Clerk hourly wage per the current collective bargaining agreement and employee shall continue to receive annual longevity based on her original date of hire, March 13, 2006; seconded by Councilor Reichert

Discussion: Council members thanked Susan Harris for serving as Deputy.

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

MOTION PASSED

b. Human Resource Administrator - Approve Dental Benefits & Waiver of Handbook, Health Insurance, Section 5. Part Time Employees, Two year minimum - Discussion and/or Action

Councilor Forgue stated that he was asked by J. Wolfgang to consider allowing him to participate

in the Dental employee benefit plan at 50% of the cost to be paid by him.

J. Wolfgang explained the reason for his request and stated the cost to him would be approx. \$18.62 per pay period (\$490 per year) and the cost to the town would be \$11-\$12 per pay period (\$300 per year). Mr. Wolfgang stated if Council decided to allow this the two year minimum employment, (referenced in handbook) would have to be waived.

Council discussed the request relative to the number of hours to be worked potentially in the future and whether, financially, the town will continue to sustain the 24 hours. Councilor Forgue stated he feels that number of hours will probably be the minimum we will need. Each gave their opinions regarding the request. Councilor W. Steere discussed setting precedence. Councilor Henry expressed that the Council was very clear on our expectations for this personnel agreement in the beginning of the process. Councilor Reichert stated he would prefer to renegotiate at the next budget cycle. Council asked if it could be allowed at full cost to Mr. Wolfgang.

After discussion Diane Brennan will research with the Trust if Mr. Wolfgang can be allowed to join the plan and pay the full amount of the dental insurance.

C. Boards and Commissions

1. Resignation - Discussion and/or Action

a. Budget Board - One unexpired three year term to expire 1/2022

Councilor G. Steere stated the Clerk has rec'd the resignation of Charles Poirier from the Budget Board.

MOTION was made by Councilor Henry to ACCEPT the resignation of Charles Poirier from the Budget Board, seconded by Councilor Reichert

Discussion: Councilor Henry thanked C. Poirier for serving the town well.

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

MOTION PASSED

b. Economic Development Commission - One unexpired two year term to expire 12/31/2020

Councilor G. Steere stated the Clerk has received the resignation of Vincent Lepore from the Economic Development Commission effective immediately.

MOTION was made by Councilor Forgue to ACCEPT the resignation of Vincent Lepore from the Economic Development Commission; seconded by Councilor Reichert

Discussion: none

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

MOTION PASSED

2. Appointments - Discussion and/or Action

a. Budget Board - One Three year term to expire 1/2022

MOTION was made by Councilor Henry to APPOINT Maureen McNamara to the Budget Board for a three year term to expire 1/2022 ; seconded by Councilor Reichert

Discussion: Councilor Henry reviewed Ms. McNamara's budgetary knowledge & experience.

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

MOTION PASSED

b. Zoning Board

1. Two Expired Alternate One-year terms

Councilor G. Steere stated this appointment is for the expired alternate terms of Joseph Fogarty and Adam Muccino and the Chair of the Zoning Board has indicated that both wish to be reappointed.

MOTION was made by Councilor W. Steere to REAPPOINT Joseph Fogarty and Adam Muccino to the Zoning Board to fill two Alternate one year positions to expire January 1, 2021; seconded by Councilor Forgue

Discussion: none

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

MOTION PASSED

c. Conservation Commission

1. Two Expired Three-year terms

Councilor G. Steere stated this item is for the expired term of James Houghton and Kathy Houghton and both would like to be reappointed.

MOTION was made by Councilor Reichert to REAPPOINT James Houghton and Kathy Houghton to the Conservation Commission to fill three year terms to expire 1/2023; seconded by Councilor W. Steere

Discussion: none

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

MOTION PASSED



- d. Economic Development Commission - One unexpired two year term to expire 12/31/2020

Councilor G. Steere stated the Chair has made a recommendation to move up the person in the Alternate #1 position.

MOTION was made by Councilor Forgue to APPOINT Will Worthy to a regular position on the Economic Development Commission for the unexpired term to expire 12/31/2020; seconded by Councilor Reichert

Discussion: none

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

MOTION PASSED

- D. Authorization for Signature by Town Council President or designee
  - 1. Architectural and Engineering Design Services Contract: Police Department Site and Building Analysis - Between Town of Gloucester & Saccoccio & Associates Architects - Discussion and/or Action

Councilor G. Steere stated the Town Planner has submitted the contract for the Gloucester Building Analysis for 162 Chopmist Hill Road, for the Phase 1 Assessment Review Report. Councilor G. Steere stated the contract is between the Town of Gloucester and Saccoccio & Associates Architects and Council now needs to authorize the Town Council President to sign.

MOTION was made by Councilor Reichert to AUTHORIZE the Town Council President to sign a contract agreement between the Town of Gloucester and Saccoccio & Associates Architects, dated January 16, 2020, at the price of \$11,600 for a Police Department Site and Building Analysis; seconded by Councilor Forgue

Discussion: none

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

MOTION PASSED

- 2. Contract between Town of Gloucester & CivicMoxie for work agreed upon per RFP 2020-01 Chepachet Village Revitalization Plan - Discussion and/or Action

Councilor G. Steere stated the Planner has submitted the contract for the agreed upon work per RFP 2020-01. Councilor G. Steere stated the contract is between the Town of Gloucester and the successful bidder, CivicMoxie and now needs to be signed by Council.

MOTION was made by Councilor Forgue to AUTHORIZE the Town Council President to sign a contract agreement between the Town of Gloucester and CivicMoxie, to be dated January 16, 2020, at the price of \$59,970 for the Chepachet Village Revitalization Plan; seconded by Councilor

Reichert.

Discussion: Councilor Henry questioned when this process would begin and what it will involve. K. Scott stated it will start right away with the group doing an assessment of each structure in the village district and match up needs with available funding sources.

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

NAYS- none

MOTION PASSED

E. Foster/Glocester Regional School -

1. Discussion and/or Action - Re: reviewing alternatives or changes to current structure of Regional School District & creation of a subcommittee to review and advise Council on concepts for change

Councilor Henry addressed the Council regarding discussions with the Regional School Committee, particularly the Foster members, about full regionalization. Councilor Henry stated that in the past Glocester has expressed their lack of interest in full regionalization but yet discussions continue. Councilor W. Steere stated we also sent a list of questions/concerns to no avail. Discussion followed on the concept that Foster appears to feel they can go forward with full regionalization on their own. Councilor Henry referred to the issue that the Regional School Committee Superintendent is also serving as the Foster Superintendent. Councilor Henry also referred to the need for sharing of municipal funds that doesn't seem to be realized by the Region. Councilor Henry stated the Region is showing an approximate \$5.4 million dollar revenue stream from tuitioned in students and yet they are looking to raise their budget by over 5%. Councilor Henry compared our local Superintendents efficiency running Glocester's schools. Councilor Henry has spoken to our local superintendents, principals, and teachers here in Glocester and they do not support this full regionalization concept and Councilor Henry stated she feels they should have a say in this decision. Councilor Forgue questioned how our local school committee feels about this concept. Councilor Henry stated a few of the local school committee people are in support because they believe there is a state aid formula which will give us more funding. Councilor Henry stated that is not the case. Councilor Forgue stated this a big white elephant in our town. Councilor Forgue questioned what we can do. Councilor Henry stated there are other models we would like to explore. Councilor Forgue stated instead of subcommittees we should be educating the public. Discussion followed, which included School Committeeman Steere, on issues of the region, regionalization, tuitioned in students and the budget.

Councilor G. Steere asked how much will we will save this year in the budget due to debt service falling off. School Committeeman Steere stated the ESCO is almost gone, \$1.2 million of debt service is going away. School Committeeman Steere stated of that \$1.2 million \$231,000 was paid by local appropriation, and \$150,000 was set aside money from reimbursement. School Committeeman Stere stated that the only savings will be \$231,000 but that amount will go in capital projects amount.

J. Fecteau stated that is the council creates a subcommittee to look at alternatives to what we currently have, she will help the committee formulate ideas to bring ideas back to Council. Council continued to discuss the negative changes over the year to the system as a whole. Councilor Forgue agreed that we need a committee to educate.

MOTION was made by Councilor Henry to create a subcommittee and appoint J. Fecteau Chair, to look at other models and regionalization issues, with the following people: Councilor Henry; Councilor Forgue ; Lauren Niedel; Robert Shields; & Diane Brennan; seconded by Councilor Forgue

J. Fecteau stated she will do all she can, research, etc., but feels this initiative should come from the Council.

Discussion: none

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

NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

IX. Town Council Correspondence/ Discussion

A. Councilor G. Steere stated we have a resolution from Exeter/West Greenwich regarding State Aid for schools. Councilor G. Steere stated it relates to the 10-year program to cut aid to rural communities. Councilor G. Steere stated it appears the state is going into an 11<sup>th</sup> year. Consensus to support, next agenda.

B. Councilor G. Steere stated we a request for support of school field trips from No. Kingstown, which we previously supported. Rec'd and filed.

C. Councilor G. Steere stated we have correspondence from DEM informing the town of a proposed wetlands alternation application. Rec'd and filed.

D. Councilor Henry updated the Council on a ceremony she attended at Ponaganset High School where "Spotlight recognition" was given by RIDE to Ponaganset High School for having the premier program called "I Chose to Include".

Councilor Henry also informed Council that the ceremony in fact was held to surprise Special Education teacher Jennifer Paolantonio with the Milken Educator Award by the Rhode Island Education Commissioner Angélica Infante-Green and Candice McQueen , the CEO of the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching. There was a consensus to recognize this teacher at a Town Council meeting.

Councilor Henry explained a conversation she had with the Commission of RIDE and other representatives present regarding the Governors's budget and state aid, in particular, how this relates to a school they refer to as a model school. Councilor Henry expressed she would like Council to send correspondence to the Governor and she will draft a letter for Council to consider.

X. Department Head Reports/Discussion- none

XI. Bds. and Commissions Reports/ Discussion -

W. Steere, School Committeeman, spoke regarding the CTE program at Ponaganset High School. Committeeman Steere stated that in the beginning it was a good idea because it did help develop programs we may not have gotten on our own but that it is now getting out of control. W. Steere stated he doesn't feel it will end well in the long run. Councilor Henry stated that when this program started other career and tech directors, statewide, were upset that we were "stealing" students. W. Steere stated other schools are now creating their own programs and he believes there will be fewer students coming. Councilor Forgue asked what we will do with all the additional resources when these students do stop coming.

XII. Open Forum

A. Dave Mahoney, 1 Robin Vale Drive, asked what the police Architectural and Engineering Design Services Contract Analysis was concerning. Councilor G. Steere explained that analysis is to determine if the current structure and property can support all the needs of the police department going forward. K. Scott, Planner, stated this is just the first phase to determine if the current site is sufficient. Mr. Mahoney asked if a public safety complex has been considered. Discussion followed on the ability of our volunteer fire companies to serve the town's needs, now and in the future. Mr. Mahoney explained some of the potential problems with the town's fire service. Mr. Mahoney asked if there is way to look into concepts. Councilor W. Steere suggested perhaps the three fire districts should get together, strategize and come to the town with suggestions. Discussion followed on fire services in town and the result of conversation was to consider a safety complex if replacement is warranted and to bring suggestions back to council.

XIII. MOTION made by Councilor Reichert to Convene to Executive Session Pursuant to R.I.G.L. 42-46-5 (a)(2) Potential Litigation - Re: Lifetime Contracts Law, Discussion and/or action; seconded by Councilor Forgue

Discussion: none

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

NAYS- none

MOTION PASSED

XIV. Reconvene Open Session

Disclosure of votes taken: One vote was taken in Executive Session - Councilor G. Steere stated the vote was to join the law suit against the Rhode Island "evergreen" legislation, not to exceed the cost of \$8,500.

MOTION was made by Councilor W. Steere to SEAL the minutes of Closed Executive Session; seconded by Councilor Forgue

Discussion: none

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

NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

XV. MOTION by Councilor W. Steere to adjourn at 10:07 p.m.; seconded by Councilor Reichert

Discussion: none

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

NAYS - none

MOTION PASSED