

At a meeting of the Town Council holden in and for the Town of Gloucester on January 18, 2018:

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; William E. Reichert and Patricia Henry.

Members Absent: Edward C. Burlingame, Vice-President

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; 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

None.

V. Public Hearing

A. Gloucester Code of Ordinance - Proposed Amendment- Discussion and/or action

1. Part 1. Administrative Legislation, Chapter 101 Personnel Board

The proposed amendment is to delete Chapter 101 - thereby eliminating the Personnel Board

Councilor G. Steere stated a first reading for this proposed amendment was held on December 21st at which time the reason for removing this Chapter was discussed. Councilor G. Steere stated this Public Hearing was advertised in the Valley Breeze Observer on January 4, 2018.

Councilor G. Steere DECLARED the Public Hearing OPEN and asked if anyone wished to speak regarding the proposed amendment.

Discussion: None

Councilor G. Steere DECLARED the Public Hearing CLOSED.

Discussion: Councilor Henry questioned if there was a need in the future could Council reinstate. Atty. Kane answered in the affirmative.

MOTION was made by Councilor Reichert to AMEND the Gloucester Code of Ordinance, deleting Part 1. Administrative Legislation, Chapter 101 Personnel Board, effective upon passage; seconded

by Councilor W. Steere

Discussion: None.

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

MOTION PASSED

B. Gloucester Licensing Board - Discussion and/or action

1. Application for proposed Expansion of hours for existing Victualing License

Applicant: Chepachet Donuts, Inc., d.b.a. Dunkin Donuts

Location: 1006 Putnam Pike

Councilor G. Steere stated that this Public Hearing was advertised in the Valley Breeze Observer on January 4th, 11th, & 18th, 2018.

Councilor G. Steere DECLARED the Public Hearing OPEN.

Councilor G. Steere stated that an application was filed by Chepachet Donuts Inc., doing business as Dunkin Donuts, requesting additional hours of operation. Councilor G. Steere stated they would like to open at 4:00 a.m. and continue to close at 11:00 p.m. Councilor G. Steere stated currently their license allows them to open at 6:00 a.m.

Councilor G. Steere asked if anyone wished to speak regarding this application.

Discussion: James Lynch, of Dunkin Donuts, appeared before the Council. Councilor Henry asked him to explain the need for opening at 4:00 a.m. J. Lynch replied that in last ten years, society has changed and business has shifted from late night to early morning, adding that one of his other stores opens at 3:00 a.m. to accommodate early commuters. Councilor Henry asked what time the doors would open to the public. J. Lynch replied 4:00 a.m.

Councilor G. Steere asked if anyone else wished to speak. Hearing none, Councilor G. Steere DECLARED the Public Hearing CLOSED.

Discussion: Councilor W. Steere asked Joseph DelPrete, Chief of Police, if there have been any issues at this establishment. J. DelPrete replied in the negative. Councilor Henry inquired if this would affect the neighbors with regard to lighting. J. Lynch stated that the parking lot lights would be on but there are not many residential properties in the area. Councilor G. Steere agreed and stated that there are no houses directly across the street. Councilor W. Steere commented that there are no residents present tonight to object.

Councilor Henry stated that the way our Ordinance currently reads, the earliest opening time is 6:00 a.m. Jean Fecteau, Town Clerk, noted that the law also states that the Town Council can grant additional hours between 2:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m.

Councilor G. Steere stated that he has no objection to the expansion of hours because the only thing across the street is the ball field. Councilor Reichert commented that 6:00 is late for people who are traveling to Providence or to the airport in the morning.

MOTION was made by Councilor Reichert to APPROVE the expansion of hours, from 6:00 a.m. opening to 4:00 a.m. opening, for Chepachet Donuts Inc., d/b/a Dunkin Donuts, location: 1006 Putnam Pike; seconded by Councilor W. Steere.

Discussion: None.

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

MOTION PASSED

VI. Consent Items - Discussion and/or action

- A. Approval of Town Council meeting minutes of December 21, 2017
- B. Tax Assessor's Additions & Abatements for December 2017
- C. Finance Director's Report for December 2017

MOTION was made by Councilor Reichert to APPROVE the Town Council meeting minutes of December 21, 2017; to APPROVE the ADDITION to the 2017 Tax Roll in the amount of \$5,430.10, No ABATEMENTS for December 2017; and to ACCEPT the Finance Director's Report for December 2017; seconded by Councilor Henry.

Discussion: None.

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

MOTION PASSED

VII. Unfinished Business

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

Discussion: Councilor G. Steere stated that the Council has been discussing this for several months now. Councilor Henry stated that she was going to work on a charge for Economic Development but does not have enough to present to the Council at this point. Councilor Henry stated that as she has done the research, she has mixed feelings regarding whether this commission is needed. Councilor Henry commented that there are many empty buildings throughout the Town, but it is up to the property owners to lease their buildings to businesses. Councilor Reichert noted that the Council made it easier with the Village Overlay District. Councilor Henry stated that she had thought if we had a vibrant Economic Development Committee, maybe they could put together some ideas to actively try to get businesses to come in, but now she's not sure if that is the Town's business.

Tim Kane, Town Solicitor, stated that it is difficult to find people to serve on boards and commissions. Councilor Henry agreed and stated that she tried to get young farmers to discuss having a farmers' market at the pavilion, but could not get anything together.

Councilor G. Steere stated that if we want to continue either of these boards, we should place an advertisement asking if anybody in the community is interested in volunteering. Jean Fecteau, Town Clerk, stated that she would not be able to include Economic Development in an ad because we don't have one at this time. Councilor G. Steere suggested that the wording of the ad is that we are contemplating bringing back the Economic Development Commission and possible Community Resource if we can find volunteers.

Councilor Henry asked if Planning has any ideas. Karen Scott, Town Planner, responded with references to goals stated in updated Comprehensive Plan, which will be adopted soon.

J. Fecteau noted that Gloucester has a much more vibrant GBA now than when Economic Development was active.

There was Council consensus to run an ad for all boards and commissions, with wording that there is the possibility of bringing back these two (2) boards if there is an interest shown.

MOTION was made by Councilor W. Steere for the Town Clerk to place an ad for volunteers for existing Town Boards and Commissions and mention that the Town is considering bringing back Community Resource and Economic Development; seconded by Councilor Henry.

Discussion: None.

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

MOTION PASSED

MOTION was made by Councilor W. Steere to remove this item from the table; seconded by Councilor Reichert.

Discussion: None.

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

MOTION PASSED

VIII. New Business

A. Boards & Commissions

1. Appointments - Discussion and/or action
 - a. Zoning Board -

1. One expired Alternate term to expire 1/2019

Councilor G. Steere stated that the Council has received a request for a reappointment to an Alternate position. This appointment is for the expired term of Joseph Trunzo. Councilor G. Steere stated the Chair has requested Mr. Trunzo be named to the Alternate #1 position.

MOTION was made by Councilor Henry to APPOINT Joseph Trunzo to the Zoning Board of Review to the Alternate #1 position to expire 1/2019; seconded by Councilor Reichert.

Discussion: None.

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

MOTION PASSED

b. Conservation Commission

1. Three expired terms to expire 1/2021

Councilor G. Steere stated that this item is for the expired terms of: Al Aubin, Roy Najecki, and Thomas Yanni all of which, per the Chair, wish to be reappointed.

MOTION was made by Councilor Henry to REAPPOINT Al Aubin, Roy Najecki, & Thomas Yanni to the Conservation Commission for 3-year terms to expire 1/2021; seconded by Councilor W. Steere.

Discussion: None.

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

MOTION PASSED

- B. Discussion and/or action: D.O.T. request (dated 12/14/17) to “solicit any initial comments or information” regarding the Project (Toll Gantries) for a R.I.D.O.T. Environmental Assessment to “evaluate the direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts of construction and implementation of the toll systems”

Councilor G. Steere stated that the Council received the following correspondence before the last meeting regarding the toll systems proposed for Rhode Island:

Re: Toll Locations 3, 4 & 6 through 13
1-95, 1-195, and 1-295, US Route 6, and RI Route 146, Rhode Island
NEPA Project Notification

Dear Mr. Steere,

The Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT) proposes to construct and operate toll systems at Toll Locations 3, 4 & 6 through 13 (Project) along five major highway corridors (1-95, 1-195, and 1-295, US Route 6, and RI Route 146 (Table I and Figure 1).

RIDOT is preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Project. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is the lead federal agency. The EA will evaluate the direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts of construction and implementation of the toll systems at Toll Locations 3, 4 & 6 through 13.

This correspondence is being sent in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) regarding project notification and early coordination. Project Notification is being sent to Federal and state resource agencies, Tribal government entities, communities with toll locations and/or diversion routes, and non-governmental entities. RIDOT solicits any initial comments or information you wish to submit regarding the Project. The information you provide will assist in preparing the EA for the Project.

The proposed toll systems would be used to collect toll revenue from a tractor or truck tractor as defined in 23 CFR 658.5, pulling a trailer or trailers traveling across select bridges associated with the toll locations. RIDOT established each tolling location to collect revenue to support reconstruction and maintenance of bridge(s). Tolls will be charged as mandated by "The Rhode Island Bridge Replacement, Reconstruction and Maintenance Fund Act of 2016" which includes policies which identify specific maximum daily tolls and daily limits charged per tolling location. Revenue collection will be accomplished via electronic means only (no cash option) using Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) and video capture.

Implementation of tolling can sometimes result in a shift of travel behavior wherein some drivers of trucks subject to tolls will travel on a different route to avoid paying a toll. The potential shift of vehicles away from the toll locations is referred to as a "toll diversion." Potential diversion routes are identified on Figure 2.

(End of memo)

Discussion: Councilor G. Steere stated that we received this correspondence because Gloucester would be considered a "diversion route". Charlie Wilson stated that Marie Sweet, president of the Gloucester Heritage Society, is still sending letters regarding the adverse effects this project would have on Routes 102 and 44. C. Wilson stated that he is also drafting letters from the Historic District Commission on the impact of the heavy traffic that will be averting through the Village. C. Wilson noted that there are many historic homes on this route which would be affected regarding foundations, etc. C. Wilson commented that what used to be 10 or 12 trucks at night is now up to 40 trucks and stated that some of the drivers have indicated that they have been told to start using these alternate routes.

Councilor G. Steere asked C. Wilson if those letters will be sent directly to the DOT. C. Wilson replied in the affirmative and stated that he will give copies to the Town Council.

Councilor W. Steere stated that the Council should probably also send some type of letter expressing our concerns. Councilor Henry stated that if the power plant in Burrillville gets approved, there will be even more truck traffic as a result. Councilor Henry suggested that we site both of these developments in the correspondence. Councilor W. Steere stated that he will draft the

letter and send it to the Council members for their comments. Councilor Henry suggested that the final letter also be sent to the Governor.

MOTION was made by Councilor W. Steere to send correspondence from the Town Council in response to RI DOT's notification expressing the Council's concern about the NEPA Project; seconded by Councilor Reichert.

Discussion: None.

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

MOTION PASSED

C. Annual Appointment: Tree Warden 2018 - Discussion and/or action
Councilor G. Steere stated that we have an annual appointment due for the Tree Warden. Councilor G. Steere stated that the current Tree Warden, Sandra Shepard was first appointed in 2013 and wishes to be reappointed. Councilor G. Steere stated Ms. Shepard's State Arborist License is on file in the Town Clerk's office.

Discussion: None.

MOTION was made by Councilor W. Steere to RE-APPOINT Sandra Shepard to the position of Gloucester Tree Warden for 2018; seconded by Councilor Reichert.

Discussion: None.

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

MOTION PASSED

D. Personnel

1. Authorization:

a. Family Medical Leave Act - Discussion and/or action

Councilor G. Steere read the following memo from Diane Brennan:

To: Honorable Town Council
From: Diane L. Brennan. Finance & HR Director
Re: Family Medical Leave
Date: January 3, 2018

An employee is requesting Medical Leave, under the Family Medical Leave Act, for a maximum equivalent of a thirteen week period. This can be used over a one year period. This would be for an employee to care for a family member. The employee meets the criteria under the law. The employee has worked for the town since October of 2008. The time off would be used to attend to

the needs of the family member. This includes time for doctor's appointments and rehabilitation due to procedures requiring care.

Under the federal and state guidelines, the town may require the employee to use available paid time to cover for the time away. In the past, FMLA time has been granted to employees and the town has required the use of all available time prior to asking for FMLA time. This situation is for time to care for a family member as defined in the FMLA guidelines. The employee has accumulated close to 400 hours of sick time and has vacation time available as well. Guidance as to the town's policy, which allows seven days, as to the use of the available time for this occurrence is to be determined. The medical event is day to day, but the expectation is for twenty days. The employee would like to use her personnel sick time, but would agree to use an equal amount of vacation time as well.

I have spoken with the department director and there will be minimal adverse consequence of allowing this employee the time. The department has been able to provide similar service in her absence and minimize any operational impact. This employee has indicated her willingness to work with the town and return to work after early appointments and work before an afternoon appointment. She is trying to limit disruption of department activity the best she can.

I would recommend the council determine an agreeable action as to the use of time – her sick time or vacation time or combination of the two- for this situation and future situations that may meet the FMLA guidelines for other than the employee. The FMLA guidelines are clear and provide a basis for extenuating circumstances that may arise for town employees now and in the future. Consideration would be provided as long as FMLA guidelines are being met.

(End of memo)

Discussion: Councilor W. Steere stated in this situation they (employees) should be able to use sick time first and from there, go to vacation time, as recommended by D. Brennan in her memo of January 3, 2018.

D. Brennan explained that we allow 7 days for family sick time but we ask employees to use all of their sick time when it is for themselves, and if they need more time we extend family sick leave so they can have the 13 weeks. D. Brennan stated that in this situation, the individual has approximately 30 days of sick time. D. Brennan stated that if the employee meets the criteria of the Family Medical Leave Act, it could be granted due to extenuating circumstances.

Councilor W. Steere asked if this has to be negotiated with the Bargaining Unit. D. Brennan replied in the negative and stated that it is for use of sick time for someone other than themselves.

Councilor Henry felt the employee is being up-front and honest and feels we should reward that with flexibility. D. Brennan agreed and stated that this is the intent of the Family Medical Leave Act, but she needs the Council's approval.

Councilor G. Steere asked if Council needs to stipulate the sick time to be used or just that the employee can use up their sick time. D. Brennan replied in the affirmative because this is a deviation from what we have written. Councilor G. Steere asked if we need to state how many days of sick time the employee can use. D. Brennan stated that there is an estimate, but we don't know how the family member's progress will go. D. Brennan stated that the Council can put a time limit on it and she can come back if necessary. Councilor G. Steere asked if the Council could just say the employee can use up her sick time. D. Brennan replied in the affirmative.

Councilor G. Steere agreed with Councilor Henry that the employee has banked a lot of sick time and could have just called in sick, but she wants to do it the right way. Councilor G. Steere also pointed out that it may be just a couple of hours a day.

Councilor Henry stated that many of us have been in that position, herself included.

MOTION was made by Councilor Henry to allow the affected employee to be allowed leave under the Family Medical Leave Act and to allow employee to use accumulated sick time for said leave; seconded by Councilor Reichert.

Discussion: None

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

MOTION PASSED

b. Use of time - Discussion and/or action

No action

2. Ratification: Advertisement for Senior Accountant/Financial Analyst-
Discussion and/or action

Councilor G. Steere stated that the Finance Director moved forward with the advertising for a position to be filled in her office after reaching a consensus of Council and the Finance Director is now asking for ratification of that consensus.

MOTION was made by Councilor W. Steere to RATIFY approval for advertising to facilitate replacing the Senior Accountant/Financial Analyst in the Finance Department; seconded by Councilor Reichert.

Discussion: None.

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

MOTION PASSED

E. Set Dates for 2018/2019 Budget & Referendum process - Discussion and/or action

Councilor G. Steere stated that the Clerk has submitted a calendar for Council's consideration. Councilor G. Steere stated first the Council needs to discuss and/or debate the date proposed for the 2018 Financial Town Referendum, May 15th. Councilor G. Steere stated that date is consistent with the last three years, third Tuesday of May.

Councilor G. Steere further stated that the Clerk is also asking Council to review the other dates proposed on the calendar. Councilor G. Steere stated once all dates are agreed upon, the Town Council can set the Public Hearing date and the dates will be made available to the public.

Discussion: Jean Fecteau, Town Clerk, stated that the Council does not need to approve all the other dates at this time, but she does need the Financial Referendum date in order to determine the last date that the Budget must be approved.

MOTION was made by Councilor W. Steere to SET the 2018 Financial Referendum date as May 15, 2018; seconded by Councilor Reichert.

Discussion: None.

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

MOTION PASSED

F. RI Attorney General lawsuit re: Opioid addiction - Discussion and/or action
Councilor G. Steere stated that the Council has received an email regarding the potential for a multi-state lawsuit, to be filed by the Atty. General, regarding opioid addiction.

Discussion: Councilor G. Steere stated that there are several other cities and towns that are getting on board with this lawsuit and the original correspondence indicated that there would be no cost to municipalities that wish to join in.

Tim Kane, Town Solicitor, stated that the Council may want to have the Attorney General appear before them to explain the details of this class-action suit. Councilor G. Steere stated that the email sounded like they are willing to come and address the Town.

Councilor Henry stated that she is against the Attorney General spending his efforts on suing the pharmaceutical companies and would rather he do work for the State to solve the drug problem and help people who have issues with drugs.

Councilor W. Steere expressed agreement with Councilor Henry and feels that it is a good idea to have the Attorney General appear and answer the Council's questions.

Councilor Henry stated that they may tell us that we will receive money from this lawsuit, but the only ones who get wealthy from this are the attorneys, and it will never trickle down to the drug addicts.

T. Kane commented that the town of North Providence sued Google and received 60 million dollars, which they used to build a Public Safety complex.

Don Simpson, of 150 Lakeview Drive, stated that he had a terrible accident on the job 18 years ago and was administered Oxycontin, which was effective in managing his pain. D. Simpson stated that due to people misusing the drug and overdosing, he is no longer able to obtain a prescription for it. D. Simpson stated that he is doomed to be in chronic 24/7 pain for the rest of his life. D. Simpson stated that the Attorney General should put some money and energy into advertising that Oxycontin can kill you if used improperly. D. Simpson stated that he was using it properly and had a normal life, but now he can't do anything.

MOTION was made by Councilor W. Steere to have Town Solicitor Kane contact the Attorney General's Office for more information regarding a potential lawsuit re: opioid addiction; seconded by Councilor Reichert.

Discussion: None

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

MOTION PASSED

IX. Town Council Correspondence /Discussion

A. Councilor G. Steere stated that he received a call from a senior citizen resident complaining about the Human Services Van Policy that was just amended to limit trips to two (2) per month within a 22-mile radius. Councilor G. Steere stated that the resident's wife has doctor's appointments that are just outside the 22-mile radius and they are disappointed that they cannot get a ride there. Councilor G. Steere suggested to him that there are other options, such as the State RIDE program. Councilor G. Steere commented that the Town is not obligated to take everybody to every appointment and it is more of a courtesy offer to help people out when we can.

Councilor W. Steere agreed and stated that we have limited resources and there are other options available.

B. Councilor G. Steere stated that we received a letter from NATCO Products Corporation regarding the Arctic Dam Hydro-Power Project on the Pawtuxet River. Councilor G. Steere commented that he does not know why we were notified as we do not border on the Pawtuxet River.

C. Councilor G. Steere stated that we received a letter from the Chepachet Grange expressing their opinion that a crosswalk is needed at the Pavilion and they suggested the town contact the state to request the installation of a crosswalk at that location. Councilor Henry asked Gary Treml, Director of Public Works, if there

are any guidelines that there must be crosswalks every certain number of feet. G. Treml replied to put in a crosswalk there needs to be curb cuts and engineering, and you can't just spray paint lines. G. Treml stated it took a very long time to get a crosswalk installed at St. Eugenes. Councilor W. Steere noted that most of the activity in the Village is on the same side of the road, the Pavilion side, and there is a crosswalk in front of Town Hall. Councilor W. Steere noted that no one stops at the existing crosswalk. Councilor Henry asked how many crosswalks are in the village already and the answer was two. Chief DelPrete stated for big events we position our detail at that location. (No Action)

- D. Councilor G. Steere stated that a letter was received from the auditors, Baxter Dansereau and Associates, containing comments and observations (nothing bad) regarding the audit.
 - E. Councilor G. Steere stated that correspondence was received from the Town of South Kingstown expressing approval of our letter to the Governor regarding the Energy Siting Board's view of the Municipal Resolutions that were sent to them.
 - F. Councilor G. Steere stated that a letter was received from the League of Cities and Towns regarding a new dues structure which will increase by 5% this year and 5% for the next three (3) years. Councilor Henry stated that included in this memo was a list of population statistics which she found interesting. Councilor G. Steere noted that the dues structure is based upon the population of each member town, and Glocester is currently about \$.39 per citizen, which will increase to \$.41 the first year.
 - G. Councilor G. Steere stated that we received a letter from the Town of Putnam notifying us of a Public Hearing for an amendment to their Zoning Ordinance pertaining to dog grooming in an Agricultural-2 Zone.
 - H. Councilor Reichert asked why residents have to renew their senior exemption every year. Councilor Reichert stated that he was told we are the only Town in the State with this requirement. Tim Kane stated that Smithfield also requires an annual application for their senior tax freeze to ensure that the resident qualifies. Councilor G. Steere stated that our formula previously included income but we have changed that to require only residency and age. There was Council consensus to discuss with the Tax Collector and Tax Assessor whether there is still a need to apply annually. Councilor Henry commented that it is the least you can do for the Town giving you a \$2,000 break in your taxes. Councilor Henry stated, her opinion, that it is not a big inconvenience.
- X. Department Head Reports/Discussion
- A. Diane Brennan, Finance Director, spoke stating she has presented copies of the audit for Council review.

- B. Karen Scott, Town Planner, stated that the Planning Board has a workshop scheduled for Jan. 22nd regarding accessory uses for farm and forest land. K. Scott further stated that a Public Hearing regarding the Comprehensive Plan will be held on Feb. 12th and the draft Comprehensive Plan will be posted on the website.
 - C. Ken Johnson, Building/Zoning Official, stated that he has corresponded with Holiday Acres regarding the proposal to phase out permanent residences at the campground. K. Johnson stated that, during the negotiations, he will require that CO2 detectors be installed in the trailers, for safety reasons, and they will be inspected for compliance. Councilor Henry questioned if the trustees have responded. Atty. Kane stated he has informed the trustees that the full time residents need to be out by the time frame stated by Council.
 - D. Gerald Mosca, EMA Director, stated that if the Council receives calls from constituents who have power outages, they should recommend that they call National Grid to report it. G. Mosca commented that it must be the customer that calls in and the more people that do, the better reaction time we will get. Councilor G. Steere stated that this information will be put on the Town's website.
- XI. Bds. and Commissions Reports/Discussion
- A. Mike Ahnrud, Chair of the Conservation Commission, thanked the Town Council for reappointing the three (3) members of the commission and stated that in February, he will have recommendations for an Alternate and a Land Trust Designee. M. Ahnrud noted that he is again the Chair for 2018, with Albert Aubin as Vice-Chair and Roy Najecki as Secretary.
 - B. Charlie Wilson, Chair of the Historic District Commission, stated that there have been requests to do a walk down by the river to which he believes the Town has a right-of-way past the stone mill. C. Wilson stated that they, along with the Heritage Society, are looking into opening that back up and doing some tours on a limited basis. C. Wilson asked if the Council has any issues with this, to which the Council replied in the negative.
 - C. Eric Croft, Budget Board, stated they are still working on the budget.
 - D. Councilor W. Steere asked Walter Steere, Jr., School Committee member, about a request that was received from the co-chair of the region to attend tonight's meeting to discuss regionalization. W. Steere, Jr. stated that the co-chair was unable to attend due to another commitment. W. Steere, Jr. stated the school committee does not have a lot of information yet and commented that the sub-Committee wanted to get regionalization on the ballot for November but he doesn't feel that will happen because of the lack of information. W. Steere, Jr. stated he doesn't feel that a majority of Gloucester members are leaning towards the idea and he has asked the School's attorney for guidance regarding what role the

Glocester School Committee has in the matter.

Councilor Henry stated that she would say to Chairwoman Pezza that the next time she wants to come before the Council, she should make sure that all of her board members are aware of that. Councilor G. Steere stated Foster Councilman Gordon Rogers was also going to come but Councilor G. Steere stated he doesn't know if the Foster Council voted on that. Councilor Henry assumed when asked that everyone involved was aware of the request. W. Steere, Jr. stated at this time the sub-committee's job is to gather information.

W. Steere, Jr. stated that Foster is really pushing for regionalization but the Gloucester members want to know how it will help us (Gloucester). Councilor W. Steere stated that once the subcommittee gets all the facts, they should meet with everyone: Foster, Gloucester, and the Region in the same room to discuss this idea because it is a big deal. Councilor Henry commented that the chair of the Region and committee is again showing the inability to be transparent. Councilor Henry stated that when the subcommittee was formed, they should have let the Councils of both towns know that they would be having these discussions. Councilor G. Steere stated apparently Foster knows because Councilman Rogers was going to attend our Council meeting. W. Steere, Jr. stated Councilman Rogers went to the last sub-committee meeting. W. Steere, Jr. stated the sub-committee hasn't asked for input from the Superintendent or the NEA teachers from Gloucester. W. Steere, Jr. stated they are against the idea but perhaps they could be asked why they are against and make them part of the process.

W. Steere, Jr. stated the sub-committee is in a big rush to get this done. There was discussion regarding the process required to change the Regional Charter. W. Steere, Jr. stated that if Gloucester does not want to regionalize, Foster still wants to if their voters approve it. The Council members stated that this does not make sense; and questioned who they would regionalize with. It was noted that the last time this was proposed, Gloucester voters approved it but Foster voters did not.

Councilor Reichert stated wood burning stove at the school is down and has been the last four weeks. W. Steere, Jr. stated they were waiting for parts. Discussion followed on ice in the wood chips.

Councilor Henry asked W. Steere, Jr. who Foster would regionalize with. W. Steere, Jr. stated Foster wants to be in the region even if Gloucester doesn't. Atty. Kane stated he didn't think it was possible but W. Steere, Jr. stated the sub-committee believes it is.

Councilor G. Steere asked as Foster had an increase in population can we expect them to pay a higher percentage of the bill this year. W. Steere, Jr. stated we are going to gain \$40,000 or \$ 50,000 on the debt service but we haven't gotten the

numbers for student population yet. W. Steere, Jr. stated he has heard from the Superintendent and Business Manager that Gloucester will “take a hit”. Councilor Henry asked if we have an estimate regarding tuitioned in students. W. Steere, Jr. replied that this year we have 105 tuitioned in students, of which 20 are graduating. W. Steere, Jr. stated that we are predicting 125 next year, and 15 international students, with tuition going up to under a million dollars in revenue. However, W. Steere, Jr. noted that we are losing \$162,000 in State Aid. Councilor G. Steere asked if the tuition is still \$16,000. W. Steere, Jr. stated that RIDE wants to change the formula to reduce the tuition because many school departments are complaining about the cost to send students here. W. Steere, Jr. stated if they do change the formula it would result in tuition revenue going down which will not help us. W. Steere, Jr. stated we won’t know for about a month what the formula will be. W. Steere, Jr. stated that the School Budget will go up approximately 2.59%.

XII. Open Forum

- A. Tom Sanzi spoke regarding the trucks that are being re-routed through the Village, stating that he can hear them from his house.

T. Sanzi commented that Candlelight Shopping went well and he is proud to participate and bring attention to the Town.

T. Sanzi spoke about the transportation program, stating that when it first began, it extended into Massachusetts and Connecticut. T. Sanzi stated that he has used the State RIDE program but some residents may not have the means, such as a computer, to look into this option. T. Sanzi commented that our seniors are vulnerable and do not know where to turn.

- B. Charlie Wilson expressed appreciation to the Town Council, Chief of Police and the Gloucester Business Association for their support regarding Candlelight Shopping. C. Wilson stated that it was another good year, especially with the addition of the Tree Lighting Event. C. Wilson stated that he has had positive feedback from people who participated and he feels the event increased the number of people from out of State that came into Town.

XIII. Adjourn

MOTION was made by Councilor Reichert to ADJOURN at 9:09 p.m.; seconded by Councilor W. Steere.

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

MOTION PASSED