

At a meeting of the Town Council holden in and for the Town of Gloucester on February 21, 2019:

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; Diane Brennan, Finance Director; Joseph DelPrete, Chief of Police; Karen Scott, Town Planner; Kenneth Johnson, Building/Zoning Official; Gary Trembl, Director of Public Works; 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. Citations - 2019-01 Recognition to Gloucester Police & Fire

Councilor G. Steere read the following Citation, prepared by the Council, to present to first responders in our town as follows:

The State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
Town of Gloucester
CITATION
2019-1

Be it hereby known to all that:
The Town of Gloucester
hereby offers its sincerest congratulations to:

The Gloucester Police Department
The Chepachet Fire Department
The West Gloucester Fire Department
The Harmony Fire Department

in recognition of
your hard work and dedication to our town.

The Town Council is proud to recognize and commend you, because without our safety service providers it would not be possible to achieve the honor of the designation:

Glocester - Safest Place to Live in Rhode Island

The Town Council and the Town Clerk represent all Glocester residents when we say “thank you” for the extraordinary effort you give every day.

Proposed this 21st day of February, 2019

George O. Steere, Jr. President,
Glocester Town Council

Jean M. Fecteau, CMC, Town Clerk

seconded by Councilor Reichert.

Discussion: Councilor Henry stated that this was brought forth by a citizen who wishes to present the citations at an event at Hill’s Tavern. Councilor Henry stated that the Councilors are pleased that this is taking place, however she feels that we need to be cautious concerning who presents these citations because they are from the Council. Councilor Henry asked the Solicitor for an opinion. Tim Kane, Town Solicitor, stated that he has been here ten (10) years and precedent would dictate that the citations should be presented by a member of the Town Council.

Councilor Henry stated that if a motion is necessary, she would like to make a motion that a Councilor attend the event on March 17th at Hill’s Tavern. Councilor G. Steere stated he could go unless somebody else wants to. Councilor G. Steere stated that it is a great suggestion by that citizen, but he also felt that the citations should be presented by the Town Council. Councilor W. Steere noted that the Council does this for other organizations, such as the Boy Scouts and the Grange. Councilor Henry stated that it is important to protect the integrity of the Council, adding that it is signed by the Council and should be presented by the Council. Joseph DelPrete, Chief of Police, expressed his agreement. Councilor Forgue stated that he feels the citations should be presented at a public building instead of a private business. Councilor Henry stated that she can see why the Chief would not want to receive a citation for having the safest community at a bar.

Councilor W. Steere suggested that the Council notify the organizers that the Council will congratulate the recipients at a ceremony at the Town Hall. Councilor Henry stated that the Council could do this at a meeting prior to the event, and the citations could be placed on display at the event. Councilor Forgue suggested inviting a local newspaper to attend to see these awards presented. Councilor G. Steere stated that the consensus is to present the citations here at a Council meeting. Councilor W. Steere stated that there is a Motion and asked if the Council wants to table it.

Councilor Reichert removed his second.

MOTION was made by Councilor Henry to TABLE Citations - 2019-01 "Recognition to Gloucester Police & Fire" for presentation at the March 7, 2019 Town Council meeting; seconded by Councilor W. Steere.

Discussion: Councilor Henry stated that we can notify the individuals that they can take the Citations with them to display at the event on March 17th. Councilor Henry stated that she doesn't want any misunderstanding and reiterated that this was a great intention and a great idea.

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

MOTION PASSED

VI. Consent Items - Discussion and/or action

- A. Approval of Town Council regular meeting minutes of February 7, 2019
- B. Tax Assessor's Additions & Abatements - January 2019
- C. Finance Director's Report - January 2019

MOTION was made by Councilor Reichert to APPROVE the Town Council regular meeting minutes of February 7, 2019; there are no Additions or Abatements to the 2018 Tax Roll for January 2019; and to ACCEPT the Finance Director's Report for January 2019; seconded by Councilor W. Steere.

Discussion: Councilor Henry stated that she must abstain regarding the approval of the minutes of February 7th as she was not present at the meeting.

VOTE: AYES- G. Steere, W. Steere, Reichert and Forgue
NAYS-0
ABSTENTION -Henry (approval of minutes)

MOTION PASSED

VII. Unfinished Business

- A. Earth Day 2019 Project - Discussion and/or Action

Councilor Henry stated that last year she and Judy Colaluca, president of the Sand Dam Association, got together to plan Gloucester's first annual Earth Day event which was quite successful. Councilor Henry stated that they plan to hold the event again this year, on Saturday, April 27th, which is the same day that Burrillville will be holding a similar event. Councilor Henry stated that this year they are expanding and have gotten permission to use the Pavilion as the main site, with additional sites at the Transfer Station turnaround and the two (2) elementary schools. Councilor Henry stated that she was advised to contact the counselor at the high school because the students are required to perform community service and may wish to participate. Councilor Henry stated that the event will be advertised in the Bargain Buyer and also placed on the Town's website. Councilor Henry stated that the hours will be extended an hour and will be from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Councilor W. Steere asked who is coordinating the event. Councilor Henry replied that she and Judy

Colaluca are. Councilor Henry stated that they want to get the Conservation Commission, Recreation Department, and the GBA involved.

Councilor Henry stated that they want Gloucester to be not only the safest community in Rhode Island, but also the cleanest community in Rhode Island.

VIII. New Business

- A. Adoption: Classification & Compensation Plan for (non-DPW) –non-union employees - Discussion and/or Action

Councilor G. Steere stated that we are just adopting the categories and the compensation ranges, and we have all the comparisons from which the consultant drew his conclusions.

Discussion: None.

MOTION was made by Councilor Forgue to ADOPT the Classification Plan and the Compensation Salary Range Schedule, dated February 21, 2019, for “Gloucester Non-union positions” & Gloucester Police Non-union positions”; seconded by Councilor Reichert.

Discussion: Councilor Reichert asked Councilor G. Steere if this will affect what they are doing. Councilor G. Steere replied that it does not.

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

MOTION PASSED

- B. Gloucester Code of Ordinance - Discussion and/or Action
1. Proposed Amendment, New Chapter - 1st Reading
Part 2: Boards, Commissions, Committees and Positions
Chapter 78. Economic Development Commission

Councilor G. Steere stated that the Council is considering an ordinance to create an Economic Development Commission. Councilor G. Steere stated that per the Charter the Council may by ordinance create a board or commission.

Councilor G. Steere explained that this is the first reading and Council can either read the proposed ordinance or make a motion to waive the reading and explain the ordinance. Councilor G. Steere stated that we could waive the reading as it is available for people to look at.

Councilor Henry asked if we already had an Economic Development Commission created at one time and if we disbanded it. Councilor G. Steere replied in the affirmative and stated that this is to create the Economic Development Commission again.

MOTION was made by Councilor Reichert to WAIVE the reading of the proposed ordinance entitled Part 2: Boards, Commissions, Committees and Positions, Chapter 78. Economic Development Commission; seconded by Councilor Forgue.

Discussion: none

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

MOTION PASSED

Discussion: Councilor Henry stated that Councilor Forgue had mentioned advertising for volunteers and asked if anybody had responded. Councilor Forgue replied that the Council must get this ordinance through the approval process first. Jean Fecteau, Town Clerk, explained that there will be a Public Hearing to read through it. Councilor G. Steere noted that there are copies available.

MOTION was made by Councilor W. Steere to SET a Public Hearing for the consideration of a proposed ordinance, **Chapter 78. Economic Development Commission**, for March 21, 2019; seconded by Councilor Reichert.

Discussion: None.

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

MOTION PASSED

C. Authorization of Correspondence:

1. Federal Fiscal Year 2018-2027 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) – Amendment 11 – Public Input Re: Route 94, Reynolds Road (STIP ID 1329) - Discussion and/or action

Discussion: Karen Scott, Town Planner, stated that the Councilors have a draft letter in their packet to be submitted in response to the DOT amendment which would further delay the Reynolds Road project, for the third time, to 2023. K. Scott noted that DOT has done some improvements, with a piece-meal approach, but it would be much more efficient if they just did the planned improvements all at once.

Councilor Reichert stated that the State is there almost every day patching the road. Councilor Reichert stated that we cannot stress enough the fact that there are tractor trailer trucks and tour buses traveling on that road to Factory Mutual. Councilor Reichert commented that it is an embarrassment that the road is literally falling apart.

K. Scott stated that her letter indicates that we have had numerous complaints and have had to call DOT to come out and do temporary fixes, and then have to call them back to fix their temporary fixes. K. Scott stated that Chris LaButti (W. Gloucester Fire Chief) has also written a letter addressing the issues it causes for first responders. K. Scott stated that she has asked FM Global to write a support letter, which is with their legal counsel right now.

K. Scott stated that she will attend the Public Hearing on this amendment next Thursday, adding that

Rep. Chippendale and Sen. De la Cruz also plan to attend.

Councilor Reichert spoke about how difficult it is to plow the road in its current condition and commented that it would be cheaper in the long run to actually fix the road. K. Scott stated that in the letter she itemizes the small incremental things they have done and agreed that it would be so much cheaper if they just did the project.

Councilor G. Steere commended K. Scott for the letter, stating that there are a lot of good points.

MOTION was made by Councilor Henry to AUTHORIZE the Town Council President to sign and send correspondence to the Chair of the State Planning Council regarding proposed amendments to the current State Transportation Improvement Program, Amendment 11, regarding Route 94, Reynolds Road; seconded by Councilor Reichert.

Discussion: None.

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

MOTION PASSED

D. Gloucester Affordable Housing Advisory Board

1. Proposed amendment to charge - Discussion and/or Action

Councilor G. Steere stated that the Town Planner is proposing an amendment to the charge of the Affordable Housing Advisory Board, which was created by Section 7.3.1 of the Affordable Housing Plan adopted in September 2005.

Discussion: Karen Scott, Town Planner, explained that in 2006, the Town created the Gloucester Affordable Housing Advisory Board but over the course of the last decade the laws have slightly changed. K. Scott stated, with the adoption of the new Comprehensive Plan, it would be a good opportunity to get that board up and meeting again and be proactive about meeting its charges and the guidelines set forth in the new Comprehensive Plan. K. Scott stated that she did not make any major changes; the membership stays the same, the overall purpose is generally the same and numbers 1 through 7 of the general duties exactly follow the action items in the Comprehensive Plan.

MOTION was made by Councilor Henry to ADOPT the amendments to the Gloucester Affordable Housing Advisory Board; seconded by Councilor W. Steere.

Discussion: None.

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

MOTION PASSED

E. Authorization of Application: 2019 RI Foundation Community Grant - Discussion and/or Action

Discussion: Karen Scott, Town Planner, explained that the RI Foundation is putting out \$10,000 grants. K. Scott noted that we received one a few years back for improvements to Leja Field. K. Scott stated that these are no-match grants for things that would make an impact in the community and bring organizations together.

K. Scott stated that Bob Shields, Recreation Director, has suggested some improvements to the Spring Grove Beach including a new sign, guardrails separating the beachfront from the parking area, and a retaining wall around the picnic area. K. Scott stated that there are some in-kind things we could leverage against this, such as underbrush clearing and selective tree-cutting, which could be done by the Public Works Department. K. Scott further stated that at the last meeting there was an Eagle Scout who talked about doing a project at Spring Grove that we could link up with.

K. Scott offered to put together an application for the grant if the Council wishes to move forward with it. K. Scott asked if the Council had any other ideas.

Councilor W. Steere asked if any of the clearing will involve the dam. K. Scott replied that the selective pruning will only be done within the picnic area.

Councilor G. Steere asked about the guardrail. K. Scott replied that the Recreation Director had priced out the materials.

MOTION was made by Councilor W. Steere to AUTHORIZE the Town Planner to submit the 2019 RI Foundation Community Grant application for the proposed project at Spring Grove Beach; seconded by Councilor Reichert.

Discussion: None.

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

MOTION PASSED

F. Electric Supply Options- Town Buildings: Discussion and/or Action

Councilor G. Steere stated that the Council has received another opportunity to receive information regarding future electricity costs for the town from Solidified Energy, LLC.

Discussion: Richard Day, of Northport, MA appeared as representative of Solidified Energy, LLC. Councilor G. Steere stated that he and Councilor Forgue met with Mr. Day and he is proposing to shop for the best price regarding electricity for the Town. R. Day stated that his company will shop multiple different suppliers to provide a fixed supply cost for the Town for a set period of time. R. Day stated that this would be an additional option for the Town to consider as it considers the

contract you are in now, as well as some of the solar options.

Councilor Henry asked R. Day if he appeared before the Regional School Committee. R. Day replied in the affirmative and stated that they are now enjoying that program.

Councilor G. Steere asked if this is at no cost to the Town. R. Day stated that the evaluation is at no cost to the Town and the contract verification is also at no cost. R. Day explained that at the end of his work, he would secure the best rates from all of the suppliers he works with, for the Town to better control utility costs.

Councilor G. Steere noted this is at no cost and to have options, we have a solar proposal and our contract with Direct Energy runs out in December so we need to start shopping around. R. Day stated that they would work with the Town on whatever option works best as it relates to programs, terms, pricing, etc.

Councilor W. Steere asked R. Day if he met with the whole School Committee or only a sub-committee. R. Day stated that he believes it was the whole committee. Councilor Henry concurred. Councilor W. Steere asked why the Council did not have the opportunity to have a meeting. Councilor W. Steere stated that Councilors G. Steere and Forgue met with R. Day, but he was not aware of that meeting nor does he know the outcome. Councilor Forgue explained that R. Day contacted him to ask what he would have to do to make a presentation to the Council. Councilor Forgue stated that R. Day came in and Councilor G. Steere happened to be here also, so they had a “meet and greet” and gave him direction on how to propose his concept to the Town. Councilor Forgue stated his opinion that more options and more people bidding for our business is a good thing. Councilor Forgue stated if we have the opportunity to lock in at a price for the year and we wouldn’t have to babysit the bill to make sure it is not creeping up is a good thing.

Councilor G. Steere again stated that there is no cost and this company will do our homework for us and give us some options and prices.

MOTION was made by Councilor Reichert to AUTHORIZE the signing of a letter of authorization to begin the process of receiving future pricing information from Solidified Energy, LLC; seconded by Councilor Forgue.

Discussion: Councilor W. Steere asked if there would be a penalty if we disaffiliated from the company. R. Day replied that there is no penalty or cost to the Town. Mr. Day stated it is his job to create the best proposal he can with the options available and it is up to the Council to approve it or not.

Councilor Henry asked R. Day to notify the Council regarding which plan the Region is going with, stating that it is public information. R. Day replied that they have chosen a fixed cost with First Point Power. Councilor Henry asked Mr. Day to include this information in with the submittal of our information.

Councilor Forgue asked if we would only have to write one (1) check instead of the two (2) checks we have to write now. R. Day replied in the affirmative and stated that our current supplier, Direct Energy, has dual billing which creates confusion. R. Day stated that all of the suppliers in the plans proposed for the Town are single-billing suppliers.

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

MOTION PASSED

The Council members thanked R. Day for his time.

IX. Town Council Correspondence and/or Discussion

- A. Councilor G. Steere stated that an invitation was received from the City of Newport to their St. Patrick's Day celebration.

- B. Councilor G. Steere stated that a letter was received from the State Planning Council seeking comments regarding a major amendment to the State Transportation Improvement Program, which is what K. Scott, Town Planner, spoke of earlier. Councilor G. Steere stated that K. Scott has prepared a letter and will testify at the hearing on February 28th along with our State Representatives.

- C. Councilor G. Steere stated that the Council has received a newsletter from the Gloucester Senior Center.

- D. Councilor W. Steere spoke regarding an email from the League of Cities and Towns regarding proposed legislation for which the League is looking for support from all cities and towns. Councilor G. Steere stated that we could put this on the next agenda. Councilor W. Steere agreed but stated that he feels they need support sooner than that. Councilor W. Steere stated that the subjects of the proposed legislation are marijuana, binding arbitration and changes in the car tax. Regarding the car tax, Councilor W. Steere stated that the Governor wants to make changes which would hurt cities and towns.

Diane Brennan, Finance Director, stated that the binding arbitration legislation proposes adding teachers to police and fire, which are already there. Regarding the car tax, D. Brennan stated that it would have some impact on our revenue but leaves her in limbo right now. D. Brennan stated it feels like the path we went down when we first started this motor vehicle phase-out, when we got stuck with the bill and did not find out until November and had to find money quickly to pay it.

Councilor W. Steere stated that he personally supports the letter that was sent by the League. Councilor G. Steere noted that February 25th is the deadline and asked Tim Kane, Town Solicitor, if there is anything the Council could do, since it is not on the

agenda. T. Kane replied that the Council could do a consensus and ratify any official action at the next meeting.

It was stated that the Council is having a Budget Workshop on Monday, February 25th, but that is the date that they need this letter. Councilor Henry asked if we could take time to read the letter now. J. Fecteau distributed copies to the Council members and a five-minute recess was called.

After the Council members read the correspondence, there was Council consensus to authorize the Town Council president to sign the letter from the League of Cities and Towns. Tim Kane stated that this action will be formally ratified at the next Town Council meeting.

X. Department Head Reports/Discussion

- A. Councilor W. Steere congratulated Gerry Mosca, EMA Director, for Gloucester being named “Safest Town in the State” for four (4) years in a row.
- B. Councilor Reichert expressed thanks to the Highway Department for their work during the recent storm, stating that every road in the state was bad, except for Gloucester.
- C. Councilor W. Steere asked Ken Johnson, Building/Zoning Official, for an update on the high school. K. Johnson stated that the permit was pulled last week and they paid their penalty. K. Johnson stated that he visits the site weekly to keep an eye on the project.
- D. Councilor W. Steere asked Bob Shields, Recreation Director, how the school vacation public events went this week. B. Shields replied that unfortunately he was in school himself, but he heard that everything went well. B. Shields stated that we let Foster piggyback on our public skating event because they couldn’t get ice time themselves and noted that they helped us out last February vacation for the same reason.

XI. Bds. and Commissions Reports/Discussion

None.

XII. Open Forum

- A. Michelle Allen, of 29 Bolton Street, addressed the Council and read a letter expressing her involvement in town and the schools. Ms. Allen closed her thoughts to Council with the following (full letter on file, and available to Public, in the Clerk’s Office):
“Regardless if my children go off to college or become tradesmen I have no doubt that they will be prepared because their years in the Gloucester School System. I have

3 potential long term Gloucester residents living in my home. Doesn't the town want the children to stay here and raise their families, like so many have in the past? Don't we want to attract more young families like mine? By investing in our schools and teachers, we are investing in the longevity of this place we call home."

XIII. Adjourn

MOTION was made by Councilor Reichert to ADJOURN at 8:29 p.m. ; seconded by Councilor W. Steere.

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

MOTION PASSED