

At a meeting of the Town Council holden in and for the Town of Gloucester on March 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; Patricia Henry; and Julian (Jay) Forgue.

Member Absent: William E. Reichert

Also Present: Jean Fecteau, Town Clerk; William Bernstein, Assistant Town Solicitor; Susan Harris, Deputy Town Clerk; Joseph DelPrete, Chief of Police; Diane Brennan, Finance Director; Karen Scott, Town Planner; Gary Treml, 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. Resolutions:

A. Resolution 2019-#01: Stabilization of State Educational Aid

Councilor Henry read the following Resolution prepared by the Council to send to our legislators and others regarding unstable state aid:

Resolution 2019-#01
Stabilization of State Educational Aid

WHEREAS: The state of Rhode Island provides direct financial support to municipalities to supplement the cost of good government by offering an alternative to higher taxation; and;

WHEREAS: it is critical to a municipalities financial stability and success to have the ability to plan to the future with assurance that funding estimates used in those calculations are stabile and then realized by the municipality; and

WHEREAS: the majority of **State Education Aid**, provided by the State, is determined by a funding formula which is recalculated annually but does not take into consideration factors such as: R.I.G.L. § 16-7-23 which mandates that each "community shall contribute local funds to its school committee in an amount not less than its local contribution for schools in the previous fiscal year"; and

WHEREAS: the **Motor Vehicle Excise Tax Phase out Reimbursement** which, per R.I.G.L., was forecasted out to 2024, at an amount certain, for each community is now in jeopardy of changing for FY 2020, 2021, 2022, & 2023 due to the Governor's budget proposal currently under consideration; and

WHEREAS: municipalities have many obligations, which are constantly growing, but the realization of restrictions such as: R.I.G.L. § 44-5-2 which caps the amount a municipality may levy in excess of the amount levied by the municipality for its previous fiscal year; and the negative impact of increasing taxation to our residents coupled with the instability of revenues, whether or not from state aid, could create a perilous fiscal forecast for our future; and

WHEREAS: consideration of a "Maintenance of Effort" funding plan for municipalities similar to R.I.G.L. § 16-7-23, which was adopted by our legislators as an attempt to maintain stability for our schools by ensuring predictable and accountable school funding from each municipality, may be a tool to ensure the same stability for municipal government; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED; the Gloucester Town Council respectfully requests the Honorable Gina Raimondo, Governor and our Legislators in the House and Senate to work towards the stabilization of funding and increased equity in the distribution of State Aid to all communities in Rhode Island;

George O. Steere, Jr.
Gloucester Town Council President

Jean M. Fecteau, CMC, Town Clerk

Dated this 21st day of March 2019

seconded by Councilor W. Steere.

Discussion: None.

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

MOTION PASSED

B. Resolution 2019-#02: Support of 2019 Proposed Legislation House Bill #5131 & Senate Bill #384 "Gold Star Family Highway"

Councilor G. Steere stated that our Legislators have filed legislation to designate a portion of

Chopmist Hill Road as the “Gold Star Family Highway”. Councilor G. Steere noted that this designation will not effect residents’ addresses.

Councilor W. Steere read the following Resolution into the record:

Resolution 2019-#02
Support of 2019 Proposed Legislation
House Bill #5131 & Senate Bill #384
“Gold Star Family Highway”

WHEREAS: the term Gold Star was first used in World War I when families flew service flags. These flags included a blue star for every family member serving in the Armed Forces of the United States. If that loved one died the blue star was replaced by a gold star. This allowed members of the community to know the price that the family had paid for the cause of freedom; and

WHEREAS: Gold Star Families are immediate relatives of U.S. Armed Forces Members who died in battle or in support of certain military activities; and

WHEREAS: the purpose of Gold Star Family designations or memorials is to honor our Gold Star Families, to preserve the memory of those that have fallen, and remind us that Freedom is not free; and

WHEREAS: Representatives Chippendale, Place, Hawkins and Senator de la Cruz have submitted proposed legislation that, if passed, would designate a section of Chopmist Hill Road, from Route 44 in Chepachet to Route 6 in Scituate, as the “Gold Star Family Highway”; said designation would be in name only and not require address changes for residents,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Council, of the Town of Gloucester, and the Town Clerk hereby supports the passage of House Bill #5131 and Senate Bill #384 and we request all R.I. Senators and Representatives to support this legislation.

George O. Steere, Jr.
Gloucester Town Council President

Jean M. Fecteau, CMC, Town Clerk

Dated this 21st day of March 2019

Seconded by Councilor Forgue.

Discussion: None.

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

MOTION PASSED

VI. Public Hearing

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

1. Proposed Amendment, New Chapter

Part 2: Boards, Commissions, Committees and Positions

Chapter 78. Economic Development Commission

Councilor G. Steere explained that this proposed amendment would create an Economic Development Commission. Councilor G. Steere stated that the first reading was held on February 21st, 2019 at which time the proposed ordinance was explained. Councilor G. Steere further stated that this public hearing was advertised on February 28th, 2019.

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

A. Vin Lepore, speaking on behalf of the Gloucester Business Association Board of Directors, stated that after the first reading last month the GBA have several questions regarding the Ordinance. V. Lepore stated regarding item #4, “Prevent highway strip development from occurring within the Town”, that the wording is an automatic negative for businesses that wish to come into Town. V. Lepore read item #5 as follows: “Prevent the negative effects of economic growth...” and stated that the wording closes the door to businesses. V. Lepore stated that we should be promoting business and he has written alternate wording as follows:

4. Mitigate high traffic retail strip development through planning and zoning processes to achieve a balanced and appropriately scaled commercial development with a balanced tenant mix which includes retail, professional, medical and general business uses.

Discussion: Councilor Henry spoke regarding the development on Route 44 proposed by Adler Brothers, stating that #4, as it is originally written, sounds as if we would be against it. V. Lepore stated that if they went to Zoning, they could read it and say that it clearly prevents it, versus wording that would allow them to go through the process and work to change any aspects that we do not like. Councilor Henry gave the example of the strip mall where Christine’s Cottage and other businesses are located, stating that it is set back and services the community.

V. Lepore read the wording he has drafted with regard to #5:

5. Mitigate the negative effects of commercial development, including environmental degradation and detrimental aesthetic changes to the Town's character, by managing commercial development to encourage appropriate balanced projects as to scale, design, tenant mix, traffic generation, and business type consistent with the Town's overall rural aesthetic and character.

Discussion: Councilor W. Steere stated that we have to think about being consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, which is where the wording came from. Councilor W. Steere stated that he sees V. Lepore's point, but these are just guidelines; the Economic Development Commission does not make any decisions, they work to promote business in Town.

Councilor Forgue agreed that, in a way, it does come off as negative. V. Lepore stated that he does not want to get away from the Comp Plan, but the Zoning Board sometimes takes things verbatim that are put on paper. V. Lepore stated that the goal of this Economic Development Commission is to create business to offset residential taxes.

Councilor G. Steere stated that he agrees concerning #4, stating that the Planning Board is just trying to prevent Gloucester from looking like Smithfield. Regarding #5, Councilor G. Steere stated that we are trying to prevent the negative effects. V. Lepore stated that the negative wording will not promote someone looking to bring business to the Town.

Councilor W. Steere pointed out that this is just their charge, and the Zoning Board is open minded if a business "fits". V. Lepore stated that we should keep it open minded on paper too. Councilor W. Steere stated that we would have to change the Comprehensive Community Plan, or take out the sentence that states consistency with the Comp Plan, which he does not think we should do. Jean Fecteau, Town Clerk, noted that it is copied exactly from the newly adopted Comprehensive Plan.

Councilor Forgue asked if a business was looking to locate in Gloucester, where would they go for direction. Karen Scott, Town Planner, replied that when someone comes in for a commercial development, the Planning Board has to make certain findings, by State law, regarding consistency with the Comp Plan. K. Scott stated that in making that decision, the Planning Board is not looking at one statement, whereas the focus of this commission is specifically Economic Development. K. Scott stated that the Planning Board has a lot more flexibility and she does not believe the intent was "no strip commercial development", but rather development that blends in with the character of the Town.

Councilor Henry commented that growth can be healthy and does not just bring in revenue for tax relief, but with that also comes other growth, such as requiring more Police and infrastructure from the Town. Councilor Henry stated that growth does not necessarily mean that it will just save taxpayer dollars. Councilor Forgue stated that nobody is saying that and we all know that we need some generators in this Town to create some sort of tax revenue instead of "knocking on the residents' door". Councilor Henry commented that there has always been an understanding that

when we look at growth, we do so cautiously.

Councilor W. Steere stated that he feels we are getting hung up on wording because ultimately, what the Commission is going to do will be working with businesses that are looking to come into Town. Councilor W. Steere further stated that when a proposal comes in, it is looked at as how it plays into the whole situation.

Councilor Forgue stated that we already have a strip mall in Town, the Adler property. V. Lepore noted that this development came in when the Economic Development Commission and this document did not exist. Councilor Henry stated that the Comprehensive Community Plan was in effect.

Councilor Forgue asked if the Council could change the wording to make it a little more attractive. William Bernstein, Assistant Town Solicitor, replied that it is within the Council's purview, but the Zoning Board is constricted to the confines of the Zoning Ordinance and he doubts that the Zoning Board will be consulting these guidelines when ruling on any petition that comes before them. W. Bernstein agreed that the language is somewhat negative, but the point is made that this is within the purview of the Comprehensive Community Plan and this is language taken from the Plan. W. Bernstein said that #4 states to prevent strip mall development within the Town, but this is just a guideline; it does not prohibit strip malls. W. Bernstein stated that when somebody comes in, he hopes that in addition to this document, they look at the Planning and Zoning Ordinances to have an overall view of what they can and cannot do.

V. Lepore expressed concern that the Economic Development Commission will not have a say in a proposal; they can offer a nay or aye, but when it moves forward to the Planning Board and Zoning Board, if somebody doesn't like the face of the building, they will say #4 of the Comprehensive Plan says "Prevent strip malls".

Karen Scott, Town Planner, stated that the Economic Development Commission will try to recruit new, different types of businesses, but the Planning Board is not so concerned with the specific use, they are concerned with the form it takes on the land and how it will look when you drive by.

Councilor G. Steere stated that he feels #5 is fine as is, but he sees V. Lepore's point regarding #4 and the GBA's proposed rewording basically says the same thing, without the word "prevent". W. Bernstein commented that he likes the word "mitigate" because "prevent" is strong word. Councilor G. Steere suggested that we rewrite #4 so it does not say "prevent". Councilor W. Steere stated that we are getting way too far ahead of ourselves; this is just a word in our Code of Ordinance. Councilor W. Steere stated that the Commission will talk to people to tell them what they can help them do. Councilor W. Steere stated that he does not want to change our Comprehensive Community Plan to make this consistent.

Jean Fecteau, Town Clerk, asked if the Council would consider adding a footnote stating that the intention is not to prohibit. J. Fecteau pointed out that if we change it, we will not be consistent with the Comp Plan. W. Bernstein stated that we could add the language “consistent with the Comprehensive Plan” to the footnote.

V. Lepore expressed disagreement to Councilor W. Steere’s comments and stated that when he looks to buy a piece of property, he looks at all of these things before he even makes a move on the property. Councilor W. Steere commented that this is an advisory board that will work with people to bring business in, adding that they do not have final decisions on Zoning or Planning. V. Lepore replied that business owners start here. Councilor W. Steere stated that we are getting caught up on one word that is in our Comprehensive Plan and if they speak to us, they will see that it is not a stopping point. Councilor W. Steere stated that the Commission will also be reaching out to people.

Councilor G. Steere stated that he is not criticizing the Comp Plan and is not trying to change it, but perhaps the wording could have been a little different.

V. Lepore stated that if we want to move the Town forward with more appropriate businesses, not so much for the tax relief, but for employment, infrastructure, etc., we need to show good faith. Councilor Henry stated that she hopes the EDC will help to fill the empty buildings in Town rather than building more. V. Lepore commented that the EDC will be able to work with potential businesses before they get to Planning and Zoning, alleviating a lot of red tape, and making the business owner more comfortable. Councilor W. Steere stated that if a business owner is concerned about #4, we can tell them that it is in the Comprehensive Plan but we are flexible to looking at different things.

V. Lepore expressed concern that when a business goes before Zoning and Planning, they will be told it is not consistent with our Comprehensive Plan due to #4. W. Bernstein noted that this is a guideline and a totally different approach. W. Bernstein explained that the EDC would encourage businesses coming in and if it is not properly zoned, they would go to the Zoning Board for relief.

Councilor Forgue stated that the EDC is something that can really help us here in Town. Councilor Forgue stated that he has visited little towns to see how they are recreating a town that is falling apart. Councilor Forgue gave the example of Chester, CT, which was a ghost town eight (8) years ago, but with the help of their Economic Development Committee, it is now a unique town that is busy with shops and restaurants. Councilor Forgue stated that he feels that we have the facilities to do that also. Councilor Forgue stated that he is tired of seeing our town used as a threshold to get to Putnam, CT.

Councilor G. Steere asked W. Bernstein if we could add a footnote to #4, such as “this item is not intended to prohibit responsible strip development, but rather to help mitigate high traffic sales through the planning and zoning process”. W. Bernstein replied that the Council could also reiterate

“consistent with the Comprehensive Plan” at the end. W. Bernstein stated that the Motion to Approve would have to be amended to include the footnote, seconded and voted on. Councilor G. Steere stated that #5 could be left as is.

Councilor Henry thanked V. Lepore for bringing forward these ideas and for the time the GBA spent reviewing the Ordinance.

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

Discussion: None.

MOTION was made by Councilor Forgue to ADOPT the proposed amendment to the Gloucester Code of Ordinance, Part 2: Boards, Commissions, Committees and Positions; Chapter 78. Economic Development Commission, effective upon passage, **with the following footnote: #4** not to be intended to prohibit responsible development but to help mitigate high traffic retail strip development through planning and zoning processes to achieve a balanced and appropriately scaled commercial development with a balanced tenant mix which includes retail, professional, medical and general business uses, and is consistent with the Comp Plan; seconded by Councilor W. Steere.

Discussion: Councilor Henry asked about the two (2) ad-hoc members who do not have to be Gloucester residents. Councilor Henry inquired if the former EDC had this in their membership. Councilor Forgue replied in the negative but explained that a representative from Navigant Bank could serve to help potential businesses with advice on funding. Councilor Forgue stated that the other ad-hoc member could be somebody who is successful in another town and can bring forth ideas to the committee. J. Fecteau added that the thought behind the ad-hoc members is that some of the business owners in Town may not be Gloucester residents, so this would afford them the opportunity to be part of this board.

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

MOTION PASSED

VII. Consent Items - Discussion and/or Action

- A. Approval of Town Council regular meeting minutes of March 7, 2019
- B. Tax Assessor’s Additions & Abatements, February 2019
- C. Abatement of Tax Year 2008 Receivables & Fees
- D. Finance Director’s Report, February 2019

MOTION was made by Councilor Henry to APPROVE the Town Council regular meeting minutes of March 7, 2019; to APPROVE the ABATEMENTS to the 2018 Tax Roll in the amount of

\$1,741.55, (No ADDITIONS); to APPROVE the ABATEMENT of the 2008 Receivable Tax Roll in the amount of \$27,430.64 and Tax Sales Fees from 2008 in the amount of \$910.50; and to ACCEPT the Finance Director's Monthly Report for February 2019; seconded by Councilor W. Steere.

Discussion: None.

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

MOTION PASSED

VIII. Unfinished Business

A. Boards and Commissions

1. Recreation Commission - Discussion and/or Action

a. Appointment: One two year term to expire 1/2021

MOTION was made by Councilor Henry to TABLE the appointment to the Recreation Commission for a two year term to expire 1/2012; seconded by Councilor Forgue.

Discussion: Councilor Henry stated that the Recreation Commission is meeting next week at which time they will come forward with a recommendation.

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

MOTION PASSED

IX. New Business

A. Budget - FY 2019/2020: Presented to Council by Budget Board and/or Finance Director - Discussion and/or Action

David Steere, Budget Board chair, stated that he has given the Council two (2) documents; the recommended Budget for FY 2019-2020 and a letter from the Budget Board outlining what is in the Budget. D. Steere stated that total expenditures are \$29,926,161 and the Budget reflects the use of \$315,000 from Unassigned Fund Balance, as outlined on Page 1 under Special Appropriations.

D. Steere stated that Municipal Expenses have not changed significantly since the Budget Board met with the Town Council. Regarding wages, salaries and benefits, D. Steere stated that non-union employees have been included in the appropriate departments. D. Steere stated that you can find the Union raises, salaries and benefits under Other Operational on page 13, labeled "Negotiations". D. Steere noted that the recommended wages for non-union employees are based on the classification and compensation salary range study which was accepted by the Town Council.

D. Steere mentioned a change on page 2 which was brought forth by the Finance Director regarding Motor Vehicle Tax Revenue. D. Steere stated that this was always included in “amount to be raised by taxes”, but the way the State is going now, we do not get 4% of the motor vehicle reimbursement. D. Steere stated that moving it out makes the amount to be raised by taxes that much clearer and you know it will come from residential, commercial and tangible. D. Steere stated his opinion that this is a good format. D. Steere noted that the Motor Vehicle figure will be a changing number, but he does not know if it will be better or worse.

Councilor Henry, as liaison to the Budget Board, expressed thanks to D. Steere and his committee for the time they put in to present this Budget to the Town Council. Councilor Henry also commented that it was unfortunate at the Regional School Committee meeting that when D. Steere stood up to ask some very good questions the chair of the Regional School Committee (from Foster) commented that it is too bad he did not take the time to attend any of their workshops or meetings. Councilor Henry stated that it was totally inappropriate.

Councilor G. Steere stated that the Council will meet on Monday and asked the Council to go over the Budget to tweak it, if necessary, before the Public Hearing scheduled for April 23rd.

B. Board of Contracts & Purchases

1. Award Bid: RFP #2019-02 - Reappraisal & Revaluation - Discussion and/or Action

Councilor G. Steere read the following request from the Finance Director:

To: Honorable Town Council Members
From: Diane L. Brennan, Finance/HR Director
Memo: Award of 2019 Gloucester Revaluation
Date: March 21, 2019

The Town of Gloucester advertised for **RFP 2019-02 Gloucester Revaluation 2019** in the Valley Breeze on the February 13, 2019. The bid specifications were also available on the town website. Two bids were opened on Friday March 1, 2019 with both vendors in attendance. The terms of each vendor is as listed:

Vision Solutions

Revaluation	\$189,500	
Option 2	\$ 500	(hardware, printers, and software
Option 3	\$20,500	Tangible Property
Deduct	(\$14,000)	1st class mail in place of certified mail
Deduct	(\$ 8,000)	on-site inspections

Northeast Revaluation Group

Revaluation	\$168,000	
Deduct	(\$ 8,000)	sticky note in place of certified mail
Option 3	\$ 16,000	Tangible Property

The request for proposal stipulated the successful vendor provide a certified general appraiser. Vision Solutions listed a certified general appraiser in their proposal, Northeast Revaluation did not.

There were discussions with both vendors to address any IT concerns for either bid. Ed Juairé and Matt Floor found there were no concerns with either vendor.

The recommended system will be cloud based and provide the assessor and the residents with a secure product.

The board of Contracts and Purchases made a recommendation on March 21, 2019 to award the proposal to **Vision Government Solutions** of Hudson, MA for the amount of **\$189,500** for the revaluation and **\$20,500** for the tangible property. **Vision** has met all the specifications.

(end of memo)

Discussion: Councilor W. Steere stated that he hopes that Vision takes into account customer service because it has been lacking in the past. Councilor G. Steere agreed. Councilor W. Steere stated that they are working for us, therefore, they are working for the residents. Councilor G. Steere asked if anyone from Vision is present tonight.

Steve Ferreira, District Manager for Vision and resident of Scituate, RI, asked Councilor W. Steere what is his concern. Councilor W. Steere replied that some of our residents have voiced concerns regarding the way they were treated by representatives of Vision when they questioned their valuations. Councilor W. Steere expressed hope that if there are any issues, they are addressed immediately because, if not, the Council will address it with the company. S. Ferreira stated that they will give everyone the respect they deserve and commented that their goal is to always provide courteous and quality product. S. Ferreira further stated that if there are issues, they ask that they be brought forward immediately, and they will take care of them post haste. S. Ferreira stated that since this will be a full revaluation, there will be an on-site supervisor managing the crew and reporting to the Assessor on a daily basis. S. Ferreira stated that there will also be a Project Manager, Steve Burke, assigned to do the day to day appraisal work.

Councilor G. Steere stated that the last time several residents called to make an appointment and were told that there were no time slots left. Councilor G. Steere stated that the Council stepped in and arranged for Vision to be here for another week. Councilor G. Steere stated that this will not happen this time; people want to be heard and the company must accommodate them. S. Ferreira stated that they put a time period to call because when values are being finalized the Council is working on the Budget and needs to have that information. S. Ferreira noted that they extend it a few days to allow people to come in if they miss the initial time period.

Councilor W. Steere asked if the field representatives have documentation with them to say who they are. S. Ferreira replied that they have a photo ID badge and wear a vest which identifies them as a worker. S. Ferreira added that they are registered with the Police Department regarding the make and model of their vehicles. S. Ferreira stated that they also carry a letter of identification from the Assessor's Office. Councilor G. Steere asked if the vehicles are marked. S. Ferreira replied in the affirmative, stating that they have magnets on the side of the vehicle that say "Assessor's Office".

Councilor Henry stated that she does not recall seeing this expense anywhere in our Budget. Diane Brennan, Finance Director, replied that we put money away every year for this and have about \$219,000 set aside for revaluation.

MOTION was made by Councilor Forgue to AWARD RFP #2019-02 Reappraisal & Revaluation to Vision Government Solutions for the bid award price of **\$189,500** for the 2019 revaluation and **\$20,500** for the tangible property; seconded by Councilor W. Steere.

Discussion: None.

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

MOTION PASSED

C. Request to Pursue Reallocation of CDBG program income to fund a Master Plan for Chepachet Village - Discussion and/or Action

Karen Scott, Town Planner, asked if the Council would be interested in taking some of the Town's \$300,000 in program income and reallocating it to the revitalizing efforts we are working on for Chepachet Village. K. Scott explained that the reason we have this \$300,000 is that when we gave out loans through our home improvement program, as they get repaid that money comes back to us and becomes program income. K. Scott stated that it can be invested back in the same program or it can be reallocated for other eligible program expenses with the approval of the Office of Housing and Community Development. K. Scott noted that the fund has been growing as people have been repaying their loans and no new loans have been given for the past several years.

K. Scott stated that we can use some of this program income if we apply to the Office of Housing and Community Development to reallocate a portion of it, under \$50,000, and if the Council is interested, she would be happy to put together an RFP.

Councilor Henry asked if this could be used on property that is falling down and the owners are struggling to do the necessary repairs. K. Scott replied that the idea is to look at the village property by property, to identify issues such as whether it is residential, commercial or mixed use, is it blighted, foreclosed or abandoned, or does it have a failing septic system. K. Scott stated that there are different programs that come through Rhode Island Housing which would fund different aspects.

Councilor Henry commented that this study would assist and work in tandem with the EDC. K. Scott agreed.

K. Scott stated that we have \$300,000 in program income and once we identify some properties, there may be some in downtown Chepachet that would income qualify for this funding.

Councilor Henry asked if it could also be used for properties outside of the village. K. Scott replied that CDBG is limited to income qualified areas and there are individual properties outside the village could certainly qualify.

Councilor W. Steere stated that we did a study of the village a long time ago and the difference between that one and this one is it will be much more focused and, more importantly, we have funding to do some things whereas in the past there wasn't funding to implement anything. Councilor W. Steere stated his opinion that it is a good idea.

Councilor Fogue thanked K. Scott for her hard work and stated that whatever tools the Council can give her to make her job easier would be a great investment in our Town. Councilor Fogue commented that it is a "breath of fresh air" to have somebody in our Planning Department who is excited about doing something in Town.

Councilor G. Steere asked K. Scott if she is looking for the Council to authorize her to request the use of some of this money to fund the creation of a master plan and questioned if we need to get bids first. K. Scott replied that the first step is to reach out to the Office of Housing and Community Development to see if we can allocate some of our CDBG money for this purpose. K. Scott stated that if they say yes, she will come back to the Council with an RFP, get the bids back and then go back to the Office of Housing with an actual dollar amount. K. Scott stated that in the last 20 years, Chepachet has been studied a lot, and many things have gotten implemented, but this is a 5-year implementation and investment plan to increase tourism, improve recreational resources, strengthen small businesses, improve building infrastructure, preserve historic resources, implement creative use of property, and identify opportunities for scattered site affordable housing development. K. Scott stated that she wants to focus on those things, property by property.

The Council members thanked K. Scott for her efforts. Councilor W. Steere asked if this authorization would give K. Scott what she needs to move forward. Councilor G. Steere stated that she will inquire and if it is okay, we will have to get bids. K. Scott concurred, stating that she will write a general RFP and ask if we can reallocate some of the \$300,000 to that specific thing, and if they say yes, she will come back to the Council with the RFP.

MOTION was made by Councilor Henry to AUTHORIZE Karen Scott, Town Planner, to request from the R.I. Office of Housing & Community Development the use of Gloucester's CDBG program income to fund the creation of a master plan for the development of Chepachet Village;

seconded by Councilor Forgue.

Discussion: None.

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

MOTION PASSED

- D. Statement of Support and Permission to Apply: Roger Williams University Community Partnerships Center for a Master Plan of Gloucester Memorial Park- Discussion and/or Action

Councilor G. Steere stated that this program connects faculty and students with communities to give hands-on, experiential learning. Councilor G. Steere noted that if the project is selected, it would be of no cost to the Town.

Discussion: Karen Scott, Town Planner, stated that there has been discussion with regard to making big investments at Gloucester Memorial Park and she and the Recreation Director have talked about setting money aside for the Spring 2020 release of recreation grants from DEM. K. Scott explained that this specific program would partner university students and faculty to do an actual master plan to show where everything will go, such as playground equipment, parking area and landscaping. K. Scott stated that she spoke to the program director at Roger Williams who was very excited about it and feels that there are several Fall classes that would be a good fit for the project.

Councilor Henry stated that this is exciting because last year, the Recreation Director was looking to hire an engineering company to do this, which would cost a lot of money.

Councilor W. Steere stated that students can be idealistic and not necessarily pragmatic about their ideas. Councilor W. Steere gave an example of a public school in Boston that has a playground which borders the projects. Councilor W. Steere stated that there were ideas proposed that would not work because of the area. Councilor W. Steere stated that it is a fantastic idea to get students involved, as long as they understand what we are looking for. K. Scott stated that we would work closely with them and keep them grounded. Councilor Henry stated that we also want to include the Director of the Senior Center because we would like to include things like senior walking paths.

Mark Rechter, of 1218 Putnam Pike and abutter to Gloucester Memorial Park, stated that as nice as the park is, it is very under-used. M. Rechter stated that he welcomes anything that would increase usage because we paid a lot of money to put it in. M. Rechter stated that he want to make sure that there is communication with the abutters to allow them to give input concerning Gloucester Memorial Park.

MOTION was made by Councilor Forgue to AUTHORIZE Karen Scott, Town Planner, to apply to

the Roger Williams University Community Partnerships Center for assistance creating a Master Plan for Gloucester Memorial Park to be considered when future improvements are planned; seconded by Councilor W. Steere.

Discussion: None.

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

MOTION PASSED

E. Gloucester Zipcodes - Discussion and/or Action

Discussion: Mark Rechter, of 1218 Putnam Pike, stated that whenever the high school and the middle school are advertised or on the news it is referred to as “North Scituate” with no recognition of the town of Gloucester or that they are Foster-Glocester students. M. Rechter expressed concern, especially with all the good things that happen at the high school, like the Moving Wall which was advertised in the paper and on TV as being in North Scituate. M. Rechter stated that it is time for the zip codes to be changed.

M. Rechter stated that he is a 40-year retiree of the Postal Service and has seen many locations changed over the years. M. Rechter stated that if you look up companies in Google, including Councilor Forgue’s, Knight’s Farm, Elwood Orchards and Holiday Acres, they are listed as North Scituate. M. Rechter further stated that Steere’s Marine is listed as Greenville because they have the zip code of 02828. M. Rechter stated that he has seen different towns and cities become completely incorporated with one (1) zip code or have a new zip code added.

M. Rechter referred to a government publication from 2011 regarding the needs of communities that have expanded and the zip codes no longer make sense. M. Rechter stated that people say you can put “Gloucester” instead of “North Scituate”, but in the age where people use GPS, it goes by the zip code.

M. Rechter stated he has talked to a few people from Snake Hill Road who are in favor of this because there is confusion all the time. Regarding West Greenville Road, M. Rechter stated that one side is Gloucester and the other side is Smithfield. M. Rechter stated that there is a process and it can be done. M. Rechter stated that he would like to see a new zip code for Gloucester, Rhode Island for the specific area that is covered by 02828 and 02857.

Councilor G. Steere stated that he understands what M. Rechter is saying, but he has done some polling of his own and people who live in that area do not want to change their address with everybody they do business with. M. Rechter stated that he still thinks there should be a public hearing. M. Rechter commented that if they were able to divide Cranston and form a new zip code for Western Cranston before computers, they could do it very readily now. M. Rechter stated that

the Economic Development Commission should not have to explain to people that the North Scituate zip code covers that part of Gloucester.

Councilor G. Steere again stated that people don't want to go to the Registry, bank, insurance company, etc. to change their address. M. Rechter stated that he does not think they would have to do that in this age because it is instantaneous with the Postal Service. Councilor G. Steere stated that he does not believe it and everybody he has talked to wants no part of it.

M. Rechter stated that his main concern at first was the schools and what they have to go through to identify where they are. Councilor G. Steere stated that he totally understands what he is saying.

Councilor Forgue stated that he understands what M. Rechter is saying regarding the confusion it causes, and it is sad when a Gloucester school does something and Scituate gets the credit for it. Councilor Forgue stated that he also understands that people don't want to change. Councilor Forgue stated that he appreciates the work M. Rechter put into this matter.

Jean Fecteau, Town Clerk, stated that the first step would be the Council would request the change and state all the reasons why, then the Postal Service would review it, and if they find it reasonable, a formal survey would be conducted of all customers who would be affected.

MOTION was made by Councilor Forgue that the Town Council send a Council member, (Councilor Henry), to the School Department to ask if they would be interested in having a change of zip code address for the High School and Middle School; seconded by Councilor W. Steere.

Discussion: None.

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

MOTION PASSED

- F. Personnel
 - 1. Police Department - Discussion and/or Action
 - a. Resignation - Police Dispatcher

Councilor G. Steere read the following request from Joseph DelPrete, Chief of Police:

TO: The Honorable Town Council
FROM: Joseph DelPrete, Chief of Police
DATE: March 20 2019
RE: Personnel-Resignation

Please accept the resignation of full time dispatcher Jacqueline M. Casale effective Wednesday March 20, 2019. Letter of resignation from Jacqueline M. Casale accompanies this memorandum (end of memo)

Discussion:

MOTION was made by Councilor W. Steere to ACCEPT the resignation of full time Police Dispatcher Jacqueline M. Casale, effective March 20, 2019; seconded by Councilor Henry.

Discussion: Chief DelPrete stated that he plans to fill this position quickly, either from within or he will advertise the position.

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

NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

X. Town Council Correspondence and/or Discussion

- A. Councilor G. Steere stated that a letter was received from DEM regarding a project priority list request of projects for the State Fiscal Year 2020.
- B. Councilor G. Steere stated that the Council received a letter from DOT regarding Bridges #100 and #184, both located on Putnam Pike, one over the Chepachet River and the other over Brandy Brook. Councilor G. Steere stated that the projects are scheduled to go out to bid this June. G. Treml, Director of Public Works, spoke from his seat and was inaudible on the recording.
- C. Councilor G. Steere stated that the Council received the March newsletter from the Senior Center.
- D. Councilor G. Steere stated that a letter was received from some new residents who did not receive an original tax bill in the mail and the first notice they received was a \$9.86 penalty for late payment. Councilor G. Steere stated they received their fire tax bill and paid that. Councilor G. Steere stated that they are requesting that the charge be abated from their bill.

XI. Department Head Reports/Discussion

- A. Bob Shields, Recreation Director, stated that he has had discussion with Tom Marcello from the high school and Gloucester Little League regarding the state of some of our ball fields. B. Shields stated that they are looking for fields for their middle school teams to play on and it has been determined that they can use Leja

Field, however there is concern that excessive use will put it behind in terms of growing grass on the infield. B. Shields stated that Mr. Marcello has requested the use of Winsor Field as an alternative, however that field is in bad shape. B. Shields proposed that some of his funds remaining from the current year be used for repairs at Winsor Park, stating that this would not only benefit us, but also the middle school and the men's softball league.

Councilor W. Steere stated that the Little League Seniors used the high school field at one point and he asked if they were charged for that. B. Shields replied that he is not certain. Councilor W. Steere asked if it would be out of bounds to ask for some type of fee from the schools since we have to do all this work to the field. B. Shields replied that he has discussed with Mr. Marcello and the person who is in charge of the men's softball league, looking for assistance in doing the work rather than putting this onto DPW's shoulders.

Councilor W. Steere expressed concern that in the past, when the middle school has used Leja Field, they had access to the bathroom facilities and left them a disaster. B. Shields stated that he and Gary Treml, Director of Public Works, have discussed this and decided to put porta-johns there and not provide access to the bathroom facilities or the sheds. Councilor W. Steere commented that they were using it as a place to change, which is not appropriate. Councilor G. Steere stated that they also went into the Senior Center last year. Councilor W. Steere stated that we would have to have clear agreements with everybody. B. Shields stated that he will put together a draft of conditions regarding the usage of these fields, based on the Council's concerns. B. Shields commented that this will not only help the middle school and Gloucester's youth, but will benefit the Town as well, and seems like a win-win situation. B. Shields noted that his department was financially prudent this past summer with some of the line items.

Councilor W. Steere stated that the Gloucester Little League is planning to do a lot of work on Leja and asked if the middle school comes in and "beats it up", what will be the impact. B. Shields replied that the Little League and the middle school program are in alignment right now and Mike Gray, from the Little League, plans to do some improvements this weekend to have the field ready for the middle school. Councilor W. Steere stated that whenever somebody uses the fields at the Region, there are certain rules to follow and suggested that we use the same rules.

Councilor G. Steere made the suggestion that if we are going to put porta-johns there, to consider asking for handicap-accessible ones because they are large enough for the players to change their clothes. Councilor Henry asked who is paying for the porta-johns. B. Shields replied that it would come out of his budget because it is something that we already have there, since the bathrooms are only unlocked for special events, such as the 4th of July. Councilor W. Steere commented that when he

played sports for Ponaganset, they were already dressed for baseball when they left the school, so there shouldn't be a need for them to change.

Councilor W. Steere asked if their use of the field would preclude anybody else from using the field. B. Shields replied that as far as he knows, there isn't anybody else seeking to use it.

- B. Councilor Forgue asked Gary Treml, Director of Public Works, about a situation on Route 44, near the Pavilion, where it always ices up when it rains and the sidewalk cannot be used. Councilor Forgue stated that there is a cut in the curb and a drain allowing water to drain onto 44. Councilor Forgue expressed concern that this is dangerous and asked G. Treml if there is something that could be done.

G. Treml replied that he cannot do anything because it is a State road and the State put the hole in the curb to address the water that comes out of the dentist's office. G. Treml stated that an alternative would be to run the pipe across the parking lot and dump the water behind the trees. Councilor Forgue asked who can facilitate this. G. Treml replied "the owner".

Councilor G. Steere stated that we have had discussions with DOT regarding this matter. Councilor Forgue stated that we should do something about it because it is dangerous. Jean Fecteau, Town Clerk, stated that we received a copy of the letter that they sent to the homeowner telling him he had to address the problem. J. Fecteau stated that it was recommended to the homeowner that he ask the Town if the water could be pumped onto our property. J. Fecteau stated that she has the name of a contact person. Councilor Forgue stated that he would be more than happy to facilitate that.

- C. Gerald Mosca, EMA Director, stated that Emergency Management grant season is approaching and he must have all applications in by July. G. Mosca explained that these are grants for projects or equipment that would make our Town better prepared in an emergency. G. Mosca stated that if the Council or department heads can think of anything, they should submit their ideas to him and he can see if they qualify.

Councilor W. Steere asked if improvements to public safety facilities would fall into that category. G. Mosca explained that the grants cannot be used to build but can be used to put equipment in a building. G. Mosca stated that we need a new antenna tower because ours is unsafe.

Councilor G. Steere asked G. Mosca if he knows of any government surplus dump

trucks because G. Treml needs one and it did not get into the Capital Budget. G. Mosca and Joseph DelPrete spoke of a program that may or not be available, but were inaudible on the recording. Councilor G. Steere asked they keep this request in mind.

XII. Bds. and Commissions Reports/ Discussion

None.

XIII. Open Forum

None.

XIV. MOTION was made by Councilor W. Steere to Seek to Convene to Executive Session Pursuant to:

A. R.I.G.L. 42-46-5 (a)(4) Investigative Proceedings regarding Allegations of Civil Misconduct - Discussion and/or Action

B. R.I.G.L. 42-46-5 (a)(2) Collective Bargaining - Discussion and/or Action

seconded by Councilor Henry.

Discussion: None.

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

NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

XV. Reconvene Open Session

Disclosure of votes taken or # of votes taken in Executive

MOTION was made by Councilor W. Steere to SEAL the minutes of Closed Executive Session pursuant to R.I.G.L. 42-46-7.c. and to disclose that one (1) vote was taken in Executive session ; seconded by Councilor Forgue.

Discussion: None.

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

NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

XVI. MOTION to Adjourn

MOTION was made by Councilor W. Steere to ADJOURN at 10:20 p.m.; seconded by Councilor

Henry.

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

NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED