

At a meeting of the Town Council holden in and for the Town of Gloucester on July 20, 2023

I. Call to Order

The meeting was Called to Order at 7:30 P.M. by Councilor W. Worthy, Town Council President.

II. Roll Call

Members present: Cheryl A. Greathouse; Walter M. O. Steere, III; Jonathan E. Burlingame; Stephen W. Arnold, Vice President; William A. Worthy, Jr., President

Also Present: Jean Fecteau, Town Clerk; David Igliazzi, Town Solicitor ; Christine Mathieu, Deputy Town Clerk; Robert Shields, Recreation Director; Jane Steere, Tax Collector; Gary Trembl, Director Public Works; Karen Scott, Town Planner; Chief Joseph Delprete; John Luszcz, Human Services Director; and Melissa Bouvier, Senior Center Director

III. Pledge of Allegiance

All stood for the Pledge of Allegiance

IV. Open Forum - For Agenda Items

Councilor W. Worthy asked if anyone wished to speak on an agenda item to step to the microphone and state your name when called on.

W. Steere, resident, stated that he wanted to speak to the matters of restoring funds to the EDC and the town branding project. W. Steere stated that the funds are not in the budget so he does not know where the money will come from. W. Steere stated that the money for the branding could come from ARPA funds but he feels a better use could be made of the funds.

W. Steere also stated he had no confidence in the current budget and that the final rate, being that high, was never discussed at public hearing.

V. Public Hearings-Discussion and/or Action

A. **CONTINUATION from Hearing Opened on May 18, 2023, continued to June 1st, 2023**

1. Chapter 350-VII Special Regulations, Section 58.1 Cannabis, Addition of : Cannabis Retail Sales- Discussion and/or action

Councilor W. Worthy stated that this Public Hearing was opened on May 18, 2023; continued to June 1st, to June 15th, and now this evening, July 20th, 2023.

Discussion:

D. Igliazzi, Town Solicitor, stated that if any new information had been received that it should be read into the record. Councilor W. Worthy stated that Council had received a letter from the owner of The Learning Place:

July 20, 2023

Dear Gloucester Town Council and Community Members –

I am writing this letter to be read at the public hearing scheduled for July 20, 2023.

I am the Owner of The Learning Place Preschool located at 19-21 Terry Lane in Chepachet. My business is licensed by the Rhode Island Department of Human Services as a school for children ages three to five. The school is licensed to service 40 students a day.

I would like to make a note in regards to the RI State guideline referring to cannabis sales in the area of K-12 schools. The Learning Place Preschool, LLC does service kindergarten age students. We currently have 35 children (nearly 50% of our capacity) enrolled that are five years old. We also have 16 five-year-old students and 7 six-year-old students attending our summer program. All of these students are age eligible for Kindergarten and First Grade. Our school license does allow us to have a full day, Rhode Island Department of Education approved, Kindergarten program. Although we are not currently offering a full day kindergarten, we have in the past and could in the future.

I have been the sole owner and operator of the Learning Place Preschool for 25 years. During this time, I have worked hard to provide a safe learning environment for the families in our community. I feel that having cannabis retail sales in close proximity to The Learning Place Preschool would not be in the best interest of the children and families in our community.

Thanks for hearing my concerns.

Bethany Brush Zimnoch
Bethany Brush Zimnoch
Owner and Director
The Learning Place Preschool
(End of memo)

D. Igliazzi stated that there was a new draft for the Council to consider. D. Igliazzi stated that there are two issues the Council is discussing. D. Igliazzi described the first issue as whether the Council should modify the proposed zones as to distance . D. Igliazzi described the second issue as whether the Council should follow the state law in its strictest sense or expand upon it.

D. Igliazzi explained that draft # 3 is the same one the Council discussed on June 1st when he was present. D. Igliazzi explained that draft # 4 provides for two changes for Council to consider. D. Igliazzi stated that one of the changes is found in section 3. b. 1 .a. where the state law is followed in its strictest sense as to a cannabis retail store being 500 feet from a pre existing public or private school in kindergarten through grade 12. D. Igliazzi stated that the second change is found in section 4 where the Council can consider giving the Zoning Board additional authority to impose further restrictions beyond those listed. D. Igliazzi described the effect of the two drafts using the town maps in the proposed zones.

D. Igliazzi also explained the particular impact in draft 3 if parks and preschools are included in the proposed ordinance. D. Igliazzi explained the particular impact of draft 4 using the state law language as written but giving the zoning board additional power to be more restrictive, on a case by case basis if someone were to apply for permission for cannabis retail sales by special use permit . D. Igliazzi stated that the difference between draft 3 and draft 4 in terms of location is that draft 3 shows a decrease in the proposed areas due to the inclusion of parks and preschools.

J. Fecteau, Town Clerk, gave several examples of possible restrictions that the Zoning Board might consider.

Councilor S. Arnold stated that he does not like giving all power back to the state and he wants to do what is right for the town. Councilor S. Arnold stated that draft 3 is restrictive and the voters did approve cannabis. Councilor S. Arnold stated that draft 4 gives people more opportunity to apply for a license and still follows the law. Councilor S. Arnold stated his biggest hangup is not calling the The Learning Place a school; they state they have been licensed for kindergarten ; and, that they have been in business in town for 25 years.

Councilor J. Burlingame suggested that draft 4 does give the Zoning Board authority to impose further restrictions of hours so the business could be open during non school hours. D. Iglizzi explained that the additional authority would give the Zoning Board the ability to consider imposing further restrictions. D. Iglizzi also stated that a business can't be denied the ability to operate during regular business hours.

Councilor C. Greathouse stated she was in favor of following the state guidelines and that it is a retail store so customers would be coming and going and that the town does have cannabis use guidelines in place.

Councilor J. Burlingame stated he was in favor of the state guidelines with extra authority for the Zoning Board.

J. Fecteau stated that several communities have passed ordinances regarding cannabis. J. Fecteau gave the examples of Burrillville who followed the state language and Charlestown who enacted a 1000 foot distance from all the same entities as in the proposed draft 3 as well as others. D. Iglizzi stated that draft 4 does give an opportunity for Council to consider .

Councilor W. Steere stated he is in favor of draft 4 but with the modification of adding preschools as he feels it is very important to protect children. Councilor W. Steere asked for the distance of schools and liquor stores. D. Iglizzi stated that it was a 500 foot distance requirement. D. Iglizzi stated, for information purposes only, that there have been many instances where the 500 foot liquor requirement is exempted by the General Assembly upon a case by case basis. Councilor W. Worthy asked if the Council were to choose draft 4 if the would additional amendments would be included. D. Iglizzi stated that any additional amendments should be clear.

Councilor S. Arnold stated that draft 4 is less limited , and speaks to what the voters wanted but he still struggles with the preschool versus a kindergarten. D. Iglizzi emphasized that the state law refers to pre existing schools and not ones to be established after a license application.

Councilor W. Worthy asked if there was anyone else who wished to speak.

1. W. Reichert, resident, stated his opinion that it seems we are trying to “shoe horn” in a property that probably shouldn't be used. Mr. Reichert stated it is not a “good look” as everyone knows the Republican Party holds all its events there (Pinewood Pub). Mr. Reichert stated the establishment is a kindergarten and it is not a “good look”.
2. M. Verrier, resident, stated it is a school, children are there. Mr. Verrier stated he would not

bring his children there. Mr. Verrier stated that he is also concerned that a retail store is being shoe horned in this location and that a cannabis store should not be that close to a school.

Councilor J. Burlingame suggested adding nursery school to the draft 4. Councilor S. Arnold suggested that the requirement of the nursery school being registered with the Department of Education. Councilors J. Burlingame and C. Greathouse stated they were now in favor of draft 4 with the addition of preschools.

Councilor W. Worthy DECLARED the Public Hearing CLOSED.

MOTION was made by Councilor S. Arnold to ADOPT the amendment to the Gloucester Code of Ordinance, Chapter 350-VII Special Regulations, Section 58.1 Cannabis, Addition of Cannabis Retail Sales as presented for public hearing with amendments, as proposed during hearing, to Section 3.b.1.a.; Section 4.a.; the addition of Section 4.g. and including any “preschool registered with the Rhode Island Department of Education”; seconded by Councilor C. Greathouse

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- C. Greathouse , J. Burlingame, W. Steere, S. Arnold , W. Worthy
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

2. Chapter 350 Zoning Attachment 1- Table of Use Regulations . Addition of: Cannabis land use- by Special permit in zone B 2 (highway commercial) and I (Industrial)- Discussion and/or action

Councilor W. Worthy stated that this proposal has also been continued each time the consideration for Section 58.1 Cannabis is tabled.

J. Fecteau stated that this adds the use to the Table of Use Regulations in the particular zones. D. Igliazzi stated that the particular zones are B2 and I and that it is by Special Use Permit.

Councilor W. Worthy stated that when a proposal for retail sales of cannabis is passed relative to Zones permitted: the Table of Use Regulations chart could be amended to reflect that change.

Discussion:

Councilor W. Worthy stated that the public hearing is still open and would anyone like to speak.

1. W. Reichert stated that he has seen a lot of people hanging around cannabis stores and reselling to others in the parking lot so it is not just customers going and coming.

Councilor W. Worthy DECLARED the PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED.

MOTION was made by Councilor S. Arnold to ADOPT the amendment to the Gloucester Code of Ordinance, Chapter 350 Zoning Attachment 1 - Table of Use Regulations. Addition of: Cannabis-Retail Sales by Special Use Permit in B2 (Highway Commercial Zone) and I (Industrial Zone); effective upon passage; seconded by Councilor C. Greathouse

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- C. Greathouse , J. Burlingame, W. Steere, S. Arnold , W. Worthy
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

B. Mulberry Vineyards - Special Event Permit - pursuant to Code of Ordinance, Chapter 174

Request for additional type of event in 2023 - Discussion and/or Action

Councilor W. Worthy stated that this Public Hearing was advertised in the Valley Breeze Observer on July 6, 2023.

Councilor W. Worthy stated that Mulberry Vineyards is requesting a Special Event License for a wedding reception on August 5th from 4:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., with DJ.

Councilor W. Worthy DECLARED the Public Hearing OPEN. Councilor W. Worthy asked if anyone wished to speak step to the microphone and state you name for the record.

Discussion:

1. Councilor W. Worthy read a letter Council received from K. Lavoie, resident:

7/18,2023

Glocester Town Council

At the town council meeting on December 15th, 2022, after lengthy discussion and debate which included many concerns and comments from the community, mostly neighbors who are directly impacted by events that take place at mulberry winery, I hesitate to call it a vineyard, the town council voted 3-2 in favor of granting 19 special events, 8 farmers markets 3 festivals with no music and 8 live music events from 1-4. specifically left out of this approval were weddings and music/DJs after 4pm and any evening or nighttime events. The fact that they are coming back to apply for what was specifically denied in their original application just six months ago shows total disregard and disrespect for the council decision and their neighbors

We have recently been down this same road, they are asking to have a wedding, probably already booked without having the necessary permits in place then pulling on the heart strings and relying on the compassion of the town council and the community not to ruin a bride's day. The guilt and responsibility for that falls squarely on their shoulders, no one else.

I would strongly suggest and encourage the council to stand by the decision already made and voted on to allow 19 special events for 2023 which DO NOT include weddings, music / DJs after 4pm and evening/ nighttime events

Thank you for your consideration,

Kevin LaVoie
59 pound road, Chepachet
(End of memo)

2. D. Colantonio, resident, asked the Council to stand by what they have previously granted and to deny this application.
3. D. Wright, owner/ operator Mulberry Vineyard, stated that he was asked by a local couple to have their wedding at the Vineyard and he told them he would have to ask the Council for approval as weddings were not permitted. D. Wright stated that he is asking for a special event license to have a wedding reception for 50 people . D. Wright stated that he had a wedding at the property that was similar and there were no problems. D. Wright stated that there would be a disc jockey; that the reception would be set back on the property and the speakers would face the woods. D. Wright stated that if there is a complaint and the police are called then he will do what is needed. D. Wright stated that this wedding would be for nice people who live in town and he would like the Council to approve.
4. R. Rogers, Country Meadow Lane, stated that a rule was made and we have been through this before and now it is the same situation. R. Rogers stated he feels this situation is going to keep happening. R. Rogers stated that the Council approved one wedding as it was a week away and just because there were no issues doesn't mean that the owner can continue to ask for these events. R. Rogers stated that the Council made a rule for no events after 4:00 p.m. so that is what should be followed.
5. D. Wright stated that he spoke with R. Rogers after the last wedding and there was no noise complaint.
6. H. Winstanley, resident, stated that there was no noise complaint after the last wedding because the owner of Mulberry was on his best behavior. H. Winstanley stated his concerns about the value of the homes in the area because he feels this is going to turn into an event venue. H. Winstanley stated that Council ruled that there would be no noise after 4 pm and everyone knows that weddings get very loud. H. Winstanley stated he wants the Council to stand by their ruling.
7. E. Gendron, Pound Road, stated that he has attended multiple meetings with complaints and he agrees with the letter read into the record from K. Lavoie. E. Gendron stated that the wedding application last year played on the Council's feelings and that opened the door for more applications. E. Gendron stated that Council needs to put a stop to this because the owner does not care about the neighbors. E. Gendron stated that he feels this application should not be before Council.

Councilor W. Worthy stated that anyone can fill out an application and ask the Council, they have the right to ask.

8. E. Gendron stated that neighbors should have peace and quiet in this residential neighborhood and town Council should say no.
9. R. Petisce, Country Meadow, stated that all noise is subjective because there is no decibel limit in town so there is no way to judge if the noise is too loud or not. R. Petisce stated that calling the police when a resident says the noise is too loud is a problem because it is subjective. R. Petisce stated that other towns have decibel levels which makes more objective.
10. D. Wright stated that have never approached 60 decibels and that the highest has been 45 decibels. D. Wright stated that he has two decibel readers. D. Wright stated that the police reports show no nuisance with music and that the police did not ask him to do anything when they came . D. Wright stated he feels the complaints are a bit exaggerated.
11. R. Petisce stated that his concern is that the Vineyard will become a venue and that the music at times is too loud . R. Petisce stated that the neighbors just want a little peace.
12. J. Petisce, Country Meadow, stated that people who live near the road are the ones the owner is asking if the music is too loud. J. Petisce stated that from her yard she can hear every word that is sung especially with one particular singer who screams. J. Petisce stated that the music is very loud and there is no peace and quiet.

Councilor W. Worthy DECLARED the Public Hearing CLOSED

Discussion:

Councilors J. Burlingame and C. Greathouse stated they would go by last year's Town Council decision as they were not Council members at that time.

Councilor W. Steere stated that the Council went through this last year with the same people speaking . Councilor W. Steere stated he feels there is no compelling reason to change last year's decision. Councilor S. Arnold stated that he feels differently as he stated he was having people at his house with music. Councilor S. Arnold stated he feels this request is different from the big traditional wedding.

MOTION was made by Councilor J. Burlingame to DENY THE REQUEST of Mulberry Vineyards for a Special Event Permit - pursuant to Code of Ordinance, Chapter 174, to hold a Special Event, Wedding on August 5, 2023; seconded by Councilor C. Greathouse

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- C. Greathouse , J. Burlingame, W. Steere, W. Worthy
NAYS- S. Arnold

MOTION PASSED

VI. Consent Items - Discussion and/or Action

- A. Approval of Town Council Minutes: Regular meeting of June 15, 2023
- B. Tax Assessor's Additions and Abatements - June 2023
- C. Finance Director's Monthly Report - June 2023
- D. Pole Grant - Highland Road, Installing Pole #3 to rise wires

MOTION was made by Councilor S. Arnold to APPROVE the Town Council minutes of June 15, 2023; No ADDITIONS to the 2022 Tax Roll; **APPROVE** the ABATEMENTS to the 2022 Tax Roll in the amount of \$113.64; **ACCEPT** the Interim Finance Director's Report for June 2023; and **APPROVE** the Pole Grant for Highland Road, installation of new Pole; seconded by Councilor W. Steere

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- C. Greathouse , J. Burlingame, W. Steere, S. Arnold , W. Worthy
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

VII. Unfinished Business

- A. Boards and Commissions
 - 1. Appointments- Terms to run concurrent with the Town Council- Discussion and /or Action
 - a. Affordable Housing Advisory Board- two year term to expire 12/2024- 4 positions

Councilor W. Worthy stated that the Planner has recommended the following "In light of the dozens of new bills that have just been passed, I'd recommend removing from the table until we can better get a handle on what we will need to do. Interpretations of the new legislation is evolving"

Discussion:

Councilor S. Arnold and Councilor W. Steere stated that there is a need for more time because of the number of bills that were passed.

MOTION was made by Councilor C. Greathouse to TABLE the appointments to the Affordable Housing Advisory Board to October 5, 2023; seconded by Councilor J. Burlingame

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- C. Greathouse , J. Burlingame, W. Steere, S. Arnold , W. Worthy
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

b. EDC- Position # 2- two year term to expire 12/2024

Councilor W. Worthy stated that the Clerk has not received a recommendation at this time. Councilor W. Worthy stated that if Council has a name from the Talent Bank listing they can appoint or table.

MOTION was made by Councilor S. Arnold to TABLE the appointment to the EDC, Position #2; seconded by Councilor W. Steere

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- C. Greathouse , J. Burlingame, W. Steere, S. Arnold , W. Worthy
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

B. Boards and Commissions

1. Economic Development Commission

a. Restore 2023/24 EDC budget to level proposed prior to budget cut- Discussion and/or Action

Councilor W. Worthy stated that at Council's last meeting the amount expended for 2022/23 was discussed and it was pointed out that not all the funds were expended. Councilor w. Worthy stated that Councilor W. Steere stated that if the EDC needs additional funds during the current fiscal year they could ask for funds for specific items when it is needed . Councilor W. Worthy stated that Councilor W. Steere further stated that he would like the input of Councilors S. Arnold and W. Worthy who were absent at the last meeting.

Discussion: Councilor W. Worthy stated that in light of the above, he spoke with the EDC chair. Councilor W. Worthy asked the EDC chair , who was present, if she had anything to add and she stated she did not.

No Action taken

b. Approval of proposed R.F.P. for Town Branding Initiative - Discussion and/or Action

Councilor W. Worthy stated that Council referred this proposed R.F.P. to the Solicitor for review.

Discussion: D. Igliazzi stated that he was satisfied with the RFP as to form. J. Fecteau stated the EDC was probably looking for approval for the next step. D. Igliazzi stated that it was up to the Council if they wanted to authorize the RFP to go out. B. MacArthur, EDC Chair, stated that the EDC was hoping to be able to send the RFP out and see what response they get before they decide how they wished to proceed. D. Igliazzi stated the Council is not authorizing any contracts but rather authorizing the RFP to be sent out.

MOTION was made by Councilor J. Burlingame to send out the RFP for the town branding

initiative; seconded by Councilor C. Greathouse

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- C. Greathouse , J. Burlingame, W. Steere, S. Arnold , W. Worthy
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

C. Personnel

1. Discussion/or action Re: Advertising/hiring for available Part Time Clerk Position - Finance Dept.

Councilor W. Worthy stated that after a long discussion about whether this position was needed at this time, Councilor Steere requested it be tabled to get input from absent Council members.

Discussion: Councilor J. Burlingame stated that he thought the Finance Department needed help but stated tonight, after conversation, he feels they may not. Councilor S. Arnold stated that in a perfect world, the town should have a new finance director in place before any new hires are made. Councilor S. Arnold stated a clerk in the Collector's Office is retiring in six weeks and there is a part time unfilled position in the Finance Department. Councilor S. Arnold stated he feels the town is in need for cross trained position in the Finance Department especially to handle tasks such as payroll if there is an absence. Councilor S. Arnold stated his suggestion that maybe a position could be posted for a clerk to be a "hybrid clerk" and flow back and forth between the Collector's office and the Finance Department. Councilor S. Arnold stated that because this potential hybrid position could become full time in the future. Councilor S. Arnold stated that this hybrid position would streamline staffing by the one and a half open positions potentially becoming one position and training one person in multiple tasks. Councilor S. Arnold stated that the job description would need to be defined.

D. Iglizozzi stated that this is the first he's heard of this matter and that if the work being described is subject to the collective bargaining agreement then the position can't be created without union negotiation.

J. Steere, Tax Collector/ Interim Finance Director, stated that she and Councilor S. Arnold had discussed this matter and she is not sure what this potential position would do contract wise. J. Steere stated that the Collector's Office is collecting only real estate and tangible taxes now, and it is hard to find enough work to keep herself and one clerk busy. J. Steere stated that the hybrid position is how she began her career with one half day in finance office and one half day in the collector's office so she learned all of the jobs. J. Steere stated that the cross trained position would save money and would eliminate having a person sitting without something to do.

Councilor W. Steere stated that he likes the concept but that need to think about the job descriptions and talk to the union so time is needed. Councilor W. Steere stated this idea warrants further discussion to determine how to proceed.

Councilor C. Greathouse stated that this is a great idea but that they need to speak to the union.

Councilor S. Arnold asked how to proceed. D. Iglizzi stated that the job description needs to be written and then presented to the union under reorganization and see if it eliminates a position or is a modification of the contract. Councilor S. Arnold stated he would like to work with the department head on the job description. D. Iglizzi stated we need to get the job description done and then a meeting can be set up with the union leadership.

Councilor J. Burlingame stated there are two positions so questioned which one this hybrid would be. D. Iglizzi stated it depends upon the job description that is written. Councilor S. Arnold stated that the proposed hybrid position would replace a full time person who is retiring and an open part time position with one full time person. Councilor J. Burlingame asked what the person would be hired as. Councilor S. Arnold stated that the position needs to be defined before can determine. Councilor W. Steere stated that the HR person could help with the job description. Councilor S. Arnold asked if he had the authority to work with the department head and the HR Director to come up with a description. D. Iglizzi stated that the matter could be put on the next agenda for ratification. D. Iglizzi stated that the discussion was positive but it was it is not exactly on point with the agenda item so the item could be ratified at the next meeting when it is a formal matter on the agenda.

No action taken

VIII. New Business

A. Authorization to Approve/Sign

1. Contract Amendment Between CLNJS, LLC & Town of Gloucester (for previously approved National Park Service's Historic Revitalization Subgrant)
- Discussion and/or Action

Councilor W. Worthy stated that the Planner has requested this item be tabled.

MOTION was made by Councilor W. Steere to TABLE the Authorization to Approve/Sign the contract amendment between CLNJS, LLC & the Town of Gloucester to the Town Council Meeting of August 3, 2023; seconded by Councilor c. Greathouse

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- C. Greathouse , J. Burlingame, W. Steere, S. Arnold , W. Worthy
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

2. Contract Amendment Between Haynes/de Boer Architecture & Preservation & Town of Glocester (for previously approved National Park Service's Historic Revitalization Subgrant) - Discussion and/or Action

Councilor W. Worthy stated that Council has a request from the Town Planner which he read as follows:

To: Town Council Members
From: Karen Scott, Town Planner
Date: July 5, 2023

Re: Historic Preservation Architectural Services - Contract Increase

In 2020, following the regulations outlined in RIGL 45-55-8.1, Qualification- Based Selection of Architects and Engineers, the State's Master Price Agreement (#494) for Architects and Engineers, the Town entered into a contract with Haynes/de Boer Architecture+ Preservation to assist with the implementation of the \$250,000 grant from the National Park Service's Historic Revitalization Subgrant program to fund building facade improvement in Chepachet Village. Haynes/ de Boer is a highly qualified architecture firm with vast experience in historic preservation projects. With the assistance of Haynes/ de Boer, we are in the process of closing out the three projects funded with the National Park Service grant. I am requesting a contract amendment to increase the current contract with Haynes/ de Boer by \$1,000 to complete the project.

All funds associated with this contract are grant funds and no town funds have been or will be used. Both the National Park Service and the RI Historic Preservation and Heritage Commission have provided funds for this contract.

(End of memo)

Discussion: K. Scott, Town Planner, stated that she is trying to close out the \$250,000 national park service grant for the three projects. K. Scott stated that there is a contingency that she would like authorization to spend to complete the project so she is asking for the contingency amount to be added to the contract amount. K. Scott stated that the contract amendment just tabled will be a request to spend this contingency after it is approved to be added. K. Scott stated the contingency will be for architectural services.

MOTION was made by Councilor S. Arnold to Approve and Authorize the signature on the contract amendment between Haynes/de Boer and the Town of Glocester (signed on 6/18/2020) titled "AMENDMENT NO. 2 to Agreement to Provide Historic Preservation Architectural Services for the Town of Glocester"; said amendment is to authorize an additional \$1,000; seconded by Councilor C. Greathouse

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- C. Greathouse , J. Burlingame, W. Steere, S. Arnold , W. Worthy
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

3. Contract Between Northeast Water Solutions, Inc & Town of Glocester: Public Water Feasibility Study for Chepachet Village (Grant Funds) - Discussion and/or Action

Councilor W. Worthy stated that council has a request from the Town Planner to enter into a contract for a water feasibility study which he read as follows:

To: Town Council
From: Karen Scott, Town Planner
Date: July 17, 2023
RE: Contract – Public Water Feasibility Study for Chepachet Village

The Town received a Site Readiness Grant from RI Commerce Corporation for \$40,000 and a Municipal Infrastructure Grant from the Rhode Island Infrastructure Bank for \$85,000 to conduct a Public Water Feasibility Study for Chepachet Village. The Study will comprehensively analyze several alternatives for providing potable water to the Village. This grant requires no cash contribution from the Town. In accordance with RIG 45-55-8.1, Award of Municipal Contracts, the Town followed a qualifications based selection process for this project. The Request for Qualifications (RFQ) was released on March 27, 2023 with responses due on May 12, 2023. The RFQ was posted on the Town’s website, advertised in the Statewide Planning and Rhode Island Planner’s Association newsletters, posted on the Rhode Island Division of Purchases website and directly sent to 51 engineering firms. We received one proposal from Northwest Water Solutions, Inc. based in Exeter, RI. Since this firm was very qualified to undertake this project, the Town entered into price negotiations. We were able to agree to a scope of work for our budget. I am requesting authorization for the Town Council President to sign the attached contract, pending review by the Town Solicitor. (End of memo)

Discussion: Councilor W. Worthy asked if the Solicitor has reviewed contract.
D. Igliazzi stated that he reviewed the contract and it is valid as to form and complies with state law.
D. Igliazzi stated he is satisfied as to the terms and conditions based on his discussion with the planner.

MOTION was made by Councilor C. Greathouse to APPROVE and AUTHORIZE the signature on a contract between the Town of Glocester and Northwest Water Solutions to conduct a Public Water Feasibility Study for the Town of Glocester, said terms for the price of \$125,000, (grant funds); seconded by Councilor J. Burlingame

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- C. Greathouse , J. Burlingame, W. Steere, S. Arnold , W. Worthy
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

4. Contract Between Beta Engineering & Town of Gloucester for Recreation Master Plan for GMP, Phase III and Winsor Park (ARPA funded)- Discussion and/or Action

Councilor W. Worthy stated that Council has received a request from the Town Planner which he read as follows:

To: Town Council

From: Karen Scott, Town Planner

Date: July 19, 2023

RE: Procurement – Master Plan - Gloucester Memorial Park Phase III & Winsor Park

Engineering procurement by municipalities is subject to RIGL 44-55-8.1 (<http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/Statutes/TITLE45/45-55/45-55-8.1.HTM>). A municipality may either pre-qualify firms through a Request for Qualifications process or use a state prequalification list. I opted to use the State’s MPA 494 – Architectural & Engineering Services. The State’s MPA does not rank firms. It lists them alphabetically. With the original GMP Master Plan for Phases I & II, I researched every engineering firm on the MPA to compile a ranked list of firms I have qualified for this project based on their experience with recreation facility site planning. The firm chosen was Beta Group, Inc. for that process. I again reached out to Beta Group, Inc. to begin competitive negotiations for this project.

The procurement process outlined in RIGL 44-55-8.1 was followed. The scope of work included in this contract has been reviewed and accepted by both the Public Works Director and the Recreation Director. The Town Council allocated American Recovery Plan Act funds not to exceed \$40,000 for this project. I am requesting authorization for the Town Council President to sign the contract in the amount of \$34,130.00 with Beta Group, Inc. for the Master Plan for GMP Phase III and Winsor Park pending review by the Town Solicitor.

(End of memo)

Discussion: Councilor W. Worthy stated that the contract has been forwarded to the Town Solicitor. D. Iglizzi stated that he reviewed the contract and state law and had a discussion with the town planner. D. Iglizzi stated that he is confident it is in compliance with state procurement requirements as well as contractual form. D. Iglizzi stated that he is satisfied with the contract and recommends it.

MOTION was made by Councilor S. Arnold to APPROVE and AUTHORIZE the signature of the Town Council on the contract entitled “Agreement for Professional Services Between the Town of Gloucester and Beta Group, INC For Master Planning Services Gloucester Memorial Park Phase III and Winsor Park Gloucester, Rhode Island” for the contract amount of \$34,130; seconded by Councilor W. Steere

Discussion: Councilor W. Steere asked K. Scott if this work will provide a blueprint to go forward with Winsor Park. K. Scott stated that laying out this process in plans will help to get grants in the future. K. Scott stated that RIDEM offers grants every two years with up to \$400,000 for large

projects and up to \$100,000 for small projects . K. Scott stated having a layout of proposed plans helps with the opportunity to receive grants as the plans and work is already laid out.

VOTE: AYES- C. Greathouse , J. Burlingame, W. Steere, S. Arnold , W. Worthy
NAYS-0
MOTION PASSED

B. Personnel

1. Ratification: Tax Collector's Carry Over of Vacation Time to FY 23/24 - Discussion and/or Action

Councilor W. Worthy stated that the Town Council voted to authorize the carry over of vacation time at the Town Council meeting of June 15, 2023. Councilor W. Worthy stated that the full Council will now ratify that action because the vote was made by three Councilors and out of necessity, Councilor Steere voted.

Discussion: Councilor w. Steere stated he was recusing from the vote.

MOTION was made by Councilor S. Arnold to RATIFY the vote of June 15, 2023 by the Town Council to AUTHORIZE the carry over of five vacation days to FY 23/24 for Tax Collector, Jane Steere; seconded by Councilor J. Burlingame

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- C. Greathouse , J. Burlingame, S. Arnold , W. Worthy
RECUSAL- W. Steere
NAYS-0
MOTION PASSED

2. Public Works - Appointment

a. Driver/Laborer 1 position - Discussion and/or Action

Councilor W. Worthy stated that Council has received a request from the Public Works Director which he read as follows:

Date: July 11,2023
To: Honorable Town Council
From: Gary Trembl
Public Works Director
RE: Driver/Laborer I Position Request

The Driver Laborer I position was advertised in the Bargain Buyer and on the Town website in December 2022 . We received 4 applications and interviewed all4 applicants. One of the applicants was hired in February 2023. At the March 3,2023 Council Meeting I was authorized to utilize the qualified candidates from this latest round of interviews should a vacancy become available. On July 7th a vacancy became available due to retirement of an employee. I contacted Jonathan Rider, second

candidate from the list to see if he was still interested in the position and the answer was affirmative. I am requesting Jonathan Rider be appointed to the Driver/Laborer 1 position effective July 24, 2023 at the rate of \$27.18/hour per the NAGE Union Contract.

Respectfully submitted,
Gary Treml
Public Works Director
(end of memo)

Discussion: None

MOTION was made by Councilor C. Greathouse to APPOINT Jonathan Rider to the position of Driver/Laborer 1 for the DPW Dept. effective July 24, 2023 at the hourly rate of \$27.18 per the NAGE Union Contract; seconded by Councilor J. Burlingame

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- C. Greathouse , J. Burlingame, W. Steere, S. Arnold , W. Worthy
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

3. Recreation Department

- a. Summer 2023 Supplemental Parking lot supervision - Two Parking Attendants - Discussion and/or Action

Councilor W. Worthy stated that Council has received a request from the Recreation Director which he read as follows:

To: Town Council

From: Robert Shields

Date: July 15 2023

RE: Summer Recreation Supplement Employment

To further aide with parking lot supervision at both Spring Grove and Marion Irons beach fronts, the following individuals are my recommendations.

PARKING ATTENDANTS

William Cavanagh \$13.00 **start date July 21**

Duncan Maclean \$13.00 **start date July 21**

(end of memo)

Discussion: Councilor S. Arnold asked if these were new positions. R. Shields, Recreation Director, stated that these are budgeted positions that were not filled at the time of the other appointments.

MOTION was made by Councilor S. Arnold to APPOINT William Cavanagh & Duncan Maclean

to the position of Parking Attendants for the 2023 Summer Recreation season at the hourly rate of \$13. effective July 21, 2023; seconded by Councilor C. Greathouse

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- C. Greathouse , J. Burlingame, W. Steere, S. Arnold , W. Worthy
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

C. Town Owned Property:

1. Maintenance of grounds - Discussion and/or Action

Councilor W. Steere stated that the town property on Stone Dam Road and Adelaide Road have fields of hay that need to be cut and he didn't know who was going to do that. Councilor W. Steere stated he was approached about the field. Councilor W. Steere asked D. Igliazzi as to the process to get the fields cut. Councilor W. Steere stated that he does not think the DPW has the equipment. Councilor W. Steere stated that there should be a policy for maintaining these fields.

Councilor S. Arnold stated that he likes the principle of the idea as it is a "win win" situation with the town getting the fields cut and the individual getting the hay. Councilor S. Arnold stated he wanted to make sure all had a fair shake. Councilor W. Steere stated the cutting season is still ahead of us and that Adelaide may have already been cut.

D. Igliazzi suggested an advertisement or if it was an immediate issue to utilize the master price agreement (MPA) list. Councilor S. Arnold stated he thought it was a for trade deal and not one with actual pay. D. Igliazzi stated he did not know the value of the service or the value of the goods.

Councilor W. Worthy asked G." Buster" Steere, who is know to cut hay, whether he had any information. Buster Steere stated that if the town can find someone who will cut the fields to let them as the hay is not that good in his opinion. Buster Steere stated that he believed there was a gentlemen's agreement to cut Stone Dam road property and he suggested the town contact them to see if they wanted to cut Adelaide Road property. Councilor W. Steere agreed. Councilor S. Arnold stated a concern as to the need for a waiver of liability. Councilor J. Burlingame stated to contact the individual to see if he would like to cut the field. Councilor W. Steere stated that if he doesn't the Council can revisit the issue. D. Igliazzi stated that if there are any legal documents required that he will provide.

MOTION was made by Councilor S. Arnold for contact to the interested party to see if he wanted the opportunity to cut the property on Adelaide Road; seconded by Councilor J. Burlingame

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- C. Greathouse , J. Burlingame, W. Steere, S. Arnold , W. Worthy

NAYS-0
MOTION PASSED

2. Discussion/Action - Town owned building, Adelaide Road

Councilor S. Arnold stated that the town's interest in the purchase of the property on Adelaide Road was the land and asked if there was a plan for the structure located on the property. Councilor S. Arnold stated he had walked through the property with G. Treml, DPW Director, and any ideas he had for the building were crushed. Councilor S. Arnold stated that the pictures do not show the full extent of the issues.

G. Treml stated the many issues that would need to be resolved. G. Treml stated it has a stone foundation with a dirt floor and would need replacing all windows and siding, the electrical, the kitchens, the baths, probably the septic and well. G. Treml explained it would need to be taken down to the studs and rebuilt so it would be expensive.

Councilor S. Arnold stated he just wanted to start a conversation and he does not want an unsafe building. G. Treml stated the building was locked and secure. G. Treml stated that if it is not fixed to tear it down. Councilor S. Arnold stated that it has historic, useful value but from a financial standpoint it would need hundreds of thousands of dollars. G. Treml stated it would basically be building a new house.

Councilor W. Steere stated he spoke with K. Scott, Town Planner, about the possibility of having the house be used for affordable housing but it sounds like fixing it may be cost prohibitive. Councilor S. Arnold suggested the councilors contact G. Treml and walk through the building.

Councilor W. Worthy stated it could be on the next agenda.

D. Factory Mutual Global - Assessment Update - Discussion and/or Action

Councilor W. Worthy stated he requested this item because he had received requests from people for an update. Councilor W. Worthy stated that the company was on site at FM in July and would provide the Council with an update in September. Councilor S. Arnold stated that there is constant communication with the company; that they have boots on the ground; that there is a scheduled meeting in September; and, that this matter is of the utmost priority. Councilor W. Worthy stated that the company has said that they have had no issues with getting communication or having access.

No action taken

E. Ratification of signature and Town Council Approval: Vision Coverage Contract (Per Town of Gloucester Clerks Contract, Effective: July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2025) - Discussion and/or Action

Councilor W. Worthy stated that no information has been received and the Clerk has requested Council table.

MOTION was made by Councilor S. Arnold to TABLE the ratification of signature and Town Council Approval for the Vision Coverage Contract, Gloucester Clerk's, to the Town Council Meeting of August 3, 2023; seconded by Councilor J. Burlingame

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- C. Greathouse , J. Burlingame, W. Steere, S. Arnold , W. Worthy
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

IX. Town Council Correspondence/ Discussion

Councilor W. Worthy stated Council has received the following correspondence:

1. Council has received correspondence from FEMA regarding flood map amendments. This information will be forwarded to the Planning Office and Bldg/Zoning as our information depository for flood map information.
2. Council has received an update from the 3 fire district Chiefs regarding their ARPA request. The Chiefs will be present at the August 3, 2023 Council Meeting.
3. Council has received correspondence from the residents of Pineledge Road thanking DPW and complimenting their work on the improvements to Pineledge Road.
4. Council has received correspondence, yesterday, from R.I.D.O.T. requesting their input and permission to install rumble strips on portions of Putnam Pike. The Clerk has informed the sender that the Council needs an extension of time to review the information and formulate a response. Please add to next agenda.
5. Council has received a complaint from a resident regarding a \$1,750 increase in their tax bill and also about the pot holes on their street. The correspondence has been forwarded to DPW.

Councilor W. Steere stated his thanks to all who helped make the 4th of July events a success.

X. Department Head Reports/Discussion

1. Chief Delprete offered his thanks to K. Lamontagne, Parade Chair, and said all went well. Chief Delprete stated that the rumble strips on Snake Hill Road were placed in the fog lane and residents feel they are noisy. Chief Delprete stated that rumble strips are to be placed on sections of Putnam Pike in an effort to prevent accidents and they won't be in the fog lane. Chief Delprete stated the police department has finished a rigorous accreditation process

and has passed. Chief Delprete stated that it is a great achievement and that Lt. Jensen took the point on this process and had help from H. Duffanay.

Chief Delprete stated that the DPW did test holes at the police station and they are waiting for the report.

Chief Delprete stated that the tenant, on the trailer park land, is out by August 31st so it may be ready for consideration of purchase.

2. K. Scott, Town Planner, stated that the picnic pavilion at GMP, that is part of Phase II, has the posts and concrete pad all done. K. Scott stated that Bay Crane would be putting on the roof next Tuesday and that they are donating the driver and the crane. K. Scott stated all of this work was done with grant money. K. Scott thanked the DPW and stated that the town has a great DPW department.

K. Scott stated that the town has received \$465,000 grant from the EPA for decentralized waste water solutions in Chepachet Village which is in addition to grants of \$250,000 from Southern New England Partnership and \$200,000 set aside of ARPA funds.

Councilor W. Steere asked for a letter of thanks to be ratified at the next meeting.

3. M. Bouvier, Senior Center Director, stated that the Village Common volunteer program is doing great. M. Bouvier stated that this program helps seniors stay in their homes by offering help with a variety of tasks as well as rides. M. Bouvier stated there are great volunteers and the program is rolling out Thursday. M. Bouvier stated that volunteers are welcome. Councilor S. Arnold commended the Director. M. Bouvier explained the process in that when a senior calls for help the task is posted and if a volunteer chooses they can take it. M. Bouvier stated the volunteer accepts jobs that works with their schedule as opposed to a set day and time for a job.

XI. Bds. and Commissions Reports/ Discussion

None

XII. Open Forum

1. Bill Brown, Gloucester Historical Cemetery Comm.;introduced his committee and stated he would be talking about two matters; one being a proposal and the other being a response to correspondence from J. Parker, Tax Assessor.

B. Brown stated he had shared his proposal with Councilor S. Arnold who said he would share it with the rest of the Council. B. Brown stated he would like to know if the proposal is being considered . B. Brown stated he needs an answer so that he can figure out another way to keep the cemeteries maintained. B. Brown discussed the work the committee does in maintaining the historical cemeteries and the need for the work to continue especially as

many of the members are getting older.

B. Brown stated that J. Parker , Tax Assessor, reached out to him for information about the historical cemeteries as she was trying to work on a tax abatement. B. Brown stated that there are 64 historical cemeteries that are now under perpetual care . B. Brown read a letter he sent to J. Parker where he stated that there are about 119 historical cemeteries of all different shapes and sizes. B. Brown stated that due to the shape and size of the cemeteries, they require different maintenance. B. Brown stated his opinion that the same abatement could not be applied to each cemetery because of the different shape, size and required maintenance. B. Brown also asked how maintenance would be enforced to an acceptable standard. B. Brown described the maintenance work as more than just leaf blowing but also stone cleaning and repair.

B. Brown is proposing that the Historical Cemeteries Committee become a budgeted town department with 3-4 employees and a budget of approximately \$280,000 with one supervisor. B. Brown described the care of the cemeteries would be nine months of the year and the other three months could be for such tasks as grant writing, scheduling and tool care.

B. Brown explained his opinion as to why he feels the tax abatement would not work due to the different sizes and requirements as well as if the property were sold to a new owner. B. Brown would like the councilors to come out with him when they are cleaning a cemetery. B. Brown stated he is concerned that if the tax abatement is done that the landowner would not do the stone maintenance and repair. B. Brown stated his opinion that if the tax abatement were done the cemeteries would not get the proper care and would revert back. B. Brown stated he feels there is about a three year window to come up with a plan. B. Brown stated that if a solution is not reached he may be forced to dissolve the committee.

Councilor S. Arnold thanked B. Brown and his whole team and recognizes it is incredible dedication. Councilor S. Arnold stated he had shared B. Brown's thoughts with Council. Councilor S. Arnold stated that he has a hard time seeing a full time crew but does not want to dismiss the idea . Councilor S. Arnold stated he is not sure of how to move forward and it that this topic warrants discussion. B. Brown stated it would be a shame to see the cemeteries grown over especially for the veterans plots. Councilors thanked B. Brown for all his the committee's work.

2. C. Kowal, Weighs and Means committee of the Gloucester Heritage Society, stated that he volunteers on the Cemetery Committee and that since April 1st, the Heritage Society members have donated 459 hours of work with the Committee. C. Kowal stated his thanks to B. Brown for all his work and gives credit to him.
3. J. Lowell, resident, asked for an update on the "Smithfield Peat" situation in West Gloucester. Councilor W. Steere stated that there is no new information. Councilor S. Arnold stated his understanding that K. Johnson, Building Official, has a meeting scheduled for next week.

Councilor W. Worthy stated that the cease and desist is being followed. J. Lowell expressed her frustration in the delays.

4. W. Steere, resident, stated he wanted to speak about the recent tax bill and tax rate. W. Steere stated that he does not know where the tax rate of \$14.25 came from because he had heard lower ones. W. Steere stated he thought the voters needed to know the tax rate before the vote and he does not believe the voters did know this year. W. Steere stated his opinion that the budget was bad enough but that the re evaluations hit the residents too. W. Steere stated the values were very increased and feels the solicitor should look at the state laws regarding revaluation. W. Steere stated he thought that a 3 year re val only applied to individuals who took out a building permit and now a three year re valve is like a full one. W. Steere stated his taxes increased by \$1300 which wiped out his senior exemption. W. Steere realizes the budget is what it is and he is very disappointed in the way the budget has gone for the past two years. W. Steere stated the Town needs to be very careful with this year's budget. W. Steere stated that he is not sure if the rate needs to be set before a vote is taken.

5. D. Laplante, resident, stated he asked the Budget Board what the rate would be and he was told at the public hearing that the rate would be between \$12.93 and \$ 13.20. D. Laplante stated that at the next meeting he was told that the rate would be \$13.50. D. Laplante asked what happened to the original range and he was told a few things changed in the budget. D. Laplante asked if this was the final number and was told yes so he relied on that number. D. Laplante stated the tax rate is the important number. D. Laplante voted because of the \$13.50 rate and then received his bill where the rate was \$14.25. D. Laplante stated that this was a \$425 increase this year. D. Laplante wanted an explanation from the Council for the taxpayers. D. Laplante stated the taxes went up way more than they should have gone up. D. Laplante stated he wants a transparent presentation for when and why taxes go up. D. Laplante recommended that it was time for a town manager.

Councilor S. Arnold stated that the \$14.25 tax rate was a surprise to everybody and that the number was not even on council's radar until the tail end of last week. Councilor S. Arnold stated it unfortunate because he was under the impression that the tax roll was fixed at the \$13.52 which was on the high end of the range given by the former Finance director. Councilor S. Arnold stated that a budget is voted on it is not the rate being voted on but the spending plan. Councilor S. Arnold stated it is good to know the rate but is not the rate being voted on.

Councilor S. Arnold stated that unfortunately there was an error in the assessor's office. Councilor S. Arnold stated that the error was that dozens of tax exempt property were in the wrong "bucket" as taxable property. Councilor S. Arnold stated that upon further review, and he is not sure how it was caught but he is glad that it was, moving th exempt properties into where they belonged changed the rate. Councilor S. Arnold stated he is pleased with the budget but the difference between \$13.52 and \$14.25 is an expensive mistake.

6. B. Brown asked if the taxpayers are responsible for his proposal if a poll be could be sent out to all taxpayers to see if they want his proposed department. B. Brown asked the effect if a majority agree . Councilor W. Steere stated he understands B. Brown’s question but it is the budget vote that matters. Councilor W. Steere stated that what the committee has done is admirable and the project is valuable. Councilor S. Arnold stated that something would have to get cut in order to do this proposal but the budget can’t be raised more than 4 %. Councilor W. Steere stated that Council must look at the big picture. Councilor J. Burlingame stated to put on the next agenda.

XIII. Adjourn

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

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- C. Greathouse , W. Steere, J. Burlingame , S. Arnold, W. Worthy
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED