



**WESTBROOK CITY COUNCIL
SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, MARCH 15, 2021 AT 7:00 PM
WESTBROOK PERFORMING ARTS CENTER
471 STROUDWATER ST.**



I. ROLL CALL

Call to Order. Meeting called to order at 7:00pm by City Council President Gary Rairdon.

City Councilors Present: Michael Shaughnessy (At-Large), David C. Morse (Ward 1), Victor Chau (Ward 2), Anna A. Turcotte (Ward 3, Vice President), Gary Rairdon (Ward 4, President), Elliot Storey (Ward 5), Claude Rwaganje (At-Large)

City Councilors Absent: None

Other City Officials Present: Jerre Bryant (City Administrator), Natalie Burns (City Solicitor), Eric Dudley (Director of Engineering & Public Services), Jennie Franceschi (Director of Planning & Code Enforcement), Michael T. Foley (Mayor), Angela Holmes (Asst. City Administrator/City Clerk), Suzanne Knight (Finance Director), Sean Lally (Police Chief), Arty Ledoux (Public Services Director of Operations), Greg Post (Director of Community Services), Robyn Saunders (Project Manager), Steve Sloan (Deputy Fire Chief), Andrew Turcotte (Fire Chief)

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

President Rairdon led all present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

No minutes were presented for approval.

IV. MAYOR'S MESSAGE

Mayor Foley read his message into the record. The full text of the Mayor's Message is attached to these minutes.

Mayor Foley played a clip from The Today Show featuring Vertical Harvest, in which Westbrook was mentioned.

Mayor Foley announced the appointment of Robin Talbot to the Public Safety Commission as an Alternate Member for a term expiring January 1, 2026.

Mayor Foley presented the City of Westbrook's Employee of the Year Award for 2020 to Aaron Davis, Facilities Technician, and presented the City of Westbrook's Co-Managers of the Year Award for 2020 to Fire & Rescue Chief Andrew Turcotte & Deputy Chief Stephen Sloan.

V. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE UPDATE

There was no Student Representative update.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT

President Rairdon opened the floor for the first public comment portion of this meeting. The following individuals spoke: Councilor Storey, Christine Latini (170 Pierce Street)

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business for consideration.

VIII. ORDERS OF THE DAY (SECOND AND FINAL READING)

Included below are the City Council Orders which require second and final reading.

Order 2021-15. Amending Order 2017-85, Authorizing the Acceptance of Additional Funds from the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant.

Order 2021-16. Authorizing Acceptance & Expenditure of \$20,000 from Westbrook Energy Corporation (Calpine).

Order 2021-17. Authorizing Village Review Overlay Zone Zoning Map Amendment - 452 Main St & 35 Seavey Street.

Order 2021-18. Authorizing Purchase of Police Department Ammunition

Order 2021-19. Authorizing Westbrook Environmental Improvement Corporation (WEIC) Expenditure to Discover Downtown Westbrook and Further Authorizing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Between the City and Discover Downtown Westbrook.

- Motion to approve second and final reading of Orders 2021-15 through 2021-19.
Moved by Councilor Morse, seconded by Vice President Turcotte.
President Rairdon asked if any Councilor would like to consider any item separately. Mr. Bryant noted that Order 2021-17 requires a public hearing. President Rairdon noted that Order 2021-17 would be considered separately.
- On Orders 2021-15, 16, 18, & 19.
President Rairdon opened the floor for comments on the motion to approve these items.
Motion carried. Orders 2021-15, 16, 18 and 19 adopted. (Vote 7-0)
Ayes: Shaughnessy, Morse, Chau, Turcotte, Storey, Rwaganje, Rairdon
Nays: None
- On Order 2021-17.
Ms. Holmes noted for the record that notice of the public hearing for this item was published in the Portland Press Herald on March 3 & 8, 2021. Notice was posted in City Hall on March 1, 2021.
President Rairdon opened the public hearing. No one spoke.
President Rairdon closed the public hearing.
Returning to the original motion made by Councilor Morse and seconded by Vice President Turcotte to approve second and final reading of the legislation, President Rairdon opened the floor for comments on the motion. No one spoke.
Motion carried. Order 2021-17 adopted. (Vote 7-0)
Ayes: Shaughnessy, Morse, Chau, Turcotte, Storey, Rwaganje, Rairdon
Nays: None

IX. NEW BUSINESS

Included below are the Council actions on New Business, which includes business licenses requiring City Council approval, City Council Resolves and Orders receiving first and final reading, City Council Orders receiving the first of two required readings.

Orders (One Reading Required)

Order 2021-20. Approving Construction Overlimit Permits for Maine Department of Transportation.

Motion to approve the first and final reading of the legislation.

Moved by Councilor Morse, seconded by Councilor Storey.

President Rairdon opened the floor for comments on the motion. The following individuals spoke:

Mayor Foley, President Rairdon

Motion carried. Order 2021-20 adopted. (Vote 7-0)

Ayes: Shaughnessy, Morse, Chau, Turcotte, Storey, Rwaganje, Rairdon

Nays: None

Orders (Two Readings Required)

Order 2021-21. Authorizing Expenditure for Additional Cost to New Fire Engine.

President Rairdon gave the floor to Mr. Bryant.

Mr. Bryant noted that the Administration would like this item to be postponed indefinitely, as it had been inappropriately added to the agenda.

Motion to postpone Order 2021-21 indefinitely.

Moved by Councilor Chau, seconded by Councilor Storey.

Motion carried by a show of hands. None opposed. Order 2021-21 postponed indefinitely.

Order 2021-22. Authorizing Purchase of Pan Zoom Tilt Camera.

Motion to approve the first of two readings of the legislation.

Moved by Councilor Shaughnessy, seconded by Councilor Morse.

President Rairdon opened the floor for comments on the motion. The following individuals spoke:

Councilor Storey, Mr. Bryant

Motion carried by a show of hands. (Vote 6-1)

Ayes: Shaughnessy, Morse, Chau, Turcotte, Rwaganje, Rairdon

Nays: Storey

Waiving the Rules.

Motion to waive the rules to allow Order 2021-25 to be added to the agenda.

Moved by Councilor Morse, seconded by Councilor Chau.

Motion carried by a show of hands. None opposed. Order 2021-25 added to the agenda.

Order 2021-23. Establishing Chapter 7, Article IV, *Veteran Services Advisory Committee*, in the Westbrook Code of Ordinances.

Motion to approve the first of two readings of the legislation.

Moved by Councilor Morse, seconded by Councilor Chau.

President Rairdon opened the floor for comments on the motion. The following individuals spoke:

Mayor Foley

Motion carried by a show of hands. None opposed.

Order 2021-24. Authorizing Agreement for Purchase & Installation of Rink Boards at Lincoln Street Ice Rink & Court.

Motion to approve the first of two readings of the legislation.

Moved by Councilor Shaughnessy, seconded by Councilor Rwaganje.

President Rairdon opened the floor for comments on the motion. The following individuals spoke:

President Rairdon, Mayor Foley

Motion carried by a show of hands. None opposed.

Order 2021-25. Authorizing the Purchase & Installation of Fencing for Bicentennial Dog Park.

Motion to approve the first of two readings of the legislation.

Moved by Councilor Morse, seconded by Vice President Turcotte.

President Rairdon opened the floor for comments on the motion. The following individuals spoke:

Mayor Foley, Councilor Storey, Councilor Rwaganje, Councilor Morse, President Rairdon

Motion carried by a show of hands. None opposed.

X. PUBLIC COMMENT

President Rairdon opened the floor for the second and final public comment portion of this meeting. The following individuals spoke: Councilor Chau, Mayor Foley, Councilor Rwaganje, Councilor Morse, Christine Latini (170 Pierce Street), Councilor Storey, Vice President Turcotte

XI. REFERRALS

President Rairdon noted that he would sponsor a referral for a Comprehensive Ethics Reform, as requested by Ms. Latini during public comment. The referral would be included on the following City Council meeting agenda.

Request to refer item titled "Relinquishing Control and Giving Freedom Back to Citizens" to the Committee of the Whole for review.

Moved by Councilor Storey. No second received.

Motion failed for lack of second.

XII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

There were no updates provided on the following items assigned to City Council Committees.

Committee of the Whole

Hours for Construction & Noise Ordinance

Residential Landlord Registration

City Council Rules & Procedures

Amending Land Use Ordinance to Expand Medical & Recreational Marijuana Businesses

Facilities & Streets Committee

Austin Street Extension

Sidewalks & Traffic at Haskell Street

Condition of Westbrook Middle School Baseball Field

Traffic Issues on Forest Street

Finance Committee
Creating a Fire Truck Fund

Public Safety Committee
Use of Force Policy Analysis

XIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 8:14pm.

Moved by Councilor Chau, seconded by Councilor Morse.

Motion carried. (Vote 6-1)

Ayes: Shaughnessy, Morse, Chau, Turcotte, Rwaganje, Rairdon

Nays: Storey

MAYOR'S MESSAGE

March 15, 2021

FREE COVID-19 TESTING SITE

We are excited to announce another extension of the Swab & Send program in partnership with Maine CDC & DHHS as we all work collaboratively, in our combined efforts to combat this pandemic. This has been a valuable resource to have here in the community, making it easy for community members and businesses to protect one another with appropriate and free testing. This service is available by appointment only now through the end of the year, pending need, and is located Public Safety Building, 570 Main Street. More details available on our website.

COVID VACCINATION SITE

A reminder we will be partnering with Maine CDC on a vaccination clinic here in the City to help make it easy for residents to get vaccinated so we can begin to get back to normal following the pandemic. Now with more vaccines coming available, we are currently finalizing details for this program and will release additional information as soon as it is available.

DISCOVER DOWNTOWN WESTBROOK'S WINTERFEST

We want to remind everyone that DDW is hosting Winterfest this year through March 31st. They have many great virtual activities and a Bucket List Challenge to support local businesses. Visit their website or Facebook page for more information.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & PROJECT UPDATES

Our Economic Development team is currently diligently working on our Business Retention & Expansion Program, meeting with businesses in the community on a regular basis both in person and via Zoom as we continue to be the first in the State with such a program, enabling the City of Westbrook to emerge from the pandemic economically well-positioned.

Our ED team also took the lead in starting the Maine Outdoor Dine campaign, now in partnership with the State and Greater Portland Council of Governments. Production for this program was done in partnership with our very own Creative Services Manager Barry Dodd and we thank the team for their great work! Check out MaineOutdoorDine.com for more information about the program and the growing list of participating restaurants and breweries.

I want to thank our Project Manager Robyn Saunders for the great project update this evening. We thank her for her work on everything she has been doing. Also, as Angela Holmes informed the City

Council today, we are hoping you will consider the request to add an item to the agenda regarding fencing for the proposed dog park. Lastly, we wanted to share a nice news piece done about Vertical Harvest recently on the Today show. We are very excited for this project in our downtown and you will see how cool this is.

DELINQUENT PROPERTY TAXES

As the City Council and public are aware, the City has had decades worth of unpaid property taxes that we have been working diligently to collect. Following the adoption of our Policy on Tax-Acquired Property this past summer, our Tax Collector Dena Lebeda has done an outstanding job making progress on collections and review as part of this new policy. She provided us with an update on this item earlier this evening. We believe this initiative has resulted in excess of \$250k collected and an additional nearly \$400k in discussions to be resolved soon.

APPOINTMENTS

As we announced at our last meeting, we have instituted a new process for soliciting and approving appointments to the City's various boards, committees, and commissions, and have done several appointments at recent meetings with more to come in future meetings. In addition to those items, I would like to announce the following Mayoral appointment:

- I have appointed Robin Talbot to the Public Safety Commission as an Alternate Member. This important commission assists with the hiring of all public safety staff.

Thank you to all individuals recently appointed for your willingness to serve the community!

STATE OF EMERGENCY REPORT

This week will be one year since the declared State of Emergency for the COVID-19 Pandemic. I will share the contents of that report with everyone.

REFERRAL

Later on this evening's agenda, there is a referral titled "Relinquishing Control and Giving Freedom Back to Citizens" to the Committee of the Whole for review. I encourage my colleagues to not support this referral request. As outlined in the State of Emergency report, our community has done an outstanding job responding to the difficulties associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, and we are beginning to see light at the end of the tunnel. Our municipality does not have the authority to do what is suggested in this referral, and beyond that, now is not the time to let our guard down. Though we may not like the cards we have been dealt in 2020 and now 2021, we need to play to win, and our community is poised to do so provided we stay the course. Just keep the faith and stay safe. We'll get through this together.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION

I will now present our Employee & Co-Managers of the Year Awards for 2020.