



KEENE CITY COUNCIL
Council Chambers, Keene City Hall
April 3, 2025
7:00 PM

ROLL CALL

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

MINUTES FROM PRECEDING MEETING

- March 20, 2025 Minutes

A. HEARINGS / PRESENTATIONS / PROCLAMATIONS

1. Community Recognition - KSC Men's Basketball Seniors

B. ELECTIONS / NOMINATIONS / APPOINTMENTS / CONFIRMATIONS

1. Nomination - Conservation Commission

C. COMMUNICATIONS

1. Stephen Bragdon and Cheryl Belair - Safety Issues Associated with the Driveway at 82 Court Street

D. REPORTS - COUNCIL COMMITTEES

1. Request for City Council Communication to State of New Hampshire - Proposed Roundabout at Rt 9 and Whitcombs Mill Road
2. Monadnock View Cemetery: Section B New Cremation Lots
3. Former Findings Property and Keene Skate Park Project Update
4. Downtown Infrastructure Project Update
5. Route 9 Restriping Project Update
6. Engineering Agreement with Wright Pierce for Martel Court Bypass Sewer Force Main Final Design

7. Right of Way (ROW) Acquisitions for the George St Bridge Replacement Project
8. Right of Way (ROW) Acquisitions for the Transportation Heritage Trail Phase 1 Project
9. Legislative Items of Concern
10. Transfer of Personnel Funds to Address Library Budget Shortfall

E. CITY MANAGER COMMENTS

F. REPORTS - CITY OFFICERS AND DEPARTMENTS

G. REPORTS - BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

1. Resignation - Jude Nuru - Energy & Climate Committee

H. REPORTS - MORE TIME

1. Carl Jacobs - Installation of a Peace Pole - Central Square
2. Proposal to Add the Necessary Infrastructure to Accommodate Banners Across Main Street

I. ORDINANCES FOR FIRST READING

1. Relating to an Amendment of the City Code, Regarding Stop Signs
Ordinance O-2025-10
2. Relating to an Amendment of the City Code, Regarding Yield Signs
Ordinance O-2025-11
3. Relating to an Amendment of the City Code, Regarding Traffic Signals
Ordinance O-2025-12
4. Relating to an Amendment of the City Code, Regarding Vehicle Turning
Limitations
Ordinance O-2025-13
5. Relating to the Installation of a Stop Sign on Wilber Street at Water Street
Ordinance O-2025-14

J. ORDINANCES FOR SECOND READING

K. RESOLUTIONS

1. Relating to the Appropriation of Unassigned Fund Balance for the FY 25
Fire Department Personnel Budget
Resolution R-2025-10

2. Relating to the Appropriation of Funds from the General Fund Unassigned Fund Balance - Fire Department Staffing
Resolution R-2025-11

NON PUBLIC SESSION

ADJOURNMENT

A regular meeting of the Keene City Council was held on Thursday, March 20, 2025. The Honorable Mayor Jay V. Kahn called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Roll called: Kate M. Bosley, Laura E. Tobin, Michael J. Remy, Randy L. Filiault, Robert C. Williams, Edward J. Haas, Philip M. Jones, Andrew M. Madison, Kris E. Roberts, Jacob R. Favolise, Bryan J. Lake, Catherine I. Workman, Bettina A. Chadbourne, Thomas F. Powers, and Mitchell H. Greenwald were present. Councilor Chadbourne led the Pledge of Allegiance.

MINUTES FROM PRECEDING MEETING

A motion by Councilor Greenwald to adopt the minutes of the March 6, 2025, meeting as presented was duly seconded by Councilor Bosley. The motion carried unanimously with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor announced that Linda Mangones—who had written many grants for the City of Keene, Cheshire County, and the Keene Housing Authority—would be retiring on April 9, 2025 after 50 years of service. Councilors were invited to the celebration which will be held at the Community Room named after Ms. Mangones at 105 Castle Street.

Mayor Kahn also encouraged the Council to attend a Master Plan Future Summit on June 3, 2025, at 5:00 PM at the Keene Public Library, Heberton Hall. The three rounds of Task Forces, which were diving into each of the six Strategic Pillars in the Master Plan, concluded in March. The Future Summit would be a chance to engage the broad community before the Master Plan returns to the Council and the Planning Board for their approval.

Lastly, the Mayor shared that the Legislative Delegation would be held this year on Wednesday, April 16, 2025, from 6:00–8:00 PM in Heberton Hall and encouraged the Council to attend. He said the City was concerned about several bills (e.g., State cap on school funding and a Federal loss of funding for interlibrary loan programs). The City Manager would bring this issue to the Finance, Organization, and Personnel Committee.

PROCLAMATION - KEENE HIGH SCHOOL BOYS BASKETBALL TEAM

Mayor Kahn welcomed Coach Ray Boulay and the Keene High School Boys Basketball Team. The Mayor said he had the privilege of attending many games and called it a remarkable season, commenting on the endearing way the community responded—both financially and in terms of attendance at the games. The Mayor said the community is strong when teams are performing at the highest level.

The Mayor read into the record a Proclamation honoring the 2025 Keene High School Boys basketball team for their remarkable season, their demonstrated resilience and teamwork, and their significant contribution to the spirit of the Keene community. All team members were presented with copies of the proclamation.

PROCLAMATION - KEENE HIGH SCHOOL WRESTLING TEAM

Mayor Kahn welcomed Coach Bill Gillard and the Keene High School Wrestling Team. The Mayor noted that this team not only took third place in the Division One Boys Wrestling State Championship and fourth place in the Meet of Champions, but several of the individual members also had achievements and accolades.

The Mayor read into the record a Proclamation recognizing and commending the Keene High School Boys wrestling team and coaches for their exceptional 2024–2025 season. Their accomplishments highlight the value of youth sports and programs, which begin at the elementary and middle school levels, making our local student-athletes more competitive on the Statewide and New England stages. All members of the team were presented with copies of the proclamation.

PRESENTATION OF RETIREMENT RESOLUTION - THOMAS P. MULLINS

Mayor Kahn welcomed former City Attorney, Tom Mullins, and presented him with a Retirement Resolution to honor his 17 years of service. The Mayor read the Resolution into the record.

Mr. Mullins said that, like Patty Little, the longest-serving City Clerk in Keene's history, he was retiring as the longest-serving City Attorney. Mr. Mullins called it a wonderful opportunity and he thanked the Council for having the confidence to offer him the position. He thanked the Mayor and former Councilors and Mayors he had served with, as well as the City Manager and former City Managers. Mr. Mullins said the City is well served by its department heads and employees, and residents should be aware of how effectively the City operates under the City Manager. Knowing how difficult the coming few years could be, Mr. Mullins challenged the public to know that the City employees make it all happen. He thanked everyone who came to honor him, noting how much he would miss them.

CONFIRMATION - BICYCLE, PEDESTRIAN PATH ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Mayor Kahn nominated Andy Holte to serve as an alternate member of the Bicycle/Pedestrian Path Advisory Committee, with a term to expire December 31, 2025. A motion by Councilor Greenwald to confirm the nomination was duly seconded by Councilor Bosley. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

COMMUNICATION - PATHWAYS FOR KEENE - REQUEST FOR USE OF CITY PROPERTY - 4 ON THE 4TH ROAD RACE - JULY 4, 2025

A communication was received from Janelle Sartorio requesting the annual license for Pathways for Keene to sponsor a footrace on July 4, 2025. Mayor Kahn referred the communication to the Planning, Licenses & Development Committee.

COMMUNICATION - KEENE PRIDE FESTIVAL - REQUEST FOR USE OF CITY
PROPERTY - PRIDE FESTIVAL - SEPTEMBER 21, 2025

A communication was received from Adam Toepfer, requesting the annual license for use of downtown City property on September 21, 2025, to conduct the 2025 Keene Pride Festival. Mayor Kahn referred the communication to the Planning, Licenses & Development Committee.

COMMUNICATION - CARL JACOBS - INSTALLATION OF A PEACE POLE - CENTRAL
SQUARE

A communication was received from Carl Jacobs, requesting the proposal to donate, install, and provide maintenance for a Peace Pole on Central Square be brought back before the Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee for consideration as an element separate from the renovated fountain design. Mayor Kahn referred the communication to the Municipal Service, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee.

COMMUNICATION - COUNCILOR JONES - REQUEST FOR RESOLUTION HONORING
THE LGBTQIA+ COMMUNITY

A communication was received from Councilor Philip Jones, recommending that the Keene City Council authorize staff to draft a resolution honoring the LGBTQIA+ Community. Mayor Kahn referred the communication to the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee.

COMMUNICATION - COUNCILOR JONES - REQUEST FOR CITY COUNCIL
COMMUNICATION TO STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE - PROPOSED ROUNDABOUT AT
RT 9 AND WHITCOMBS MILL ROAD

A communication was received from Councilor Philip Jones, requesting the City Council send a communication to the State of New Hampshire proposing a roundabout be constructed at the intersection of Rt. 9 and Whitcombs Mill Road. Mayor Kahn referred the communication to the Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee.

PLD REPORT - KEENE SWAMPBATS - DISCHARGE OF FIREWORKS -
INDEPENDENCE EVE CELEBRATION - JULY 3, 2025

A Planning, Licenses & Development Committee report read, recommending granting the Keene SwampBats permission to discharge a fireworks display on Thursday, July 3, 2025, at Alumni Field, no later than 10:00 PM. A "rain date" will be coordinated with City staff in case of inclement weather. This approval is contingent upon the following conditions:

- Signing a revocable license and indemnification agreement.
- Providing a certificate of liability insurance from both the Keene SwampBats and the fireworks vendor, each listing the City of Keene as an additional insured with coverage of \$1,000,000.
- Submitting a signed letter of permission from SAU 29 for the use of their property.
- Obtaining a State Fireworks permit.

Additionally, the petitioner must comply with any recommendations from City staff and cover any City service costs exceeding the funding allocated in the FY 26 Community Events Budget. Payment for these costs must be made within 30 days of invoicing.

A motion by Councilor Jones to carry out the intent of the Committee report was duly seconded by Councilor Madison. The motion carried unanimously with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

PLD REPORT - BIRDIES - REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO SERVE ALCOHOL - SIDEWALK CAFÉ

A Planning, Licenses, & Development Committee report read, recommending that Birdies be granted permission to serve alcoholic beverages in connection with their Sidewalk Café License, subject to the customary licensing requirements of the City Council, compliance with the requirements of Sections 46-1191 through 46-1196 of the City Code, and compliance with any requirements of the NH Liquor Commission. This license shall expire on March 1, 2026.

A motion by Councilor Jones to carry out the intent of the Committee report was duly seconded by Councilor Madison. The motion carried unanimously with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

PLD REPORTS - FARMERS' MARKET OF KEENE - REQUEST FOR USE OF CITY PROPERTY - 2025 FARMERS' MARKET; COPPER CANNON DISTILLERY - REQUEST TO PARTICIPATE IN THE KEENE FARMERS' MARKET; CABANA FALLS - REQUEST TO PARTICIPATE IN THE KEENE FARMERS' MARKET

The Clerk stated that the Council would consider the next three reports together and that an amendment would be considered on the first report, relative to the Farmer's Market of Keene.

A Planning, Licenses & Development Committee report read, recommending the Farmers' Market of Keene be permitted to use 22 parking spaces along Gilbo Avenue and 18 spaces on the opposite side of the median strip in the Commercial Street parking lot from Saturday, April 26, 2025, to Saturday, October 25, 2025. This approval is contingent upon the following conditions:

- Submission of a certificate of liability insurance for \$1,000,000, listing the City of Keene as an additional insured;
- Execution of a standard revocable license and indemnification agreement;
- Payment of a total rental fee of \$932.00, with monthly installments of \$155.00 due on the first day of each month;
- Access to City electrical service for a seasonal fee of \$60.00;
- Obtain all necessary permits and licenses, comply with applicable laws, and adhere to any recommendations from City staff.

Additionally, it is recommended that the Farmers' Market of Keene be permitted to place sandwich board signs on City property before sales begin, subject to City staff review and approval regarding quantity and placement. These signs must be removed immediately after sales conclude.

A Planning, Licenses & Development Committee report read, recommending that the Copper Cannon Distillery be granted permission to sell alcohol and provide individual product samples to patrons at the 2025 Keene Farmers' Market on City property licensed to the Keene Farmers' Market in accordance with the requirements of the State Liquor Commission. Said permission is contingent on submitting a signed letter of permission from the Keene Farmers' Market, obtaining all necessary permits and licenses, and compliance with all laws.

A Planning, Licenses & Development Committee report read, unanimously recommending that the Cabana Falls Winery be granted permission to sell alcohol and provide individual product samples to patrons at the 2025 Keene Farmers' Market on City property licensed to the Keene Farmers' Market in accordance with the requirements of the State Liquor Commission. Said permission is contingent on the following: submitting a signed letter of permission from the Keene Farmers' Market, obtaining all necessary permits and licenses, and compliance with all laws.

A motion by Councilor Jones to carry out the intent of all three Committee reports was duly seconded by Councilor Filiault. A motion by Councilor Jones was duly seconded by Councilor Madison to amend the Committee Report on the annual license for the Farmer's Market to allow the placement of a portable toilet, at the licensee's expense to be available during the operation of the market and for the duration of their license. Licensee must comply with all recommendations of city staff and the portable toilet is subject to removal if directed by city staff. The motion to amend the report carried unanimously with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor. Referring to the amended Committee report on the Farmer's Market as well as the reports on Copper Cannon Distillery and the Cabana Falls Winter, voted unanimously to carry out the intent of the reports.

PLD REPORT - KEENE YOUNG PROFESSIONALS - REQUEST TO USE CITY PROPERTY - TASTE OF KEENE FOOD FESTIVAL - JUNE 7, 2025

Councilor Remy pointed out his stated conflict of interest, though it was not a pecuniary conflict. He was willing to step away. There was no objection to Councilor Remy recusing himself from the conversation.

A Planning, Licenses & Development Committee report read, recommending granting the Keene Young Professionals Network permission to use downtown City rights-of-way on Saturday, June 7, 2025, for a Food Festival, subject to the following conditions:

- Submission of a certificate of liability insurance in the amount of \$1,000,000, naming the City of Keene as an additional insured;
- Execution of a standard revocable license and indemnification agreement;
- Agreement by the Petitioner to cover any City service costs exceeding the allocated City funding, with payment due within 30 days of invoicing;
- Permission for the Petitioner to place porta-potties in City parking spaces at the base of Washington Street and on Railroad Street (north side near Cherry Garden) from Friday, June 6, 2025, to Monday, June 9, 2025. These units must be secured to prevent vandalism when unattended overnight. Additional porta-potties may be placed in the alley between

the former Miller Brothers building and the Colonial Theatre with consent from private property owners;

- Permission to serve alcoholic beverage samples for consumption within the event footprint, in accordance with the terms of a one-day license from the NH Liquor Commission and any conditions set by City staff;
- Submission of signed letters of permission from private property owners for any use of their property;
- Compliance with all required permits, licenses, applicable laws, and any recommendations from City staff.

The event footprint and layout shall include the traveled portions of Central Square, both sides of Main Street from Central Square to Emerald Street and Eagle Court, and part of Railroad Street. Road closures may also extend to other streets as necessary for detour routes, with final closure and detour plans determined in coordination with City staff. The event will take place from 11:30 AM to 4:00 PM, with setup and cleanup times to be coordinated with City staff. Free parking is granted under the City's free parking policy for designated spaces on Washington Street and Railroad Street for equipment storage from Friday, June 6, 2025, to Monday, June 9, 2025, as well as for spaces within the event footprint on the day of the festival.

A motion by Councilor Jones to carry out the intent of the Committee report was duly seconded by Councilor Madison. The motion carried unanimously with 14 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilor Remy abstained.

PLD REPORT - COUNCILOR REMY - POTENTIAL IMPLEMENTATION OF CONSENT AGENDA BY COMMITTEE - CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS

A Planning, Licenses & Development Committee report read, recommending directing the Charter Officers to investigate and present to the City Council a plan for development and potential implementation of a consent agenda format for City Council meetings. A motion by Councilor Jones to carry out the intent of the Committee report was duly seconded by Councilor Madison.

Councilor Jones summarized the Committee report, stating that this was well done, and the request that came to the Committee was a way to discuss the possibility of streamlining the way the Council does business. Instead of putting it on more time, the Committee brought it to the Council to determine whether there was interest in having staff further pursue the possibility of a consent agenda process.

Councilor Remy said he was unsure whether this would be the right thing for the Council to do, but he wanted to initiate the conversation. He recalled that the Council tried a consent agenda at its December 19, 2024, meeting, grouping Committee actions as one motion. He thought it went well for a first attempt, so he considered it worth investigating the possibility of implementing it further, noting that it had worked well when grouping three motions earlier in the meeting. With some practice, he thought it could work to streamline the Council meetings. He liked an idea mentioned at the Planning, Licenses and Development (PLD) Committee to have the Standing committees decide at the end of their meetings which agenda items could be grouped on a

consent agenda at the next Council meeting; that would remove staff's concern about having to make the decisions. For Councilor Remy, it was mostly about the non-controversial Committee reports or matters on similar topics that could be grouped and voted on together (e.g., grouping votes on sewer mains and sewer manholes). With research and practice, he thought a method could be developed. Councilor Remy hoped to hear the will of the rest of the Council.

Councilor Filiault respected the goal of having faster Council meetings on some nights, but he was opposed to it as an "it's not broken, don't fix it" situation. He agreed that there would be instances where grouping things and speeding up the process would be beneficial, as seen earlier in this meeting (e.g., the Farmers' Market), if recommended by the City Clerk. Still, Councilor Filiault said that with consent agendas, the Council would be taking actions on things and the public would not know what is happening. While it would take longer, he said it needs to be done right for the constituents. He encouraged his fellow Councilors to imagine what these discussions look like from the outside. He said faster is not always better. Councilor Greenwald recalled years past when Council meetings would last until past 11:00 PM and now meetings might last less than two hours. In the interest of transparency and information, Councilor Greenwald agreed with Councilor Filiault and opposed this measure. At times in the past, Councilor Greenwald stated that the Committee Chair would not even explain the motions, so the public would not know what was happening. He thought the current process was a good compromise and if certain issues could be grouped—like earlier in this meeting—he thought that would accomplish the same thing.

Councilor Haas thought the example from earlier in this meeting of the City Clerk grouping the Farmers' Market items was the exact direction to go in. He thought the Council was looking for more direction and motivation like that, so things are discussed and advertised at the right times and common things are grouped. Councilor Haas thought this could give the Council some direction, noting that this was not a vote to pass anything, just to sense the opinion of the Council.

Councilor Tobin thought back to her early days as a Councilor, when it was unclear how things worked with items going back and forth between the Council and Standing Committees. So, when Councilor Remy presented this idea, Councilor Tobin said she checked the views of the Council and Standing Committees videos on the City's YouTube channel. She found that views were much higher for Council meetings, which suggested to her that was where people were getting more of their information. That was an important consideration for her. She was open to exploring more options to combine motions like those concerning the Farmers' Market, but she wanted those decisions to be separate; she said sometimes people think that government is something that happens to them and she wanted to make sure people understand how they could participate in the process.

Councilor Jones said that the Council had tried to streamline things over time. For example, the Clerk's office now handles Sidewalk Café Licenses, eliminating the need for 15+ applications per year to go through the Council. Similarly, there is now a special Committee for Congregate Living and Social Service Licenses, which considers applications for lodging house licenses. This again was a license that was previously considered by the City Council. Councilor Jones

agreed with Councilor Filiault's concerns about the public not understanding what the Council is voting on if they group items this way. He said sometimes things get lost in translation, so it is good to have full explanation.

Councilor Favolise said he is typically in favor of moving things forward to have something the Council can vote on. In this case, he did not think he felt strongly enough in support of consent agendas that the PLD Committee or staff should be spending as much time as would have to be spent on this. He said that at the PLD meeting, Councilor Jones alluded to the questions: Who decides what gets on the consent agenda? Is it a vote of the Committee? Does the Mayor put it on? Does it require a unanimous vote of the Committee? Does everybody have to be present at the Committee meeting? Councilor Favolise could see the Committee and staff getting stuck on these issues, which was not worth it to him, so Councilor Favolise said he would be voting against the Committee recommendation. He said he associated himself with some of the comments that if the Council could group reports together, on the floor, he did not see anything wrong with that. So, Councilor Favolise thought he heard the Council directing the Mayor and City Clerk that it liked what happened at tonight's meeting, but he was not willing to have the PLD Committee and staff spend more time on this than that.

Councilor Madison felt he sometimes still did not understand what happened at Council meetings, but he supported this motion. He said it would be worth having a conversation about streamlining these meetings. He stated that he would not be running for his Council seat again, and in talking to people interested in running, he learned that the greatest concern was the time commitment. He informed them that it varies from 1.5 hours to 3 hours or more for Council meetings, but then Committee meetings are additional; this week he had two, three-hour meetings, much of which is spent on "fluff." So, Councilor Madison agreed that there could be a way to streamline things, if not for the Council, then for the citizens who attend meetings and wait for certain items, or for staff who have worked a full day and are still here at 8:00 PM. Mayor Kahn said he had spent some time discussing this with the Charter Officers, and regardless of the outcome of this vote, the Mayor believed this discussion had made an impact. He thought everyone recognized that things could be done to organize the presentation of the motions and combine them when possible. He noted that some things that seem routine, like accepting donations or spending money, still these items must be approved by the Council. The City Clerk agreed that she would be happy to consider these ways to streamline the process.

On a vote of 6–9, the motion directing the Charter Officers to investigate and present to the City Council a plan for development and potential implementation of a consent agenda format for City Council meetings failed. Councilors Remy, Williams, Madison, Roberts, Chadbourne, and Greenwald voted in the minority.

Councilor Remy was grateful because the point was to have the conversation. Councilor Jones agreed that the Council accomplished something with this conversation just by the Councilors telling the Mayor and the Charter Officers the positive feedback about the Farmers' Market applications.

FOP REPORT - DOWNTOWN BUSINESS AND EMPLOYEE PARKING UPDATE

A Finance, Organization & Personnel Committee report read, recommending accepting this item as informational. Mayor Kahn filed the report as informational.

FOP REPORT - FUTURE DEVELOPMENT - BLACK BROOK TAX INCREMENT FINANCE DISTRICT

A Finance, Organization & Personnel Committee report read, recommending that the City Manager be authorized to negotiate a development plan and a tax increment financing plan regarding parcels in the Black Brook Corporate Park Tax Increment Financing District. As part of any plans, the City Manager may explore whether it is beneficial to enlarge the area of the development district to include additional parcels. A motion by Councilor Powers to carry out the intent of the Committee report was duly seconded by Councilor Remy. The motion carried unanimously with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

FOP REPORT - APPROVAL TO ACCEPT DONATIONS SOLICITED, AND ACCEPT AND EXPEND FUNDS RAISED TO SUPPORT EMPLOYEE EVENTS AND SIMILAR ACTIVITIES

A Finance, Organization & Personnel Committee report read, recommending that the City Manager be authorized to solicit and accept items donated to support fundraising or other activities related to employee events, accept and expend cash donations, and accept and expend funds raised through fundraising activities including raffles, conducted pursuant to RSA 287-A, in support of such events. A motion by Councilor Powers to carry out the intent of the Committee report was duly seconded by Councilor Remy. The motion carried unanimously with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

FOP REPORT - ENGINEERING AGREEMENT WITH MCFARLAND JOHNSON INC. FOR THE AIRPORT PERIMETER FENCE PROJECT

A Finance, Organization & Personnel Committee report read, recommending that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to negotiate and execute an agreement with McFarland Johnson Inc. for engineering services associated with the Airport Wildlife Perimeter Fence project (05J0004B) for an amount not to exceed \$325,000. A motion by Councilor Powers to carry out the intent of the Committee report was duly seconded by Councilor Remy.

Councilor Madison asked the City Manager if the final layout of the fence was determined or if that was still pending the permitting phase. The City Manager, Elizabeth Ferland, deferred to the Airport Director, David Hickling, who said that this would be the design phase of the project. During the previous phase, the environmental assessment was conducted, allowing the layout of the fence to be finalized.

Councilor Williams asked if the current fence design would leave the wetlands intact. Mr. Hickling said at this time, the design placed the fence along the Runway Safety Area, which is away from Airport Road.

Mayor Kahn asked for the total amount appropriated. Mr. Hickling said the design would be multi-phased and the design engineering contract would be the total part of this project. When

there is more work in those parts of the project, Mr. Hickling would come back to the Council. Mayor Kahn asked if the City had received the necessary appropriations from the Federal Aviation Administration to complete the project. Mr. Hickling said yes, he would do a grant application based on this action and then award the contract after the grant.

The motion to carry out the intent of the report carried unanimously with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

FOP REPORT - ENGINEERING AGREEMENT WITH MCFARLAND JOHNSON INC. FOR THE AIRPORT TAXIWAY A RECONSTRUCTION PROJECT

A Finance, Organization & Personnel Committee report read, recommending that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to negotiate and execute an agreement with McFarland Johnson Inc. for the construction administration of the Taxiway 'A' Reconstruction project (05J0004B) for an amount not to exceed \$308,300. A motion by Councilor Powers to carry out the intent of the Committee report was duly seconded by Councilor Remy. The motion carried unanimously with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

FOP REPORT - RECOMMENDED AMENDMENTS - KEENE COMMUNITY POWER PLAN

A Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee report read, recommending that the next Community Power Plan electricity options have four levels. These levels would include the Keene Basic as an elective option with the minimum renewable energy content required by the State of New Hampshire which is 25% total renewable energy, the Keene Green Local with 35% total renewable energy, the Keene 50 as the default option with 50% total renewable energy, and the Keene 100 as an elective option with 100% total renewable energy. A motion by Councilor Powers to carry out the intent of the Committee report was duly seconded by Councilor Remy.

Councilor Powers summarized the first recommendation in the FOP Committee report was intended to update the Community Power Plan and the second recommendation would adopt the Plan. He recalled how many people invested time and energy in this Plan. He said that most of the amendments the FOP Committee spent time on were at four levels: 25% total renewable energy, Keene Green Local at 35%, Keene 50 as the default with 50% total renewable energy, and Keene 100 as an elective option with 100% total renewable energy. He said the Committee spent a lot of time trying to devise a solution that would be acceptable and work out for everyone. The Plan was developed several years ago with the honorable idea that levels would be cleaner by 2030. Councilor Powers discussed the current circumstances, stating that it was difficult to know if the City would reach its goals. He discussed the cost of doing business and the impact on community members who could not afford the two cents that would add up over time at the grocery store. So, he said the FOP Committee developed a proposal that three members supported four recommended levels.

Councilor Filiault said he would vote in favor of the Committee report. He said the Council used to joke about their phones ringing off the hook, but he said for this matter, he received many

emails of overwhelming support for this committee report. So, he intended to vote with his constituents.

A motion by Councilor Workman was duly seconded by Councilor Bosley to amend the Committee report to only include three levels: 35%, 50%, and 100%, with the default level being 35%.

Councilor Workman said this was not the time. She told the Council that she understood this goal and she did not want to discredit the work that the Energy and Climate Committee (ECC), the FOP Committee, or City staff. However, Councilor Workman noted that this would be an optional increase, and she did not think the City should be unnecessarily adding to residents' bottom lines. She called this a want, not a need. Councilor Workman also said she received all the constituent emails Councilor Filiault received and Councilor Workman respected their input. She hoped those who could contribute more to the Community Power Plan would continue to do so, but she did not think the Committee recommendation was the correct method to reach the goal.

Councilor Bosley said that when she initiated this conversation at the previous Council meetings, it became very clear to her that a compromise was needed, and she hoped that the FOP Committee would return with a resolution. She did not see anything about an adder fee on the table at this meeting as a partial compromise; she thought it was left in the Plan so it could be discussed in the future. The real crux of her issue was that the City adopted an admirable and aspirational goal in 2019—which she was not yet on the Council to vote on—but five years later in the current climate (i.e., inflation), this felt like a huge hurdle. She did not feel like she could support a 50% default rate with these costs to reach this goal in good conscience. When she read the FOP minutes, she learned that 4% of people opted down, 2% opted for 100%, and 1% opted for 50%; 7% of people did not change the default rate. Councilor Bosley said that was probably because they did not understand how the program works; they were opted into Keene Community Power at the default rate. She said the City had not done a good job of educating residents about their options and how to opt in-and-out of these plans. Councilor Bosley said residents are too busy working to put food on their tables to educate themselves on how to make the best financial decisions. She said that when she was learning about the Keene Community Power Plan she recalled being told it was an opportunity for the City to create a savings mechanism for its constituents by buying power in bulk. It was not explained to her as the only tool the City had to reach this one particular goal prior to her being a Councilor. In good conscience, Councilor Bosley said she could not vote to increase rates but in two years she might change her mind.

Councilor Favolise said he prepared some remarks. He, too, received the communications from folks across the community, some of his constituents. “So, I want to be very clear about why I am supporting this amendment and why I support 35% as the default rate. He continued that he wasn’t on the Council in 2019 when these initial goals were adopted, but the world was vastly different then. I wanted to put some actual hard numbers and statistics to what Councilor Powers, Councilor Bosley, and Councilor Workman have alluded to in terms of the costs facing people across the country, across the state, and right here in the community. In 2019, the median home

price in New Hampshire, according to the New Hampshire Association of Realtors, was \$300,000. Today, it is pushing \$600,000. In 2019 a loaf of bread according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, National Government Statistics, was 50% less expensive today than it was six years ago. That number is about 300% more expensive for a dozen eggs. Our residents, ratepayers in the City, are being hit from so many different directions. I don't feel good about adding an additional punch to them right now. This doesn't mean that we're not making progress toward clean energy. It doesn't mean that we're not continuing to punch above our weight as a small rural community. The 35% default is still 10% above what we are required to have under State Statute. It's 10% above the State minimum renewable portfolio. I understand the desire to get to 100% by 2030, but I fully agree with Councilor Bosley—we can't climb up to that by stepping over our constituents in the process. I would like to conclude with this. I've heard some discussion around this Plan that it's eight additional dollars a month, and it's not that much in the grand scheme of things. I'm not going to look at my constituents living on a fixed income—deciding between paying for prescriptions this month, clothes, food, transportation—well, it's only \$8/month. I can't do it. I won't do it. I'll vote to support this amendment, and I think this is a way to strike a balance between continuing to move toward and supporting our clean energy goals and initiatives as a City and recognizing the economic situation that many of our constituents find themselves in.

Councilor Lake spoke against this amendment because he did not support eliminating the 25% option. He said some Councilors spoke about this possibly increasing costs for some individuals struggling in the community. At the same time, Councilor Lake said this amendment would get rid of their cheapest option, so he did not understand why the concern was cost. He did not think eliminating this option was the right way forward and hoped to find another compromise. He spoke more broadly to the cost for the average consumer, explaining that this Plan has a Resolution for those customers who cannot afford the higher rates. Councilor Lake stated that any person on this Plan—at any time—can opt out, opt down, switch to Cheshire Community Power, or explore other public options in the community at a better rate. If a constituent tells Councilor Lake that they cannot pay for this Plan, he sends them the link to opt out; he said it is easy to get the bill, go online, and opt out. So, Councilor Lake did not think his fellow Councilors should say that residents could not handle this. He said the Councilors should continue to be leaders in the community, work toward these energy goals, and inform all constituents of what they can do in their situations. This would only be successful at scale and Councilor Lake was worried that this amendment would undermine one of the important parts of this program. So, he would vote against this amendment but was open to other amendments.

Councilor Madison echoed Councilor Lake about the importance of keeping the 25% option. Councilor Madison said he was hearing Councilors discuss a lack of public education about the options available to residents. He said the City would need to do a better job of ensuring people are informed rather than simply hamstringing itself against reaching its goals. He appreciated the comments about people staying with the default, which potentially increases the default cost. Respectfully, Councilor Madison viewed the solution as more outreach and education rather than changing the levels and eliminating the cheapest option. He also appreciated the comments about the distinction between wants and needs in this climate, specifically in a climate where 100-year

floods are now becoming annual events. This climate, where our forests are burning. This climate, where devastating hurricanes are happening several times per season. This climate, where millions of our fellow citizens are facing climate-related disasters. So, Councilor Madison asked his fellow Councilors to consider wants vs. needs in this climate.

Councilor Williams noted that Councilor Favolise cited statistics from 2019, so Councilor Williams wanted to do so as well. Councilor Williams said the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere in 2019 was approximately 407 parts per million, and at this time, it is about 427 parts per million. Councilor Williams asked what we would do about this problem; what responsibility do we have to fix this problem? He said the City already had a Plan and should stick with the Plan. He appreciated that there was an opportunity to opt out if people have trouble meeting the 50%. He agreed that the City should take proactive steps to educate people about their options. With this update, he wanted to see mail sent to every member of the Plan indicating that the default rate had changed and how to opt out if they chose to. However, Councilor Williams said that the planet is getting hotter, and this Plan is what this City has to do about it, so he said, "Let's do it."

Councilor Haas agreed with the idea of having a Plan, following it, and going forward. Councilor Haas said there would always be an argument for these being "hard times" or "special times." He cited reading past Council minutes and learning of missed opportunities along the way. He agreed with other Councilors that this was a communications issue that should be addressed immediately. He acknowledged that some people do not have time to go to meetings and take on communications so they just pay higher fees, so Councilor Haas said the City would have to reach out to those people and make sure that they understand the changes and their options. Additionally, Councilor Haas stated that it would be a great idea to retain the State-mandated minimum as a possibility and direct users if they choose to be to set to the 50% default. More importantly to the Councilor, it is what makes Keene attractive. He cited the Farmers' Market, Taste of Keene, and all the other wonderful things in the community because, Councilor Haas said, Keene is aspirational and not just ordinary.

Councilor Chadbourne voted against both motions at the Committee level and was in favor of keeping the four levels, but not in favor of the default being 50%. Regarding the Committee recommendation to adopt the whole Community Power Plan with amendments she maintained consistency and voted in dissent. Councilor Chadbourne explained her position of pride in this very engaged community that cares deeply about one another, the community, including the environment. She said the community set very lofty goals in 2019. She had been a part of vision meetings for the 2010 Comprehensive Master Plan and ongoing Master Plan update. She loosely quoted John Lennon, "life is what happens when you're [busy] making [other] plans." She said the Community Power Plan was developed in 2019 and that it is important to be flexible because sometimes things change. She thought the City could still accomplish its goals, but perhaps not by 2030, given the current state of the world; perhaps by 2035. With so many major market fluctuations to worry about in their day-to-day lives and how to meet those challenges, she thought it was in the best interest to maintain the four levels. However, Councilor Chadbourne disagreed with the default being 50%, so she would support the amendment. Discussion ensued

as Councilor Chadbourne described engaging with a young neighbor family with four kids who moved to Keene two years prior, rented an apartment first, and then bought a home; they switched to Eversource because it was less expensive. Councilor Chadbourne agreed that the City needed to do more to inform people because it did not need angry constituents who opted into the default without realizing it and paying more. She suggested better literature with the first bill. For this amendment, Councilor Chadbourne suggested the 35% as the default. She understood the reasoning behind the 50% default to meet the City's goals on time, but she suggested adjusting the goalpost.

Councilor Greenwald stated that this was all clearly about education, which had been repeatedly emphasized. Customers had the options to go up to 100% or go down. He said the concern over \$8/month was laudable, stating that he could not wait for budget discussions in May when the tax increases would come in at \$8/month.

Councilor Roberts said that nothing happens in a vacuum, and he heard a lot of people in different silos that crossover. He discussed the concept of 100% renewable energy, recalling when California achieved 100% renewable energy while he lived there, noting that 10% of renewable energy coming through the line from other states, for example, might be lost. So, someone could be paying for 100% renewable energy and receiving electricity that is 0% renewable, or pay for 50% from Quebec, for example, and receive more than anticipated. Councilor Roberts went on to discuss the concept of the "average person," questioning who that was, recalling the statistics mentioned about houses going from \$300,000 to \$600,000 since 2019. He said that if he just bought a house for \$600,000, he would not care about the cost of electricity. He said there are programs to help pay the electric bills of low-income individuals, such as electric subsidies in the City. Councilor Roberts said the Council could not state who this Plan or these levels would hurt/help the most. He added caution that if consumers receive informational postcards all the time, they might switch companies every six months looking for a better rate than the City or County; it would eventually cause the City's costs to increase and the Councilor called it a vicious circle. Regarding climate change, Councilor Roberts said it was coming, plain and simple. Who would be affected? He said the City would have to discuss all these issues, including the flooding, mentioning the impact on his home in 2005. He asked who would pay for the infrastructure required to handle the big deluges that Vermont had seen over the previous two years due to rainfall. He mentioned how high the Connecticut River was at the time of this meeting. Councilor Roberts said the City could not make decisions independent of these other factors.

The City Manager said that when the City went out to bid again for the new, revised Community Power Plan, there would be substantial outreach similar to the first time the Plan was adopted. The first time, there were mailings, public meetings, and radio announcements. Still, she agreed that it would be hard to reach everyone. Everyone currently on the City's Plan would receive a direct mailing explaining what is happening with the Plan, including the new default, available options, and instructions on how to make a change.

Councilor Workman clarified that she was proposing the three-level option and associated figures as a compromise based on the information that came out of the FOP Committee, recalling

Councilor Lake saying that three levels would be in line with consumer standards. So, Councilor Workman thought it would be a good thing. Regarding this being a communication problem, she reminded the Council that for the past nine years, she had worked with some of the most marginalized members of this community, such as serving as a case manager for several non-profits, assisting those with basic activities of daily living, including opening their mail. She discussed the understaffed and overburdened non-profit system, noting that simply stating someone could opt in or out of this Community Power Plan would put more work on caretakers and in-home direct support professionals. Councilor Workman said this would impact those who could not afford it the most.

Councilor Lake clarified that the position he took at the FOP meeting was in support of three levels at 25%, 50%, and 100%. He thought it was very important to keep the 25% level, which was why he would not support Councilor Workman's amendment. Councilor Lake thought the FOP recommendation was a good one that aligned with the ECC recommendation.

On a vote of 5–10, the motion to amend the Community Power Plan to three levels—35%, 50%, and 100% —with the default at 35%, failed. Councilors Bosley, Roberts, Favolise, Workman, and Chadbourne voted in the minority.

Councilor Bosley clarified that the Committee's recommendation would be the original, default Community Power Plan, with four levels: 25%, 35%, 50%, and 100%. The City Manager explained that this first motion would be the Council's instructions to her for the bid. The second motion would be amendments to the Plan, regardless of what the Council determined to be the default. Every time the City goes out to bid, staff will need to come back to the Council and ask for the parameters for the bid.

Councilor Greenwald asked what would happen in the case of a “no” vote on this first motion. The City Manager said she would not have the authorization to move forward with a bid because she would not have instructions as to what to bid.

Councilor Bosley asked if we vote no on the Committee recommendation, would that leave us at the original plan as the default? The City Manager said no, for the second vote on the Plan, the language in the Plan was written in a way that allows the Council flexibility from bid-to-bid, including the ability to add an adder fee, change the default, or change the number of levels. The Plan is written with the most flexible language to allow for every type of bid. The Plan would still need to be approved separately by the Public Utilities Commission (PUC).

A motion by Councilor Chadbourne to amend the Community Power Plan to make the default rate 35% was duly seconded by Councilor Bosley.

Councilor Remy called the question. He felt this was the same amendment as the previous one. Discussion ensued about why it was a different motion. The Mayor allowed discussion because Councilor Chadbourne's motion differed: it proposed maintaining all four levels but changing the default from 50% to 35%.

Councilor Lake referred to a suggestion to change the City's total goal target from 2030 to 2035 or some other future goal. He said he was not necessarily opposed to the City, considering it's a

long-term plan, if the City realized halfway through its 2019 Plan that it was a little too ambitious. Still, he said it was important for the City to move forward with a Plan and if 2035 was the new goal, he said there should be incremental change between now and then, so that when 2035 arrives, the City does not increase the default to try to reach its 100% goal. Councilor Lake did the quick math for the City, making the same incremental change for every cycle of negotiations every three years to the 2035 goal; he cited 51% this bid cycle, 67% the next, and 81% in 2031. He said he still did not see how the City would reach any of those renewable energy goals if it did not continue to increase incrementally. So, Councilor Lake said he would vote against the amendment, as he felt the 50% default was correct.

On a vote of 5–10, Councilor Chadbourne’s motion to amend the default rate in the Community Power Plan to 35% failed. Councilors Bosley, Tobin, Favolise, Workman, and Chadbourne voted in the minority.

Councilor Jones recalled that many years ago, when he chaired the Cities for Climate Protection initiative, which created the City’s Greenhouse Gas Plan, Carbon Footprint Plan, and Environmental Plan. Additionally, when he was PLD Chairman, many people were interested in these plans and moving in these directions. Councilor Jones said the good thing about the Community Power Plan is that people have a choice of what to pay for. He said some people in the community were choosing to pay for \$700,000 homes and renewable energy. He thought the recommendation out of FOP was well-discussed and worked because the consumer could choose their level; someone wanting to be an environmental steward could choose a higher rate, and he encouraged them to do so, and those with concerns could opt down. Councilor Jones did not think the Council was hurting the people by voting for this Plan.

Councilor Chadbourne asked the City Manager how to advise community members with new Community Power Plan accounts, so they know information in advance and are not blindsided. The City Manager deferred to Senior Planner, Mari Brunner, who explained that when people move into Keene or to a new address, the consultants mail those customers, notifying them that they are eligible for automatic enrollment. The customer has 30 days before that happens; the letter will include opt-out cards that they can complete and return, or they can opt out by calling or visiting the online portal. The consultants typically do these mailing sweeps every few months. She said they had not been conducting those sweeps since the default Eversource rate was lower than the City’s (for the previous six months), because they had not been automatically enrolling people while the Eversource default was lower than the program. She recalled that Eversource’s rates change every six months. Ms. Brunner said that per NH law, no one would be enrolled in the program without notification and the option to opt out first.

On a vote of 11–4, the motion to carry out the intent of the first FOP Committee report carried. Councilors Bosley, Favolise, Workman, and Chadbourne voted in the minority.

A Finance, Organization & Personnel Committee report read, unanimously recommending that the Community Power Plan with amendments shown in the draft dated February 10, 2025, be adopted with the recommended revisions to have a four-level plan. A motion by Councilor Powers to carry out the intent of the Committee report was duly seconded by Councilor Remy.

Councilor Remy clarified the discussion at the FOP Committee about the levels in the Plan and his intention to ensure there would be an option in the plan for four levels allowed.

Councilor Favolise stated that he would vote in support of this recommendation. He mentioned at the last Council meeting in relation to a different item that the time for discussing something in a contract had passed. He felt the same was true for this, that the time for discussing and voting on what the levels should be had come and gone. He said he did not support the default level being 50%. Councilor Favolise said he continued to see the value in a Community Power Plan and prioritizing clean energy initiatives as a City. He encouraged his fellow Councilors to vote in support along with him, including those who voted against the previous recommendation.

Mayor Kahn believed that the conversation over the past month with the Council presented a challenge to the ECC to reassess the Community Power Plan and consider the current situation, as well as what kind of progress is reasonable for the community. He reiterated that this Plan would need to go to the PUC for approval, but there would still be options to adjust the Plan over time as the Council expressed interest in wanting to see additional thought put into the plan.

The motion carried unanimously with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

CITY MANAGER COMMENTS

The City Manager, Elizabeth Ferland, reported that Eversource would be donating more than 100 trees and shrubs to the City through the Arbor Day Foundation's Energy-Saving Tree Program, a larger environmental initiative spanning its three-state service territory. Residents could visit Eversource.com starting Monday, March 24, 2025, to select and reserve a free tree or shrub while supplies last. Applications must be completed online through the application portal. A press release and social media posts would disseminate the information.

Councilor Haas asked if residents could donate the trees they reserve from Eversource back to the City for installation on City property. The City Manager said it was a great question, and while the portal was not available yet, she suggested that when applying, they should enter the "right-of-way" for the location they propose the tree/shrub to be placed. The City Manager added that trees were also being funded through the Transfer Station Fund for the City right-of-way to be located at the former Findings property. Councilor Jones asked if it was the Transfer Station Closure Fund. The City Manager said no, the Solid Waste Fund—the City negotiated a settlement with the Department of Environmental Services that involved some tree planting.

The City Manager also announced that the 2025 Green Up Keene would be Saturday, April 26. Once again, there would be a drive-thru supply pick-up on Saturday. Public Works would place a dumpster prior to the event and drive specific routes the following Monday to pick up trash that is collected by volunteers and placed in NH the Beautiful bags. At this time, there were 25 teams signed up for this year's event. Anyone interested in volunteering could find a link at KeeneNH.gov, as well as a map showing the streets and neighborhoods available.

The City Manager shared that NHDOT scheduled a Road Safety Audit for Rt. 9 and Whitcombs Mill Road for April 1. Additionally, Public Works asked the City Manager to share that there would be Downtown traffic disruptions for Geotechnical testing using a truck-mounted drill from

March 24, 2025–April 1, 2025; users should expect lane closures and some traffic delays. Also, Public Works shared that Airport Road would be closed for construction March 24, 2025–April 1, 2025, but it would be available for waste haulers and official Wastewater Treatment Plant business only. The barricades would be set up just after the Terminal parking lot and would impact traffic to and from the businesses located at the Terminal.

ORDINANCES FOR FIRST READING - RELATING TO AMENDMENTS TO THE ZONING MAP - 425 MARLBORO STREET - NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS TO LOW DENSITY - ORDINANCE O-2025-07

An application was received from Jeb Thurmond, requesting to amend the Zoning Map relative to the Zoning designation for property located at 425 Marlboro Street. The application proposed a change from Neighborhood Business to Low Density. Mayor Kahn referred Ordinance O-2025-07 to the Joint Planning Board/Planning, Licenses and Development Committee.

ORDINANCES FOR FIRST READING - RELATING TO AMENDMENTS TO THE LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE, FEATHER SIGNS IN INDUSTRIAL DISTRICTS - ORDINANCE O-2025-08

A memorandum was received from Mari Brunner, Senior Planner, recommending that the City Council refer Ordinance O-2025-08 to the Joint Committee of the Planning Board and the Planning Licenses, and Development Committee for a public workshop. Mayor Kahn referred Ordinance O-2025-08 to the Joint Planning Board/Planning Licenses, and Development Committee.

ORDINANCES FOR FIRST READING - RELATING TO THE LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE, SINGLE-FAMILY PARKING REQUIREMENTS - ORDINANCE O-2025-09

A memorandum was received from Mari Brunner, Senior Planner, recommending that the City Council refer Ordinance O-2025-09 to the Joint Planning Board/Planning, Licenses and Development Committee for a public workshop. Mayor Kahn referred Ordinance O-2025-09 to the Joint Planning Board/Planning, Licenses and Development Committee.

RESOLUTION - RELATING TO ADOPTING THE PROVISIONS OF RSA 79-E “COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION TAX RELIEF INCENTIVE” - RESOLUTION R-2025-09

A memorandum was received from Medard Kopczynski, recommending, that Resolution R-2025-09 relative to revision and readopting of the provisions of 79-E “Community Revitalization Tax Relief Incentive” with a revised map be referred to the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee for consideration and a recommendation back to City Council. Mayor Kahn referred Resolution R-2025-09 to the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee.

RESOLUTION - APPROPRIATION OF FUNDS - PURCHASE OF SIDEWALK PAVER - RESOLUTION R-2025-07

A Finance, Organization & Personnel Committee report read, recommending the adoption of Resolution R-2025-07. A motion by Councilor Powers to adopt Resolution R-2025-07 was duly

seconded by Councilor Remy. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

**RESOLUTION - RELATED TO THE APPROPRIATION OF UNASSIGNED FUND
BALANCE FOR THE FY 25 FIRE DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL BUDGET - RESOLUTION
R-2025-10**

A memorandum was received from Kari Chamberlain, Finance Director/Treasurer, and Jason Martin, Fire Chief, recommending that Resolution R-2025-10 be referred to the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee. Mayor Kahn referred Resolution R-2025-10 to the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee.

NON-PUBLIC SESSION

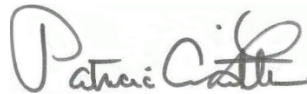
At 9:18 pm a motion by Councilor Greenwald to go into a non-public session to discuss the potential the release of non-public minutes under RSA 91-A:3 II (m) was duly seconded by Councilor Tobin. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor. The non-public session began at 9:19 PM. The Mayor called for a five minute recess. The City Attorney stated that the Councilors would be considering non-public minutes from 2014 and 2015 this evening. These minutes are recommended for release because the circumstances that warranted their withholding from the public no longer exist. At 9:34 PM the discussion concluded.

Councilor Greenwald moved to unseal the non-public minutes from February 20, March 20, April 3, April 10, and November 20, 2014; as well as the minutes from February 5, February 19, March 5, April 9, April 16, May 21, June 4, July 2, July 16, August 6, September 3, September 17, September 18, October 8, October 27, and October 29, November 16, November 17, November 19, November 24, and December 3, 2015 pursuant to NHRSA 91:A:3 IV (a) because the reason the minutes were originally sealed no longer applied.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mayor Kahn adjourned the meeting at 9:36 PM.

A true record, attest:



City Clerk



CITY OF KEENE NEW HAMPSHIRE

ITEM #B.1.

Meeting Date: April 3, 2025
To: Mayor and Keene City Council
From: Mayor Jay V. Kahn
Through: Patricia Little, City Clerk
Subject: **Nomination - Conservation Commission**

Recommendation:

Attachments:

1. Kinsella, Katie_Redacted

Background:

I hereby nominate the following individual to serve on the designated Board or Commission:

Conservation Commission

Katie Kinsella (Slot 1)

Term to Expire December 31, 2027

21 Hancock Street

From: [Patty Little](#)
To: [Heather Fitz-Simon](#); [Terri Hood](#)
Subject: Fw: Interested in serving on a City Board or Commission
Date: Wednesday, March 5, 2025 5:20:00 AM

Please save and redact

Sent from my U.S.Cellular© Smartphone
Get [Outlook for Android](#)

From: helpdesk@ci.keene.nh.us <helpdesk@ci.keene.nh.us> on behalf of City of Keene
<helpdesk@ci.keene.nh.us>

Sent: Tuesday, March 4, 2025 7:50:19 PM

To: Nicole Howe <nhowe@keenenh.gov>

Cc: Patty Little <plittle@keenenh.gov>; Terri Hood <thood@keenenh.gov>

Subject: Interested in serving on a City Board or Commission

<p>Submitted on Tue, 03/04/2025 - 19:50</p>

<p>Submitted values are:</p>

First Name:

Katie

Last Name:

Kinsella

Address

21 Hancock Street
Keene, NH 03431

How long have you resided in Keene?

2 months but previously 7 years

Email:

[REDACTED]

Cell Phone:

[REDACTED]

Employer:

VHB

Occupation:

Natural Sciences Manager

Retired

No

Have you ever served on a public body before?

No

Please select the Boards or Commissions you would be most interested in serving on.
Conservation Commission

Please let us know the Board or Commission that you are most interested in serving on.
Conservation Commission

Please share what your interests are and your background or any skill sets that may apply.

I'm a professional wetland scientist and have been an environmental consultant for 20 years.
I've presented in front of conservation commissions in support of my client's projects.

Please provide 2 personal references:

Andrew Madison

AMADISON@KEENENH.GOV

[REDACTED]

References #2:

Anne-Elizabeth Kaitano

[REDACTED]



CITY OF KEENE NEW HAMPSHIRE

ITEM #C.1.

Meeting Date: April 3, 2025
To: Mayor and Keene City Council
From: Cheryl Belair and Steve Bragdon
Through: Patricia Little, City Clerk
Subject: **Stephen Bragdon and Cheryl Belair - Safety Issues Associated with the Driveway at 82 Court Street**

Recommendation:

Attachments:

1. Parking 82 Court St.

Background:

Attorney Bradgon and Ms. Belair has submitted a follow-up communication regarding continued safety concerns when vehicles exit the driveway at 82 Court Street. Their previous communication requesting consideration of an ordinance that would restrict parking on either side of the driveway was submitted in November 2023 and reported out as informational in February 2024.

March 31, 2025

TO: City Council, City Manager, City Attorney, City Engineer and Mayor of Keene

RE: Safety Issues Associated with the Driveway at 82 Court St.

Dear Interested Parties,

Since 2021 we have been requesting that the parking spaces in front of our office building located at 82 Court St. be changed to eliminate at least 3 or 4 spaces to the north of our driveway. Our specific request in 2024, when we came before the Municipal Facilities, Service & Infrastructure Committee, was to have a minimum of a 30 ft. setback on the northern side of our driveway as a no parking area.

We would like to bring to your attention the fact that on Thursday, March 27, 2025, a 3-car accident occurred in front of 82 Court Street, with one of the passengers being a small child.

Upon speaking with the driver of the car exiting our driveway, she was very clear that she checked for traffic at least twice in both directions but could not see the small car coming south because of all the parked vehicles.

This continues to be a daily danger that is faced by every person exiting our driveway, including all the staff and clients of the 2 businesses located in our building. The accident today is not the first to occur over the last few years due to the same circumstances.

Visibility to the north of our driveway caused by parked cars is terrible.

When we addressed our concerns previously, there was discussion that any change in the parking configuration would have to apply to all parking from Main St. to School St. and "exceptions can't be made per property". We would STRONGLY disagree with this statement when safety is the concern.

We would also argue, that 82 Court Street is different than other properties near us and therefore should be treated as such when it comes to parking and public safety.

- We are a business with 15+ people coming in and out multiple times a day. On an average day I would estimate that cars are pulling out of our driveway no less the 25-30 times.
- We are the only **business** on the west side of Court Street north of our location
- Our driveway sits at the bottom of the incline on Court Street which makes visibility much worse than other Court St. properties
- Because we are at the bottom of the incline, we believe by the time traffic comes to our location, it is moving faster than the northern part of Court St.

Respectfully,



Cheryl A. Belair

Stephen B. Bragdon





CITY OF KEENE NEW HAMPSHIRE

Meeting Date: April 3, 2025

To: Mayor and Keene City Council

From: Municipal Facilities, Services and Infrastructure Committee, Standing Committee

Through:

Subject: Request for City Council Communication to State of New Hampshire - Proposed Roundabout at Rt 9 and Whitcombs Mill Road

Recommendation:

On a vote of 5-0, the Municipal Services, Facilities, and Infrastructure Committee recommends the City Council authorize the drafting of a letter to the State of New Hampshire, proposing a roundabout be constructed at the intersection of Rt. 9 and Whitcomb's Mill Rd.

Attachments:

None

Background:

Chair Greenwald asked Councilor Jones to speak.

Councilor Jones stated that in the early 2000s there was an issue on Rt. 9 and Washington St. He continued that the State built a jug handle there that the City was against from the beginning, saying it was dangerous. Michael Blastos was the mayor. There was a petition to change it because it was dangerous. He himself got 200 people to sign. The petition went to Governor Nichols and the Executive Councilor, Mr. Wheeler. Nothing was done about (the jug handle) until one day a woman was killed there, coming south on Rt. 9, crossing over two lanes and trying to make that left turn onto Washington St. At that time, Mayor Blastos told the Governor and the Executive Councilor he could go public with the petitions or the (State) could do something about it. It got done right away.

Councilor Jones continued that that is the kind of action they are looking for today. They are not looking for something to go on the State's Ten-Year Plan. This is a whole different action, working on something that will make life safer. He is not a traffic expert and does not know if a roundabout is the answer, but "if you ask for diamonds and hope for rhinestones, sometimes you get it." He does not care whether the City Council's communication to the State is a letter or a Resolution, but he does not want it to be just an email. Regarding to whom the letter or Resolution goes, he specifically asked for it to include the NHDOT Commissioner, the Administrative Services Commissioner, the NH Public Works Director, and the Safety Commissioner. Those are the people who get together all the time and look at what is going on with safety and traffic around the state. The current Governor and Executive Councilor should be copied, because they want them in tune with this.

Councilor Jones continued that he will not read all the bullet points from his letter, but they all know it

is a failed intersection, and they all know that soon there will be a 12-unit residential complex going in there. That will cause hundreds more vehicle trips per day. The intersection is commonly used by employees, guests, visitors, and service vehicles going to Langdon Place. All delivery trucks, school buses, and emergency vehicles servicing Whitcomb's Mill Rd. must access via Rt. 9 as they are prohibited from coming the Arch St. way because of the limited-weight bridge going over White Brook. That is what causes part of the issue there.

Councilor Jones continued that as everyone knows, there have recently been a high number of fatal and tragic accidents along this stretch of Rt. 9 in both Chesterfield and Keene. They hope the State can do something about that. There is a high need for improvements at this intersection. There is a lack of turning lanes, narrow shoulders, steep terrain, excessive curvature, and limited visibility. A few years back, the State installed a roundabout about a half mile east of this location, on Rt. 9 and Base Hill Rd., to the acclaim of the local residents. It made life a lot safer.

Councilor Jones stated that he has something else he did not put into his bullet points, which he thinks is very important. He has maps of the intersection to show tonight, with a red dot at the intersection where Whitcomb's Mill Rd. crosses over. Along Whitcomb's Mill Rd., Daniels Hill Rd., and Langley Rd., there are about 50 houses. About a year ago, there was a bad accident where Daniels Hill Rd. comes out and meets Rt. 9. He challenges anyone to go into that neighborhood and try to make a left turn onto Rt. 9. If there were a roundabout at the intersection of Rt. 9 and Whitcomb's Mill Rd., all those people could make their way to that one intersection and safely get across to the other side or make that turn to go toward Chesterfield.

He continued that it could not hurt to ask (the State for a roundabout). It came up a few years back when the City improved the residential complex. There was a different mayor at the time, who said he was going to contact the State. He (Councilor Jones) does not know if that happened or if he made any progress with that. Tonight, all he is asking is for the City Council to send a communication to the State, either a letter or a Resolution, asking for a roundabout and seeing what happens.

Chair Greenwald asked if anyone on the Committee objects to sending this communication. Hearing none, he asked if there was any objection from the public, or the Public Works Director. Hearing none, he continued that he thinks a letter would be preferable to a Resolution. He asked the City Attorney if she thinks a letter would be good. The City Attorney (replied yes).

Councilor Favolise asked if there is a preference for who writes the letter. He asked if it should be the Mayor. Others replied yes.

Mr. Lussier stated that Councilor Jones mentioned that a couple of years ago when the residential development was approved, the Mayor talked about going to the State. He continued that what came about as a result of that was the City submitted a request for roadway safety audit to the State, through their normal process. That was in 2023. In 2024, the City was notified that they were selected to have that intersection audited, scheduled for April 1. Next week, NHDOT staff will come, and the Southwest Regional Planning Commission (SWRPC) will participate. They will do a site visit and all the on-site portion of that. He handed out copies of the roadway safety audit flow chart. They will do the audit next week, and the City will get a copy of the draft report and will be invited to weigh in on it. The State will then compile the draft comments into a final report. The final report goes to NHDOT's Highway Safety Improvements Committee, and then they make recommendations about the implementation. There will probably be some near-term or immediate implementation steps, such as re-striping the roadway for turn lanes or something like that, and then potentially longer-term implementation.

Mr. Lussier continued that he knows Councilor Jones does not want this to go into the Ten-Year

Plan, but long-term solutions such as a multi-million-dollar roundabout would almost certainly be part of the State's Ten-Year Plan. His suggestion is to wait for the roadway safety audit to be completed. When the City gets the draft, that would be the appropriate time for the City to weigh in with the recommendation that this intersection be improved with the roundabout, which would be a long-term improvement there.

Mayor Jay Kahn stated that this week, the SWRPC rendered their final decision on the TAC (Transportation Advisory Committee). He continued that the City had one project in there, the intersection improvements at Rt. 32 and 12. It was not recommended. He voted against the TAC's recommendation; his was one of 14 votes. The two authorized projects were not in Keene. His point is that if the highway safety audit renders that this is another intersection worthy of improvements and those improvements need to go into the Ten-Year Plan, then Keene would have two competing projects. He would ask the Committee, before he gets into the position of writing to someone, that there is some consideration as to which project is of higher value and of higher priority for the City.

Councilor Jones stated that the Public Works Director and the Mayor are exactly right, and that is why he was trying to avoid that process altogether and having it sound more like an emergency process. He continued that he wanted the letter to go to the department heads to try and circumvent the (Ten-Year Plan) process, because it does cause problems as the Mayor is talking about.

Chair Greenwald asked if there is a problem with sending the letter and asking for the consideration. Councilor Filiault replied that he does not see a problem with it; he thinks it is a good idea. He continued that if they go through the process like the Mayor talked about, it causes a conflict for the Mayor. But if it is two different processes, he no longer has that conflict.

Chair Greenwald replied that the State will make their own decision, and chances are, it will be "Don't hold your breath." Councilor Jones replied that he is trying to have this recognized as an emergency situation versus something for the Ten-Year Plan.

Councilor Tobin stated that she is curious about what the turnaround time is for the report. She asked if it will take months to get back, or a week, for example. Mr. Lussier replied that the City will have a draft report in two or three months, but the final process with going through the Highway Safety Improvements Committee, the executive council, and all the different steps, will probably take six or more months before the implementation plan is finalized. Councilor Tobin replied that that makes her feel more comfortable with sending the letter now.

Councilor Favolise made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Filiault.

On a vote of 5-0, the Municipal Services, Facilities, and Infrastructure Committee recommends the City Council authorize the drafting of a letter to the State of New Hampshire, proposing a roundabout be constructed at the intersection of Rt. 9 and Whitcomb's Mill Rd.



CITY OF KEENE NEW HAMPSHIRE

Meeting Date: April 3, 2025
To: Mayor and Keene City Council
From: Municipal Facilities, Services and Infrastructure Committee, Standing Committee
Through:
Subject: **Monadnock View Cemetery: Section B New Cremation Lots**

Recommendation:

On a vote of 5-0, the Municipal Services, Facilities, and Infrastructure Committee recommends the City Council approve additional cremation lots in Section B of the Monadnock View Cemetery.

Attachments:

None

Background:

Chair Greenwald asked to hear from Parks and Recreation Director Carrah Fisk-Hennessey.

Ms. Fisk-Hennessey stated that she is here tonight to request that the MSFI Committee recommend the City Council approve additional cremation lots in Section B of the Monadnock View Cemetery. She continued that the cemetery is quickly running out of space. They are in the process of accepting and reviewing proposals for cemetery expansion on a larger scale. In the meantime, they are worried that they might run out of cremation spaces specifically. Currently, there are 13 cremation lots available, and 56 full body burial lots available.

She continued that in November 2024, staff went to the Trustees to request the ability to add some lots to the existing mapping at Monadnock View Cemetery in three different sections. Section B is the first section they would like to use. Ms. Fisk-Hennessey provided a map for the Committee's reference. The map of these 27 additional lots in Section B shows they will not interfere with anyone else's resting place. They are currently located within an area of vegetation, so that everyone will have access to the new spaces. She is here because of Section 22-61 of the City Code. For them to develop and use lots, and before they can open them up for sale, they need to have it plotted and recorded in the City Clerk's Office upon City Council approval. She is here to ask the MSFI Committee to request City Council approval for the addition of these lots.

Councilor Tobin asked where Section B is. Ms. Fisk-Hennessey replied that if you are going into Monadnock View Cemetery, you go up one of the roadways, and Section B is in the center of the cemetery.

Councilor Tobin asked what vegetation is there now. Ms. Fisk-Hennessey replied shrubbery.

Chair Greenwald asked if members of the public had any questions. Hearing none, he asked for a motion.

Councilor Filiault made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Tobin.

On a vote of 5-0, the Municipal Services, Facilities, and Infrastructure Committee recommends the City Council approve additional cremation lots in Section B of the Monadnock View Cemetery.



CITY OF KEENE NEW HAMPSHIRE

Meeting Date: April 3, 2025

To: Mayor and Keene City Council

From: Municipal Facilities, Services and Infrastructure Committee, Standing Committee

Through:

Subject: **Former Findings Property and Keene Skate Park Project Update**

Recommendation:

On a vote of 5-0, the Municipal Services, Facilities, and Infrastructure Committee recommends the update on the former Findings property and the skate park project be accepted as informational.

Attachments:

None

Background:

Chair Greenwald asked to hear from the Parks and Recreation Director. He continued that he and other Committee members have been asked what is going on in this location.

Ms. Fisk-Hennessey stated that in the map the Deputy City Manager handed out to the Committee is a conceptual rendering of what is going into the former Findings property space. She continued that right now, they have the survey and wetlands delineation and sidewalk design in progress by Meridian. They will have these plans ready for construction at the end of April. You will see the sidewalk that goes along the front connecting Water St. to the parking area at Russell Park. Bazin Brothers will be coming back to the site around mid-April. They are the ones who did the demolition of the Findings property. They will cap and abandon the water, sewer, and gas utilities and loam and seed the site to complete that part of the project.

She continued that the City will be putting a skate park permanent fence out to bid to make sure that they can get rid of the temporary fence that is there now. A Bocce ball court will be likely installed in May. The lights, posts, and bases will be delivered for installation around the third week of April. The green circles on the map show where they anticipate being able to plant trees. Again, this is a conceptual idea at this point. They want to preserve this space as green space and increase the number of trees that are available in this park. The trees will not all be the same species. It is important to have a diversified forest. Also, they will not all be planted at the same time, so it will be an eventual planting of different species of trees in this space.

Chair Greenwald stated that he was under the impression that this property is a floodway and that is why buildings cannot be built there. He asked if that is true. Mr. Bohannon replied that if you follow the demarcation of the walking path, the skate park was located just outside of that. He continued that the wetland that is earmarked up above is part of the property. The floodway goes close to the

sidewalk. Chair Greenwald replied that among the questions people ask him are, “Why don’t we rebuild the building?” and “Why not get an industry out there?”, and the answer is that it is a floodway. Mr. Bohannon replied that is correct. He continued that the City has accepted LWCF funds, so this will be green space for perpetuity.

Councilor Favolise stated that he really likes this, and he thinks it is consistent with what folks in the east Keene neighborhood have asked for in that space. He continued that it is always nice to see investment and development of all sorts of projects, industry, green space, and otherwise, in east Keene. He also wants to say that he does not think this is a terrible place for a Peace Pole, if that is the ultimate design direction that they go in.

Chair Greenwald stated that among the other questions and comments he has heard, as he is sure Councilor Haas has, too, are ones about community gardens and a pickleball court. He continued that green space is a good idea, too, but those are things the public is asking about.

Councilor Tobin stated that she met the woman who was testing for wetlands, and it was fascinating to hear about that process. She continued that she noticed, walking over there, that there are still some invasive vines in the ground in that area near the skate park and around where it says the existing tree is. She wonders if there are plans to remove those. Ms. Fisk-Hennessey replied that she is not sure, so she thinks that it would warrant further exploration as Bazin Brothers comes back to loam and seed the area.

Mr. Bohannon stated that regarding the pickleball question, the other side of the map shows basketball courts, which have four pickleball courts lined on that space. He continued that there is no need to put a whole new set of pickleball courts on the other side. He is thus informing the public that pickleball courts are in that location. People do need to bring their own nets. The spaces are lit from the lights of the basketball courts. Quite a few groups use those because they are kind of quiet and unknown, although they might become a little more competitive for the space now that he has announced it a little more. What he sees is that the basketball and pickleball community have worked out a cohesion. It is working out well.

Chair Greenwald asked if there were any further questions from the Committee or the public. Hearing none, he asked for a motion.

Councilor Tobin made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Filiault.

On a vote of 5-0, the Municipal Services, Facilities, and Infrastructure Committee recommends the update on the former Findings property and the skate park project be accepted as informational.



CITY OF KEENE NEW HAMPSHIRE

Meeting Date: April 3, 2025
To: Mayor and Keene City Council
From: Municipal Facilities, Services and Infrastructure Committee, Standing Committee
Through:
Subject: Downtown Infrastructure Project Update

Recommendation:

On a vote of 5-0, the Municipal Services, Facilities, and Infrastructure Committee recommends accepting the verbal update on the Downtown Infrastructure Project as informational.

Attachments:

None

Background:

Mr. Lussier stated that there is nothing too heavy to talk about with the downtown project this month, but he has some brief updates. He continued that to date, the City has received seven applications for the Project Ombudsman position. He will send the resumes to the selection team probably this week, to schedule interviews with the candidates the team is interested in meeting in the next couple of weeks. By this time next month, they will be able to give the MSFI Committee more insight on the selection process.

Mr. Lussier continued that this week, the drill rig was on Main St. doing geotechnical exploration, also called subsurface investigations. They are collecting data on the soil conditions below ground. Some people were confused about the purpose of that work. It has nothing to do with investigating the condition of the utilities or determining the scope of the utility work. It is providing the design parameters they need for things like how to hold up the foundation for a traffic signal pole or making sure the gravel under the new roadway is of sufficient quality and quantity that it will hold up over time, not about what the actual utilities are. That is the information they are collecting this week. It is expected to wrap up by the end of the week.

Mr. Lussier continued that the City Clerk's Office has scheduled a meeting with the license holders. There have been some questions about how the City would manage things like sidewalk café licenses during construction. A draft Ordinance was put into the Council process, which would allow the Public Works Director to deny licenses when the roadway was under construction. That did not go over well. Based on that feedback, staff will meet with folks who currently hold sidewalk café licenses, on April 7, to give them realistic expectations about what it will be like to try to have sidewalk dining during construction. Staff want them to understand, for example, that the tables will be sitting on gravel and the area will be dusty. They also need to figure out what they can live with in terms of notification when they need to move their tables out of the way, and for how long a period of

time a site needs to be inactive in order for them to be allowed to move back in, and then move back out, and similar issues. They need to just set some parameters for how to manage it during construction.

Mr. Lussier continued that the draft Ordinance that was placed on more time and is languishing will be withdrawn. Instead of having an Ordinance allowing the Public Works Director to direct the City Clerk not to issue licenses, they will manage it through conditions of approval that will be written into (an establishment's) annual license for the year that the site is under construction.

Mr. Lussier stated that finally, he wanted to mention the Northern Borders Regional Commission. The City received a grant for the solar pavilion on Gilbo Ave. They received notice on Monday that that grant had moved its way through the process, so now they (the Northern Borders Regional Commission) are waiting for some paperwork from the City to document a few things. They hope that within the month they will get notice to proceed on the work that is covered by the grant. When that happens, staff will come to the Council for authorization to execute an agreement with the SWRPC. The City is required to use the services of a Local Development District (LDD) to help administer the grant. The City pays the SWRPC 2% of the grant award, for the SWRPC to make sure the City is following all the federal regulations. The SWRPC is the LDD and they have agreed to do that work, and the City will sign an agreement with them. The Council will also be seeing, hopefully next month, a solicitation for a consulting team to design the structure. The design of that structure was not included in Stantec's work, because the City was not sure if they would be moving forward with it at the time they issued Stantec the contract for the final design. Thus, the City will do a separate solicitation to select an engineer to design that structure. Of course, it will need to be integrated with the downtown plans.

Councilor Tobin asked if there are plans to communicate with the Farmer's Market. Mr. Lussier replied yes, absolutely. He continued that that will be managed the same way the City manages events during the process. The City has committed to accommodate all the community events that are happening downtown during construction, including Farmer's Market, which is a weekly event. Events might be in a different footprint. During the second year of construction, they will be working on Gilbo Ave. Right now, that is 2027. The Farmer's Market will not be located on Gilbo Ave. then; the City will find a different location for that. Councilor Tobin stated that she wants to make sure that the Farmer's Market is given plenty of notice so they can notify the customers, which might be more than two weeks' notice. Mr. Lussier replied that this will be worked out months in advance and it will be the same location for the duration of the season. He continued that it could be in one of the parking lots. The Commercial St. lot is half of the Farmer's Market today; maybe all of it could be within the Commercial St. lot, such as by using both sides of the lot. Maybe it would be in a different part of the downtown. The location has not been decided. Once it is decided, his preference is that the Farmer's Market be in (that one location) for the season.

Councilor Favolise stated that he does not remember the details of this conversation at a previous MSFI Committee meeting, but he had asked about whether the City had been doing enough to compile resources and work with places like the Hannah Grimes Center to help businesses manage through this. He continued that there was a specific event Mr. Lussier had said staff would be at, and he wonders how that went. Mr. Lussier replied that Hannah Grimes hosted a coordination meeting for events planners, in January. He continued that staff did attend, and essentially the message staff gave was what he just said here, and staff showed conceptual plans of how alternative arrangements could be arranged. The Highway Superintendent and staff from the KPD met to talk about how they are going to manage events when Central Square is under construction, and everything is torn up. They determined that by using a combination of other spaces, they could accommodate the footprint of any event currently being held. Again, events might not be in the usual locations, but the City can provide as much as or more room for every event that is currently being held. Parking will be a

challenge, because part of the space they are counting on to accommodate those events is the Gilbo Ave. parking lot. That is a challenge they still need to figure out details on. Just as they do now, staff will work with (organizers for) each event to determine the footprint they need and how to safely accommodate that, with event security and all the other considerations.

Councilor Ed Haas stated that he has a question for staff. He continued that the Project Ombudsman position is deemed a part-time position. He asked what the anticipated start date is. Mr. Lussier replied that it was going to be early spring as part of the construction ramp up, but now that the project has been delayed a year, they would like to select the person for the position and have them officially become a part-time employee, but their work scope will be fairly limited through the summer and early fall. It will ramp up later in the fall as they go into bidding the project, receiving the bids, meeting with the contractor to coordinate schedules, and whatnot.

Councilor Haas stated that the Ward 2 listening session brought up the need to understand traffic flows around construction during construction, not just during the events. There will be a lot of diversion of traffic into neighborhoods during construction. That would be good for the ombudsman to take on and plan for.

Chair Greenwald asked if there were any further questions from the Committee or the public. Hearing none, he asked for a motion.

Councilor Favolise made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Workman.

On a vote of 5-0, the Municipal Services, Facilities, and Infrastructure Committee recommends accepting the verbal update on the Downtown Infrastructure Project as informational.



CITY OF KEENE NEW HAMPSHIRE

Meeting Date: April 3, 2025
To: Mayor and Keene City Council
From: Municipal Facilities, Services and Infrastructure Committee, Standing Committee
Through:
Subject: **Route 9 Restriping Project Update**

Recommendation:

On a vote of 5-0, the Municipal Services, Facilities, and Infrastructure Committee recommends the verbal update on the Route 9 Restriping Project be accepted as informational.

Attachments:

None

Background:

Chair Greenwald asked to hear from Bryan Ruoff.

Bryan Ruoff, City Engineer, stated that last fall they discussed this Rt. 9 intersection. He continued that the Public Works Engineering Division, in conjunction with NHDOT, came up with a solution to re-stripe this intersection. They planned to execute that plan a day or two before Thanksgiving, but it snowed, which killed the plans for getting it done before the end of the year. Staff has since communicated with NHDOT. The reason the City was taking on the work and its expense was because NHDOT was no longer able to do the striping that late in the season. NHDOT has since confirmed, at the start of this season, that they will schedule and coordinate with the City to do this striping work. It is anticipated to be done within the next four to six weeks, at no cost to the City. There is no exact date yet; they are waiting for warmer temperatures. For a location with this volume of traffic, the temperature needs to be 50 degrees and rising in order for the striping to hold up. This work being performed by NHDOT in-house, at no cost to the City, which is different from the original plan.

Chair Greenwald replied that with the original plan, there was going to be a cost to the City. He continued that the other great news is that there were no accidents (in this location) over the course of the winter, which they are very glad about.

Chair Greenwald asked if there were any further comments or questions. Councilor Tobin thanked Mr. Ruoff for including the compass on the document, which was helpful.

Councilor Workman made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Filiault.

On a vote of 5-0, the Municipal Services, Facilities, and Infrastructure Committee recommends the verbal update on the Route 9 Restriping Project be accepted as informational.



CITY OF KEENE NEW HAMPSHIRE

Meeting Date: April 3, 2025

To: Mayor and Keene City Council

From: Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee, Standing Committee

Through:

Subject: **Engineering Agreement with Wright Pierce for Martel Court Bypass Sewer Force Main Final Design**

Recommendation:

On a 4-0 vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to negotiate and execute an engineering services agreement with Wright Pierce for the Final Design of the Martel Court Sewer Force Main Bypass Project (32JM012A), up to \$650,000.

Attachments:

None

Background:

City Engineer Bryan Ruoff addressed the committee and stated this item is an engineering agreement with Wright Pierce for the final design of the bypass sewer force main for the Martel Court pump station. In July 2023, the Martel Court pump station's night gate experienced a catastrophic failure. The pump station and force main have been temporarily repaired by City staff to keep them in operation. Mr. Ruoff stated this is a critical piece of infrastructure for the sewer system and the City overall.

In light of this, the City hired Wright Pierce on an emergency basis to develop a feasibility study to examine a bypass force main in case a similar instance or issue with the force main happens again. The consultant completed that scope of services this past December. Their report went to DES, where it was reviewed, approved, and found acceptable.

What the staff is asking is to take the preliminary engineering work and go to the final design. Mr. Ruoff explained the reason for hiring another engineer is to meet the City's procurement requirements. The value of the contract requires the City to obtain competitive pricing.

Secondly, there is a chance the City could procure federal funds for this work and the associated construction of the redundant bypass force main – the City is complying with federal funding requirements to advertise for RFQ, select a consultant and then hire them to complete this design work so we can put in this redundant force main for the City.

The amount listed as the not-to-exceed amount is based on the construction estimate. Typically, final

design engineering costs range between 15% and 20% of the construction cost. The City is using 20% as a worst-case scenario to move forward on this. The City already has \$2.4 million for this project, and any unused funds will be used for construction going forward.

The Chairman asked for the timeframe to go to bid. Mr. Ruoff stated he would like to go out to bid by January 2026.

Councilor Chadbourne made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Lake.

On a 4-0 vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to negotiate and execute an engineering services agreement with Wright Pierce for the Final Design of the Martel Court Sewer Force Main Bypass Project (32JM012A), up to \$650,000.



CITY OF KEENE NEW HAMPSHIRE

Meeting Date: April 3, 2025

To: Mayor and Keene City Council

From: Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee, Standing Committee

Through:

Subject: **Right of Way (ROW) Acquisitions for the George St Bridge Replacement Project**

Recommendation:

On a 4-0 vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to negotiate and execute temporary and permanent easements with abutting property owners necessary for the construction and future maintenance of the George Street replacement bridge, up to the aggregate amount of \$40,000.

Attachments:

None

Background:

Mr. Ruoff stated that this project is federally funded through NHDOT, with 80% federal funding and a 20% City match. Mr. Ruoff stated that funding is contingent on a couple of things being approved, one of which is the permanent easements and temporary construction access agreements needed for construction of the project.

The City has submitted a compliance with LPA and federal funding DOT requirement letters of statements of rights to the four property owners for easements. This issue has been discussed with the property owners. Mr. Ruoff felt \$40,000 should be sufficient for easement acquisition.

Councilor Lake made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Roberts.

On a 4-0 vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to negotiate and execute temporary and permanent easements with abutting property owners necessary for the construction and future maintenance of the George Street replacement bridge, up to the aggregate amount of \$40,000.



CITY OF KEENE NEW HAMPSHIRE

ITEM #D.8.

Meeting Date: April 3, 2025
To: Mayor and Keene City Council
From: Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee, Standing Committee
Through:
Subject: **Right of Way (ROW) Acquisitions for the Transportation Heritage Trail Phase 1 Project**

Recommendation:

On a 4-0 vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to negotiate and execute permanent easements with abutting property owners necessary for the construction and future maintenance of the Transportation Heritage Trail (THT) Phase 1 Project, up to the amount of \$10,000.

Attachments:

None

Background:

Mr. Ruoff stated this is also another project; 80% federally funded with a 20% City match.

There are easements required to upgrade existing drainage to ensure the improvements that are made to the trail. The City Appraiser has provided calculations for compensation for these properties, and the staff feels the value is appropriate for the three permanent easements needed for drainage improvements to the adjacent infrastructure to this project.

Councilor Roberts made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Chadbourne.

On a 4-0 vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to negotiate and execute permanent easements with abutting property owners necessary for the construction and future maintenance of the Transportation Heritage Trail (THT) Phase 1 Project, up to the amount of \$10,000.



CITY OF KEENE NEW HAMPSHIRE

ITEM #D.9.

Meeting Date: April 3, 2025
To: Mayor and Keene City Council
From: Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee, Standing Committee
Through:
Subject: Legislative Items of Concern

Recommendation:

On a 4-0 vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends that the City Manager or Mayor be authorized to write letters weighing in on behalf of the City on the various bills discussed this evening.

Attachments:

None

Background:

The Manager stated tonight that she would like to discuss with the committee the Bills that staff would like to support or oppose. She deferred to the Mayor to comment on a few Bills.

Mayor Kahn addressed the committee regarding House Bill 675. This is a Bill that proposes to limit the amount of funds that a local school board can raise through property taxes by placing a cap on the amount of increase based on a five-year average of a consumer price index.

The Mayor stated that the Bill has passed the House and that the House has sent that language to the Finance Committee, which has embedded it within House Bill 2.

House Bill 1 appropriates the money, and House Bill 2 is the trailer Bill into which legislative language is added.

The Mayor stated the reason the City has concerns regarding this Bill is because if the legislature believes it can place caps on school funding, then it is a small step to other types, such as property tax funding. This could include municipal and town governments and county government. The Mayor went on to say that if the state decides to increase retirement funding, that would be good, but if the state decides to reduce retirement funding, then local property taxes would be needed to respond to that downshifting. The City feels this type of cap is not in the best interest of taxpayers.

The Mayor stated that if the committee is interested in taking a position on this Bill, he will then share that with the other mayors at their next meeting and seek their support.

Councilor Roberts agreed that if this legislature passes this Bill, it would be transferred over to

municipalities. He felt local control is necessary which could eventually affect contracts and ultimately affect City services.

Senate Bill 297 – The Manager stated this Bill has already passed the Senate and is crossing over to the House. The Manager stated there is a legislative meeting coming up with the City's delegation next month and will continue to monitor the bills that either get killed or that are crossing over to be able to focus on them. The Manager stated they have received communication from Health Trust that if this Bill passes, they will be shutting down their doors and phasing the City out. Health Trust is a risk pool the City has been in for many years. There is another risk pool Interlocal Government, this is another source, towns and cities get their health insurance from.

She stated, however, that there are not too many other options. The Manager said there has been a long-standing battle between Health Trust, the Secretary of State's office and NHMA. A while ago HealthTrust and NHMA combined, even though HealthTrust is not with NHMA anymore - this Bill is definitely directed at HealthTrust and is coming from the Secretary of State's office. The Manager expressed concern that the City's cost of health insurance, which is one of the largest costs of employee benefits, will increase, and what will that mean in terms of transitioning employees in a very short amount of time and what that will mean to their benefits moving forward.

The Manager went on to say that the way that this is structured in Senate Bill 297 would require towns, municipalities, and counties to take on the risk. One year the cost may come in higher for a pool and then the next year it may come in lower, and it evens out overall. However, this would require towns and cities themselves to create reserves and take on the risk, should the cost go up or go down. The Manager stated this is of great concern and something the City will be opposing.

House Bill 456 – The Manager stated this bill was postponed but was a bill aimed at NHMA. It would limit the City's ability to join organizations like NHMA to represent the City in Concord. It says that you cannot use your budget to join an organization such as NHMA. The Manager stated the issue with that is, at the present time, the City chooses to join NHMA, and so does every other town and City in the State of New Hampshire, which makes our voice much louder than just the City of Keene going to Concord. This has, however, been frustrating for lawmakers because some of the Bills that they have been putting forward have been opposed by NHMA. She stated it is likely this Bill will be back next year.

House Bill 316 - It was reported as "ought to pass" yesterday, and it would eliminate billing for ambulance services and set the reimbursement rate for non-Medicare, non-Medicaid health insurance carriers at approximately 200% of Medicare reimbursement. The City is at 250% right now, and this goes backwards, and there would be a reduction in revenue.

SB 245 - Which the City would support, would set the reimbursement rate for ambulances at 325% of Medicare rates – this would be a potential 75% increase in revenue. The City will continue to support SB 245.

SB 291 - Would expand religious property tax exemptions to include rental housing for which a religious institution profits. The Manager noted this is not part of their mission; it is not part of the church, and what they are doing is actually renting out rental property and trying to exempt it from taxation. The City will continue to oppose this Bill.

HB 410 - Prohibits municipalities from enforcing or adopting restrictions unless directly necessary for health or safety reasons and supported by empirical and scientific evidence from nonpartisan sources. It talks about how much you can have for restrictions related to size of lots etc. The City would be opposing this Bill.

The Manager went on to say they are monitoring the state budget, and every year they monitor meals and rooms tax, highway block grant, state aid grants, wastewater project funding, and revenue sharing and advocate for at least what the City received last year. The City is aware that this is not a year to be advocating for more but if those revenues are reduced, it is a direct impact to the City budget and the potentially the tax rate.

With respect to the IMLS Service – even though the City is a net provider in terms of our sharing of resources, this would impact the City as well. The users of our library, but it would dramatically affect the small libraries around the City who are not able to purchase the materials that the people in their community are looking for. The City is hoping to weigh in with the federal government and continue to monitor the impacts on the state. This concluded the Manager's presentation.

Councilor Roberts stated that the issue with health insurance is of concern. The councilor discussed how health insurance issues impact the school district and how people are working beyond their retirement age, which at times puts them in a higher-risk pool that the school district has to assume. This would eventually have an impact on City taxpayers.

Library Director Marti Fiske addressed the committee and stated IMLS has a significant impact. She stated that even if the library was to raise its postage budget by \$13,000 next year, they won't be able to have interlibrary service in the State.

She noted IMLS funding pays over \$300,000 just to run the catalog system which all the libraries in the state use, another \$145,000 to join the nationwide inter library system, and then the cost the library would have to absorb in postage, which equates to about half million dollars across all libraries in the state. Between 2019 and 2022, the Keene Public Library has also received nearly \$300,000 in grants. Audio (talking) books would also be impacted, which is the only access that most homebound people have. Download access would also be limited

Ms. Fiske asked if the Council would agree to write to the federal government in support of resending the executive order, saying that she would be most grateful.

Councilor Chadbourne made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Lake.

On a 4-0 vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends that the City Manager or Mayor be authorized to write letters weighing in on behalf of the City on the various bills discussed this evening.



CITY OF KEENE NEW HAMPSHIRE

ITEM #D.10.

Meeting Date: April 3, 2025
To: Mayor and Keene City Council
From: Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee, Standing Committee
Through:
Subject: **Transfer of Personnel Funds to Address Library Budget Shortfall**

Recommendation:

On a 4-0 vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends that the City Manager be authorized to allocate \$47,000 from the FY25 Public Works Winter Operations wage lines to the FY25 library part-time wage-related accounts.

Attachments:

None

Background:

Ms. Fiske addressed the committee again and stated the library has a shortfall in the part-time personnel budget which shortfall occurred last year, but it was absorbed because of the many open full-time positions and ended up with a balanced personnel budget.

She stated this was discovered before the end of the first quarter and they implemented cost saving steps immediately; A 16-hour open position was not filled; they reduced and trimmed as many part time hours as possible; re-assigned a lot of duties to full time staff and to qualified part time staff who work a standard 32 hour a week.

Ms. Fiske noted she is now working an average of five hours a week at the reference desk and circulation desk. Last week, the Assistant Director worked over 17 hours on circulation and the reference desk. The head of Youth and Community Services is doing a similar amount of work. She stated that this is not cost-effective – you have the highest-paid people working essentially the jobs that are among the lowest-paid in the library. She noted they have also eliminated use of their per-diem staff. Library staff is struggling to get their work done.

Ms. Fiske went on to say that they have utilized a rollover from the leftover fund balance from personnel last year, amounting to \$26,932.00. After implementing the entire cost-cutting measure, they have managed to reduce the overage by 1/4 to 1/3, in addition to increasing the fund balance. There is still a shortfall of just under \$47,000. She pointed out that this is the first year they have had full staffing – they have had open positions for several years. She stated that they would have to lay off 12 part-time staff, which would equal 40% of the library's weekly hours and reduce another part-time position by 27%.

Ms. Fiske stated there is money in the Public Works Department budget, which is not being used

because of non-filled internal positions. She said she is requesting the council to authorize the Manager to transfer those funds to the library.

The Manager stated that although the budgets are bottom-line budgets and the overall budget is a bottom-line budget, wages are separated. She said she doesn't have the ability to transfer wage lines from one department to another. The Manager noted she has identified in the Public Works Department sufficient wages to cover this shortfall and would like to be able to use wages from Public Works winter operations. She indicated she had discussed this with the Public Works Director, and he is supportive of this. This would enable the City to cover the remainder of this fiscal year and avoid any additional cuts and layoffs to the library.

Councilor Lake thanked the department for the detailed outline and for their assistance with this deficit. He asked whether this is a one-time expenditure or are we expecting to see an increase in the budget to account for this going forward as well. The Manager stated this is a substantial increase in the part-time budget line going forward. The Manager stated she has completed the meetings with all departments and there is a significant adjustment over \$100,000 in part-time wages in order to fund the different positions in the department. She added that this is a Band-Aid fix through the end of the fiscal year and the Council has the opportunity to make those decisions.

Councilor Chadbourne made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Roberts.

On a 4-0 vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends that the City Manager be authorized to allocate \$47,000 from the FY25 Public Works Winter Operations wage lines to the FY25 library part-time wage-related accounts.



CITY OF KEENE NEW HAMPSHIRE

ITEM #G.1.

Meeting Date: April 3, 2025
To: Mayor and Keene City Council
From: Megan Fortson, Planner
Through: Paul Andrus, Community Development Director
Subject: **Resignation - Jude Nuru - Energy & Climate Committee**

Recommendation:

Accept the resignation of Jude Nuru from the Energy & Climate Committee with gratitude for his four years of service.

Attachments:

1. Jude Nuru Resignation Letter_Redacted

Background:

Jude Nuru is a regular member of the Energy & Climate Committee. He has served on the committee since January 2021 and has submitted his resignation effective immediately due to moving out of the state with his family.

From: Jude Nuru <jnuru@revisionenergy.com>

Sent: Tuesday, March 4, 2025 2:38 PM

To: Zach Luse <zach@paragondigital.com>

Cc: Mari Brunner <mbrunner@keenenh.gov>; [REDACTED] >

Subject: Withdrawal from ECC

Hi Zach,

I'm writing to inform you that I'm in the process of relocating from NH to MA, and as such, I'm not able to continue as a member of the ECC. It's a difficult decision that I have to take to meet some family priorities.

I would like to use this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to you and the city staff (through Mari Brunner) for the opportunity to have served on the ECC. I enjoyed working with you and the rest of the ECC members. While I'm parting company with the hard-working ECC team, I will continue to be involved in the fight against climate change and being an advocate for clean energy wherever I find myself.

It's worth mentioning that I still work for ReVision Energy (I will be about 25 mins away from my office in Brentwood right on the MA border in Haverhill), and I will continue to work on projects throughout NH. In other words, NH will still be my home office, and I will have the opportunity to meet you all at events in the future.

Kind regards!

Jude Nuru, PhD

Solar for All Lead- NH| Employee-Owner

Direct: 603.852.6082

ReVision Energy, a Certified B Corp

Locations in Maine, New Hampshire & Massachusetts



CITY OF KEENE NEW HAMPSHIRE

Meeting Date: April 3, 2025

To: Mayor and Keene City Council

From: Municipal Facilities, Services and Infrastructure Committee, Standing Committee

Through:

Subject: Carl Jacobs - Installation of a Peace Pole - Central Square

Recommendation:

On a vote of 5-0, the Municipal Services, Facilities, and Infrastructure Committee voted unanimously to place this item on more time.

Attachments:

None

Background:

Brought back from later discussion: Chair Greenwald stated that the Committee has a communication from Cole Mills, who cannot be present this evening, in opposition to the installation of a Peace Pole on Central Square.

Chair Greenwald asked to hear from Carl Jacobs.

Carl Jacobs stated that as he indicated in the communication, they (he and Cameron Tease, Phil Wyzik, and Tom Julius) submitted a proposal last year for a Peace Pole. He continued that as he understands it, the MSFI Committee and some City staff members were interested in pursuing the notion of the Central Square fountain becoming some sort of peace monument. Now, they (he and the others who submitted the proposal) understand that that is not going to happen, and the fountain will go in another direction. He and the others are still interested in donating a Peace Pole to be installed in Central Square, which is their purpose for being here tonight.

Chair Greenwald stated that he would throw this question to the City Manager. He continued that he was not aware that the function or design or anything about the fountain had changed. He hoped the fountain would become a fountain of peace and that has not changed. Maybe the shape will change, and maybe not; they have not decided.

Elizabeth Ferland, City Manager, replied that she would let Deputy City Manager Andy Bohannon talk more about this since he is the one who worked with the group, but they did go through a process for a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a fountain with a message of peace. She continued that they received one proposal, and the group, comprising Mr. Jacobs, Mr. Tease, Mr. Wyzik, and Mr. Julius, decided not to pursue that direction.

Chair Greenwald stated that his observation was that at first, the group wanted a Peace Pole and then a suggestion came forth to make the fountain a fountain of peace. He continued that he does not think the City said anything further. He does not think there was any design work done on the fountain.

Andy Bohannon, Deputy City Manager, replied that that is correct. He continued that after the last MSFI Committee meeting, staff took the direction for the fountain, created a Request for Qualifications (RFQ), and put it out to bid. They received one proposal, reviewed it, and determined that it was not what the group of people who originally petitioned the Committee was looking for. The group said they wanted to go back to the Peace Pole idea. Thus, staff re-directed them back to the Committee.

Chair Greenwald stated that there was nothing said by City staff that the fountain would be inappropriate for the use. He continued that he just wants to set the boundaries of where they are. He asked if Mr. Jacobs wanted to speak more or if there were other people with him who wished to speak.

Mr. Jacobs stated that he learned something tonight that he did not know, because he had the clear impression that the idea of the fountain becoming a peace monument was off the table. Chair Greenwald replied that they are having the conversation.

Mr. Jacobs stated that the proposal they received was for a beautiful piece of sculpture that represented "peace" in the artists' eyes and probably in others' eyes. He continued that several people in the group, who were petitioning for the Peace Pole, had a concern. Rotary International has a Peace Pole program, and the group of people petitioning for the Peace Pole in Keene thought that being associated with this effort to install Peace Poles all around the world would strengthen their effort. The proposed sculpture was beautiful but did not really make that connection to Peace Poles around the world. In his opinion, the design would evoke beautiful thoughts but is not immediately recognizable as "peace." Peace Poles are clearly labeled with "Peace" in many languages and "May Peace Prevail." For the Peace Pole in Keene, it would be the languages commonly associated with Keene, or that have been in the past, such as Abenaki, Braille, and obviously English. The artistic expression was more than they were looking for; they were looking for a more literal statement about peace.

Councilor Favolise stated that as someone who is not an architect or sculptor, he had not envisioned this as a sculpture combined with a fountain. He asked if the group would be open to having an inscription of "peace" around the fountain in various languages. To clarify, he is not saying they should or should not go in this direction. Mr. Jacobs replied that his is just one voice, and he should probably have some of the others in the group speak to this as well, but yes, that was one of the possibilities they were thinking about. He continued that the word "peace" seems to be essential to the effort, as did something like an obelisk to associate the monument with the other statements of peace around the globe. That is especially important to the Rotary Clubs that are supporting this effort.

Phil Wyzik of 15 Base Hill Rd. stated that he is the past president of the Elm City Rotary Club that has been part of this project from the beginning. He continued that the group was confused, because they thought someone had decided that the delay of the infrastructure project would mean a delay of the renovation of the fountain, so they thought they were back to square one with asking the Council to make a place somewhere in Central Square for a standard granite obelisk. The group could go back and think about it more, if using the fountain as a memorial to peace is still a possibility.

Cameron Tease of 21 Grant St. stated that he is the past president of the Keene Rotary Club and a

member of the committee that has been meeting since the end of 2023 on this subject. He continued that he agrees with Mr. Wyzik. The group thought that the (fountain as a peace monument) had been nixed. He saw on the front page of the Keene Sentinel a picture of a fountain like what had been there in the early 1900s, and it seemed like the decision had been made to separate the fountain and the Peace Pole or peace monument. The group is still open to a monument. It is just that, as Mr. Bohannon said, they did not come up with a design with the one submission they received (from the RFQ). The bottom line is that the group is committed to the symbol of peace they feel is universal, as a gathering place to show that the people of Keene are united around peace.

Chair Greenwald stated that the only thing that has been decided is that the fountain will be in the middle of Central Square, and not on the side. He continued that what it will be has not been decided and is up to people with more artistic ability than the MSFI Committee.

Mr. Bohannon stated that he thinks he can explain the confusion. He continued that at the Committee meeting in February, there was discussion about the fountain and its location. Then, the Keene Sentinel published an article about how Stantec had put forward a design that was like the more traditional fountain from the early 1900s. He himself was on vacation at the time of that meeting. When he returned, he met with the group petitioning for the peace monument, and they talked about their decision to move on from what they had done the RFQ for and to go back to the monument piece, thinking that Stantec had moved forward with the downtown infrastructure project and moved forward with a different fountain design. He thinks that explains the disconnect here.

Councilor Filiault stated that he and Chair Greenwald have been dealing with this for three years, and sometimes things get too much press, and the fountain is one of those things. He continued that he has no problem with the Peace Pole and thinks it is a good idea. His opinion is to keep it separate from the fountain. All the Committee talked about a few weeks ago was whether to move the fountain to the side or keep it in the middle, and they decided to keep it in the middle. That is all they said about the fountain, but social media (then had a large amount of conversation about the fountain). He thinks a Peace Pole would be great. There is one at the airport and there is no controversy there. He was joking before the meeting that if they put a Peace Pole in the middle of the night, it would probably take people weeks to even notice it, but if it is attached to the fountain, it will always have controversy to it. Because for whatever reason, even though this Downtown Infrastructure Project is a \$17 million project, people decided they were going to focus on the fountain. He thinks they should keep the peace monument separate from the fountain so it is not an issue down the road, with (the public) asking who designed it, who is paying for it, how much it costs, who in City Hall decided, who on the Council is friends with someone in the Peace Pole group, and on and on. He thinks if the peace monument was separate from the fountain, it would go through quickly.

Councilor Workman stated that she encourages the peace monument group to continue discussions with the City to come to an agreement or compromise to make sure the group's wishes and intent are fulfilled. She continued that the City can help with the logistical planning piece of it.

Mr. Jacobs stated that he is hearing that there is still support for a peace monument or Peace Pole on Central Square, which fills his heart with joy. He continued that the group started with the notion of a free-standing Peace Pole, and they would be happy with that. The idea of the fountain (being a peace monument) did not come from them; it came from City staff and Councilors who wanted to address other issues with the fountain. If others want to continue exploring that option, they could, but he is sure that if the Council is willing to accept the gift of a Peace Pole to be installed on Central Square, the group that has been requesting that is able to provide it. Probably the final design needs to be agreed upon, as well as the location. The group got sidetracked on the fountain effort but could easily come back to the (free-standing Peace Pole) option, as long as they clearly know which fork in the road they (the City Councilors) are taking.

Councilor Tobin stated that she was a little confused, too. She continued that she remembers the group coming to the MSFI Committee with the proposal of a Peace Pole. It is her understanding that the group is still working with City staff. She appreciates the clarity that one of the important elements is (peace) in different languages.

The City Manager stated that she would like to ask the Committee for some clarification. She continued that she had envisioned something like what Councilor Favolise described, with peace language in the fountain design, however that fountain ends up looking. For example, it could be engraved, or bricks, or something else. She appreciates Councilor Filiault's point about how this (the fountain) has been an emotionally charged topic. She wants to know whether the Committee wants staff to continue to work on the fountain idea or if they want them to work on the Peace Pole as a separate item. If it is the latter, she wants to know if they want it in Central Square. She would like additional direction to clear up the confusion.

Councilor Workman stated that she would be comfortable moving forward with exploring the fountain idea with the group (that is asking for the peace monument), in Central Square. She continued that she has some concerns about the aesthetics of having a pole in Central Square. She is not as comfortable with the pole being on Central Square as much as the fountain idea, but she does like the idea of a Peace Pole, and she would not vote against it if it came down to it.

Councilor Favolise stated that he agrees largely with Councilor Workman about the direction and concerns about the pole itself. He continued that, depending on the design that comes back, if it goes in the fountain direction, he does not feel comfortable judging how the community will react. There is a big difference between, say, adding something to the existing fountain versus redesigning the entire fountain. They have at least answered the question about moving the fountain or not moving it. It would be harder for him to support a standalone Peace Pole than it would be for him to support something that is tied in with the fountain, although he appreciates the message and he thinks this is a unique opportunity for them to recognize all the different backgrounds of community members. He appreciates the group coming to the Committee about this.

Jennifer Sizo of 10 Fairfield Ct. stated that as a member of the public, she thinks a Peace Pole is a great idea. She continued that the Peace Pole is very recognizable across the world, whether it is tied to the fountain or not. To a member of the public driving by and seeing the Peace Pole with different languages on it, it is very recognizable. She supports the idea. She is not 100% opposed to the fountain idea, but that will take a while.

Councilor Jones stated that he, too, received questions from the public about this. He continued that one of the unanswered questions is how it will fit. He thinks people are asking questions about how tall it will be, how much square footage it will take, how it will affect the Christmas Tree and/or the Pumpkin Festival, and so on and so forth.

Chair Greenwald asked if there were any further questions or comments.

Chair Greenwald made a motion to put this matter on more time to come back at the next MSFI Committee meeting, to allow the Committee and staff to work on a combination fountain and Peace Pole concept. Councilor Favolise seconded the motion.

Councilor Filiault replied that he is fine with that, but he thinks that is just one of the options to look at. He continued that he thinks all options should be explored. He is fine with the Peace Pole, whether it is with the fountain or not. It is up to them how they want to present it and how staff wants to work with it, but combining the Peace Pole with the fountain is not a good idea, based on what they just

went through when all the Committee said about the fountain was that they wanted to keep it where it is, and the topic blew up on social media, on the radio, and in the newspaper for a month. The Peace Pole process would go faster if it were not combined with the fountain. If they say they want it to be part of the fountain, he expects many more people would come out here and say they want their thing to be part of the fountain.

Chair Greenwald stated that the comments he personally has heard about it have been more about the funding of (the peace monument). He continued that with the City Attorney's permission, he would like to be the first to contribute \$100 toward a self-funded peace fountain.

Councilor Favolise stated that he can argue both sides of this. He continued that he can imagine that if a Peace Pole goes up, more people will want their pole or monument to go up. He is not sure that is necessarily a consideration for him. He would be open to tweaking the language of the motion to just direct staff to continue conversations, if the Committee does not want to pigeonhole it. He is not sure this conversation tonight could be productive much longer.

Public Works Director Don Lussier stated that he thinks Councilor Favolise addressed his question, but the way he heard the motion was that it was specifically about options involving a Peace Pole with the fountain. He continued that he was not sure if that was the intent, or if the Committee wanted staff to look at both options, having the Peace Pole in the fountain or not in the fountain. He does not have an opinion; he just wants to make sure staff is clear on what the Committee wants them to do.

Chair Greenwald replied that to clarify, the Committee wants staff to look at all options.

On a vote of 5-0, the Municipal Services, Facilities, and Infrastructure Committee voted unanimously to place this item on more time.



CITY OF KEENE NEW HAMPSHIRE

Meeting Date: April 3, 2025

To: Mayor and Keene City Council

From: Municipal Facilities, Services and Infrastructure Committee, Standing Committee

Through:

Subject: **Proposal to Add the Necessary Infrastructure to Accommodate Banners Across Main Street**

Recommendation:

On a vote of 5-0, the Municipal Services, Facilities, and Infrastructure Committee voted unanimously to place this item on more time with the intent that staff return with an update at the next meeting.

Attachments:

None

Background:

Chair Greenwald stated that this is a discussion brought forward by Ted McGreer and Tim Pipp. He asked them to speak.

Tim Pipp stated that he owns Beeze Tee's on Main St. He continued that he and Mr. McGreer came a couple months ago to talk about pole infrastructure for banners over Main St. Ideally, they are looking to promote events and things happening downtown. Many cities in NH, VT, and MA have banners over their main streets. Such a banner would drive foot traffic to events. For example, if you leave a banner up for two weeks before an event, people will know about it. It would support the local economy, bringing more people downtown who recognize what is going on, and strengthen the community identity. They could have a "Welcome to Keene" message on a banner, or holiday greetings, or that sort of thing. It is a flexible communication tool that could promote tourism or increase visibility for underserved organizations. There would be minimal ongoing costs. The only real cost is hanging up banners, which could possibly be taken over by an organization. They (he and Mr. McGreer) talked about it with the City and they are trying to figure it out. It shows that the City is business friendly. By promoting these events, they are welcoming people into the city. Many times, people come into his store and say they did not know there was an event that day. That is probably the biggest thing they hear when there is a big event, such as Wizarding Week or Pumpkin Festival - people coming in and saying they did not know. He always asks if they are from around here and whether they ever drive downtown. Even if they drive downtown, sometimes there is nowhere to figure that out.

Mr. Pipp continued that as he said, these (banners) are very beneficial for other cities and towns around New England. They (Beeze Tees) have worked with the City of Manchester frequently to do their banners, and it is an easy process. The City has all the requirements for that.

Ted McGreer of 115 Main St. stated that he echoes what Mr. Pipp said. He continued that he would also say that Keene used to have one of these (banners across Main St.) and it has a level of nostalgia to it. He was at Market Basket on Tuesday around 1:00 PM and could not find a parking spot. That side of town was packed. He came back to Main St., and it was “a ghost town.” He does not want this ghost town to feel to continue. Concord and Manchester both have (banners across Main St.). He knows that the two poles that are designed to support this banner in the wind and the loads on it are substantial. There might be some discussion about having issues with changing the way the town looks and losing the side of the church because there is a banner across Main St., but he really endorses this and he hopes the Committee will, too. The two poles supporting the banner could even be beautiful peace poles.

Mr. Lussier stated that the City Manager directed staff to look at this issue from several different perspectives. He continued that staff met with Mr. McGreer and Mr. Pipp to discuss it a couple weeks ago. The engineering Mr. McGreer mentioned is kind of the easy part. The poles that would be necessary are large, steel poles 18 to 24 inches in diameter. They are more substantial than streetlight poles and are supported underground by concrete bases approximately 42 inches in diameter. Thus, these are large poles, which is necessary because of the wind forces the banner would be subject to. Yet in many ways, that is the easy part of this question.

Mr. Lussier continued that the more interesting and complicated questions are related to legal issues like freedom of speech. There are questions about who would get to use the poles for their banner, who would get to decide who was allowed to use the banner and who was not, what kind of messaging would be allowed, and how much of the messaging could be commercial in nature. All of those sorts of issues get very hairy, very quickly. For these reasons, staff have significant reservations regarding those issues, as well as concerns about aesthetics, as Mr. McGreer mentioned. It would definitely change the perception and look of the downtown as you approach Main St. from the south.

Mr. Lussier continued that they would most likely be looking at a 35-foot-wide banner. Staff looked at different options, such as one that was centered over the roadway, over the median, or one that was centered over the northbound lane, for example. Then it would be in one direction only. Either way, it will change the way you can perceive the downtown, the church, the tree canopy, and so on and so forth, as you approach downtown. Those aesthetics are a real concern.

Mr. Lussier continued that if the City Council wants to move forward with this, his recommendation is that it be used only for City-sanctioned events, either City-sponsored events that are official community events receiving funding from the City, or events that receive a license from the City Council. That way, they can have a little control over the messaging and content. Or it could be official communications – banners put up by the City itself. He would imagine that when it was not in use for a community event, it could say “Welcome to Keene” and maybe some seasonal message from the City.

Mr. Lussier continued that his other recommendation, if this moves forward either through an Ordinance or just directives from the City Manager’s Office, is for them to develop a clear set of guidelines for how this is going to be implemented, in terms of the management. For example, they need to determine how long before an event someone is allowed to put the banner up, how long it is allowed to stay up, and who is eligible and qualified to put the banner up. Installing the banner is not just a matter of having a volunteer with a stepladder. It will be more like a bucket truck parked in traffic with traffic controls, to protect the work area and avoid liability for someone getting hurt. Staff would need to develop those controls in the form of an administrative directive or City Ordinance.

Chair Greenwald stated that a question came to him. He continued that the Rotary Club puts up banners on the light poles. He asked how they would differentiate the ability to put up a banner on the light pole from a banner across the road. He clarified that he is referring to the banner's content, not the logistics of how it is hung. Mr. Lussier replied that he thinks the Rotary Club controls the content. Chair Greenwald replied that his question is how they would determine when to say "No, you cannot put that up" on a banner on a light pole, if it is for some downtown event.

The City Manager replied that it was before her arrival, but it was her understanding that the City created an agreement with the Rotary Club that gave them control of those light poles and those banners, and the City was not monitoring or controlling the content. This banner (across the road) is very large, and she does not recommend that (the City be uninvolved in the content). She thinks the City Council will want to have some control, and they will want to have it in a way that does not get the City into trouble or predicaments when people are competing for time to use those banners. That is why, when they were having the conversation with Mr. Pipp and Mr. McGreer, they were talking about how if this were to move forward, they would potentially start with government speech. (That means) things that are City-sanctioned events, things that come through the community event process, or something that the City is putting out there. Even just with that, there would be a banner there nearly every month, if not multiple banners a month. Then there is the process of figuring out who puts it up. She does not recommend using City staff and a bucket truck. There are many other competing needs for those staff members, in the Fire Department in particular. There would then need to be an understanding of who is doing it and who pays for it.

The City Manager continued that staff looked at many elements of this. Terri Hood and the City Clerk's Office did a great job looking at how Manchester, Concord, and other municipalities do it, finding that they also limit it to some degree. Different municipalities do it in different ways, depending on their requirements. Some have a list of people who can be hired to put the banners up, while others are a bit more lenient, and they do it themselves at the city. Thus, there are options, but what staff wanted to emphasize most with the Council are the look and size of these poles, and the infrastructure that will be up all year long, even when a banner is not in place, to be sure the Council realizes that when they make the decision. The other (thing that staff wanted to emphasize) is that if they choose to do this, they need to have a good program in place that does not get the City into predicaments where they have people competing for time on the banner system.

Chair Greenwald thanked the City Manager for touching on all those issues. He continued that he still has the question of how a banner could be allowed on a light pole and then denied on the big banner. That could become a real problematic speech issue.

Amanda Palmeira, City Attorney, stated that she is glad to jump in here, as the First Amendment is her favorite area. She continued that her understanding is, as the City Manager said, that the City gave the Rotary Club permission to do the whole thing themselves. The City does not look at what goes up on those light poles. For the banner across the street, being much larger infrastructure, the City would obviously be much more involved. There are safety concerns, issues of rights-of-way, and things like that. As far as the speech goes, government speech, the government cannot be regulating speech when it is somebody from the public and saying, "This speech is acceptable, but not this type." That is where they get in trouble. The alternative for that is the government speech doctrine, which would mean the City controlling all of the speech. Therefore, they would not be picking and choosing; all of the (banner content) would be coming from the City. That is why it would make the most sense. If it is just going to be government speech, the City is putting content out about things the City is already involved in, like community events.

Councilor Favolise stated that he has not yet heard the installation cost addressed. He continued that that question was on the Committee's mind the last time around. Mr. Lussier replied that the

materials cost is about \$25,000, for the systems themselves. He continued that to include the cost of installation he would probably double that. For the system to be installed – the poles, wires, and everything else – would be about \$50,000. Regarding the banners, he has heard quotes between \$1,500 and \$2,500 for each banner.

Councilor Filiault stated that he has lived in Keene his whole life and has been a Councilor for many years. He continued that they are still known as “the City that says ‘no,’” finding a reason to say no, and he thinks they need more of an attitude of finding a reason to say ‘yes.’ It is easy to say ‘no’ to things, but they should think about what they can do to say ‘yes.’ Other NH communities have banners like these. He and his wife drove by the banner in Concord and thought to come back the following weekend for the event the banner was promoting. He works part time at the Colonial Theater, where 700 to 900 people per night come to the shows. He engages with them and asks them if they have been to Keene before, and when they ask him what else is going on here, he tells them about what he knows is going on. Having a banner across the roadway would inform those 900 people who are popping into Keene (about other events). Most people going to the Colonial Theater shows are not from Keene, so if they see that banner, it could draw another 100 or 200 people to Keene. That increases revenue. The Colonial Theater fills up, and the restaurants and retailers are full. When a Colonial Theater show sells out, the downtown hotels are completely full.

Councilor Filiault continued that instead of just talking about how much the banners and poles will cost, they should consider the return on investment. Thirty years ago, when the City brought Jumanji to Keene, there were many negative naysayers saying that it would not work, it would cost a fortune, it would shut down businesses in downtown, and everyone who wanted it was crazy. Now, they have a major event coming up for Jumanji’s 30th anniversary because it went so well. Thus, he thinks they should be approaching the banner across Main St. not from a ‘why should this not happen?’ mindset but a ‘why can’t we make this happen?’ mindset. They would not be creating something new. Other communities have this. They should see what they can do to get it done. If it is cost prohibitive, they can talk about that down the road. He wants them to have the mindset of “we can do this,” until they find a reason they cannot.

The City Manager stated that she agrees that the City tries to find ways to do things, and they try to be creative, but it is also (staff’s) job to make sure the Council is thinking about all sides of an issue. She continued that the way this was presented tonight was, ‘here is the size of the pole, here is how much the City would need to have to put it in place, and here is the program the Council would need to think about.’ Never once did someone say they should not do this. Staff were not advocating for or against it. It is staff’s job to make sure the Council understands that the poles and infrastructure Keene would need in place is much larger than in Concord or some other communities, due to the width of Keene’s Main St. She agrees that the banners are very visible and can be very effective for people who go downtown and might otherwise not know an event is happening. She also agrees that having people come downtown and support local businesses is very important. Staff are not saying the Council should not do this. They are just providing all the information Council needs to think about when they are making their decision.

Councilor Filiault stated that he agrees with everything the City Manager is saying. He continued that it could be cost prohibitive, but until it is shown to be so, he thinks they should move forward in a positive direction. If something comes up and they realize they cannot do it for some reason, then so be it; they will look at an alternative route.

Councilor Tobin stated that for her to feel comfortable saying yes, she would need to see what the program is and how the payment would work. She continued that if this were going to be, say, specifically for festivals, she assumes the person or organization hosting the festival would be

paying. She would want to see a lot of support from organizations that are hosting festivals saying that they are willing to pay the \$1,500 per banner or whatever it costs, and that this would be really helpful (to have). She would have trouble considering it until she knew those things.

Chair Greenwald asked Mr. Lussier if they considered having a pole in the middle, so the banner spanned half the road, not the full road. Mr. Lussier replied yes, they did. He continued that if they were to do just the northbound half of the roadway, for example, they would put a pole in the median and one on the outside. That lessens the span, but it is still a 35-foot-wide banner, which is catching the wind. It makes it a little bit easier, but it is still a substantial piece of infrastructure. They could potentially do two banners, one on each side. It would complicate the installation, because they would have to install them from each side, basically installing two separate banners.

Chair Greenwald replied that that was his thought. He continued that they could have (two banners for) two different events, or just the banner split in half, but it would cut down the span. His concern is there will be a cable there all year, whether there is a banner or not. Mr. Lussier replied yes, the way the systems work is the guy wires would be continuously in place. He continued that the banners themselves hook onto them on the top and bottom and a pulley system deploys the banner across the street and retracts it.

Mr. Pipp stated that he wants to clear something up. He continued that the banners are more than \$1,250. The way he saw this was for an organization to take over this like the Rotary Club does and then report to the City, and the City would use the permitting for events for this. It would directly correlate. If you have a permit to do an event in the city, you would be allowed to hang a banner, otherwise, no. He thinks that is fair. Another option they discussed before is putting it from building to building, which would make it private. That was originally what he was thinking, but he was told that the City should take care of it and put poles up. However, if the banners were tied from building to building, it would be less of a distraction. He does not really love the idea of three poles on Main St. He thinks there are options other than just a big pole.

Chair Greenwald asked what Mr. Lussier thinks about the building-to-building idea. Mr. Lussier replied that it potentially eliminates the issue with the poles being visible, but it does not really eliminate the government speech concerns, because that messaging is still over the public way. He continued that if there is no control over that, then they have to worry about distracting messaging that will create traffic problems, whether the messaging is appropriate for the public way, and that sort of thing. Theoretically, he thinks that it could work through an air rights license, but there would still have to be some sort of restrictions on the content.

Chair Greenwald asked if the buildings line up appropriately. Mr. Lussier replied that he is not sure about the height, but regarding horizontal alignment, he thinks it would work. He continued that north/south, he thinks it works out okay using Ted's Shoes as one side. He cannot visualize right now whether the building across the street is high enough to meet what they would need. The bottom of these banners would be about 17 feet off the ground. The tops would be 20 to 22 feet off the ground. He is not sure if the building on the east side is tall enough to work.

Councilor Workman stated that they talked about the advertising above the light posts being overseen by the Rotary Club. She continued that she has not heard about the message boards that are put up usually by the Post Office and maybe up by Central Square. They have used those frequently for event promotions. She asked if Mr. Lussier could provide a little history on that, such as how one goes about getting their event advertised there. Mr. Lussier replied that his understanding is that that is managed by the City Clerk's Office, and he believes it is only for City-licensed events.

Mr. Bohannon stated that there is an application. He continued that any organization can utilize that.

There is a \$15 fee to post for your banner for 10 days, he believes it is. Councilor Workman asked if it is correct that the City has no control over that aspect of it. Mr. Bohannon replied that the City licenses it. The City Attorney stated that she thinks the City Clerk's Office does review it ahead of time, although she does not know exactly what that review is.

Chair Greenwald stated that it sounds like there are many options that need to be explored, such as the building-to-building idea, the building heights, and two poles versus three poles. He asked if they should place this item on more time. Other Committee members replied yes. Chair Greenwald asked if there was anything further from the public or the Public Works Director. Hearing none, he asked for a motion.

Councilor Workman made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Filiault.

On a vote of 5-0, the Municipal Services, Facilities, and Infrastructure Committee placed this item on more time with the intent that staff return with an update at the next meeting.



CITY OF KEENE NEW HAMPSHIRE

ITEM #1.1.

Meeting Date: April 3, 2025

To: Mayor and Keene City Council

From: Bryan Ruoff, City Engineer

Through: Elizabeth Ferland, City Manager
Donald Lussier, Public Works Director

Subject: **Relating to an Amendment of the City Code, Regarding Stop Signs Ordinance O-2025-10**

Recommendation:

Recommend that the Ordinance be referred to the Municipal Services, Facilities & Infrastructure Committee for their review and recommendation.

Attachments:

1. O-2025-10 City Code Stop Sign Updates

Background:

During a recent engineering review of requests by the public for the installation of Stop Signs in specific locations in the City, it was observed, during investigations, that the current City Code, Section 94-321, "Stop Signs" in Division 5, "Specific Street Regulations" in Article IV of Chapter 94, entitled "TRAFFIC, PARKING AND PUBLIC WAYS" has listed stop sign locations that are no longer required at the specified locations based on the current road infrastructure and stop signs that have been in place for (in general) over 20-years but are not reflected in the City Code.

The purpose of the Ordinance is to amend the existing City Code, Section 94-321, "Stop Signs" in Division 5, "Specific Street Regulations" in Article IV of Chapter 94, entitled "TRAFFIC, PARKING AND PUBLIC WAYS" to reflect the current and confirmed warranted stop sign locations based on the current list of locations in the City Code.



CITY OF KEENE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand and Twenty-Five

AN ORDINANCE Relating to the Amendment of City Code for Stop Sign Locations

Be it ordained by the City Council of the City of Keene, as follows:

That the City Code of the City of Keene, New Hampshire, as amended, is hereby further amended by adding the bolded underlined text to the provisions of Section 94-321, “Stop Signs” in Division 5, “Specific Street Regulations”, and deleting the stricken text from the provisions of Section 94-321, “Stop Signs” in Division 5, “Specific Street Regulations” in Article IV of Chapter 94, entitled “TRAFFIC, PARKING AND PUBLIC WAYS” as follows.

Sec. 94-321. - Stop signs.

Arch Street for eastbound traffic at Park Avenue.

Appleton Street for eastbound traffic at Main Street.

Base Hill Road for northbound traffic at West Hill Road.

Black Brook Road for westbound traffic at Wyman Road.

Burdett Street for westbound traffic at Washington Street.

Bruden Street for eastbound traffic at Main Street.

Carpenter Street for southbound traffic at Water Street.

Chase Place for eastbound traffic at Washington Street.

Church Street for westbound traffic at Norway Ave and 93rd Street.

Community Way for southbound traffic at Water Street.

Gates Street for westbound traffic at Main Street.

Harrison Street for northbound traffic at Church Street.

King Court for eastbound traffic at Main Street.

Kit Street for eastbound traffic at Winchester Street.

Lynnwood Avenue for eastbound traffic at Edgewood Avenue.

Matthews Road for north-westbound traffic at Winchester Street.

Martel Court for eastbound traffic at Main Street.

New Acres Road for southbound traffic at Allen Court.

Norward Ave for northbound traffic at Roxbury Street.

Robbins Road for westbound traffic at Starlight Drive.

Roxbury Road for westbound traffic at Peg Shop Road.

School Street for northbound traffic at Leverett Street.

Skyline Drive for southbound traffic at Stonehouse Road.

Skyline Drive for northbound traffic at Stonehouse Road.

Silent Way for northbound traffic at Main Street.

Schulyer Way for southbound traffic at Daniels Hill Road

Spring Street for westbound traffic at Washington Street

Wright Street for eastbound traffic at Washinton Street

~~Butler Court for southbound traffic at the Keene State College property line 682.2 feet south of Winchester Street.~~

~~Carpenter Street at Water Street.~~

~~Cottage Street for westbound traffic at Washington Street.~~

~~Cross Street for westbound traffic at Court Street.~~

~~Elm Street for northbound traffic at Mechanic Street.~~

~~Elm Street for northbound traffic at Union Street.~~

~~Felt Road for northbound traffic at Arch Street.~~

~~Hitchcock Clinic for eastbound traffic at Court Street.~~

~~Island Street for eastbound traffic at Pearl Street.~~

~~Island Street for westbound traffic at Pearl Street.~~

~~Island Street for southbound traffic at Pearl Street.~~

~~Jordan Road for southbound traffic at Old Concord Road.~~

~~Kit Street at the entrance to Best Western. A stop sign as described in this section for traffic entering Kit Street from the driveway of Best Western.~~

~~Post Office exit for traffic entering Water Street.~~

~~Railroad Street for northbound traffic at Church Street.~~

~~Roxbury Road for eastbound traffic at Peg Shop Road.~~

~~Union Street for northbound traffic on Elm Street.~~

~~Wells Street parking structure for westbound traffic existing onto Wells Street.~~

~~93rd Street for westbound traffic at Church Street~~

Jay V. Kahn, Mayor



CITY OF KEENE NEW HAMPSHIRE

ITEM #1.2.

Meeting Date: April 3, 2025

To: Mayor and Keene City Council

From: Bryan Ruoff, City Engineer

Through: Donald Lussier, Public Works Director
Elizabeth Ferland, City Manager

Subject: **Relating to an Amendment of the City Code, Regarding Yield Signs Ordinance O-2025-11**

Recommendation:

Recommend that the Ordinance be referred to the Municipal Services, Facilities & Infrastructure Committee for their review and recommendation.

Attachments:

1. O-2025-11 City Code Yield Sign Updates

Background:

During a recent engineering review of requests by the public for the installation of Stop Signs in specific locations in the City, it was observed, during investigations, that the current City Code, Section 94-346, "Yield Signs" in Division 5, "Specific Street Regulations" in Article IV of Chapter 94, entitled "TRAFFIC, PARKING AND PUBLIC WAYS" has listed stop sign locations that are no longer required at the specified locations based on the current road infrastructure and stop signs that have been in place for (in general) over 20-years but are not reflected in the City Code.

The purpose of the Ordinance is to amend the existing City Code, Section 94-346, "Yield Signs" in Division 5, "Specific Street Regulations" in Article IV of Chapter 94, entitled "TRAFFIC, PARKING AND PUBLIC WAYS" to reflect the current and confirmed warranted yield sign locations based on the current list of locations in the City Code.



CITY OF KEENE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand and Twenty-Five

AN ORDINANCE Relating to the Amendment of City Code for Yield Sign Locations

Be it ordained by the City Council of the City of Keene, as follows:

That the City Code of the City of Keene, New Hampshire, as amended, is hereby further amended by deleting the stricken text from the provisions of Section 94-346, "Yield Signs" in Division 6, "Specific Street Regulations" in Article IV of Chapter 94, entitled "TRAFFIC, PARKING AND PUBLIC WAYS" as follows.

Sec. 94-346. - Yield signs.

Key Road for eastbound traffic at Winchester Street

Pearl Street for eastbound traffic at Winchester Street

Island Street for southbound traffic at Winchester Street

Roxbury Street for southbound traffic at Robinhood Lane

Roxbury Street for eastbound traffic at Water Street

~~**Island Street for southbound traffic at Winchester Street.**~~

~~**Victoria Court for westbound traffic at Victoria Street.**~~

~~**Washington Avenue and Gilsum Street for southbound traffic on Washington Avenue.**~~

~~**Wells Street parking lot at exist to Roxbury Plaza.**~~

Jay V. Kahn, Mayor



CITY OF KEENE NEW HAMPSHIRE

ITEM #1.3.

Meeting Date: April 3, 2025
To: Mayor and Keene City Council
From: Bryan Ruoff, City Engineer
Through: Elizabeth Ferland, City Manager
Subject: **Relating to an Amendment of the City Code, Regarding Traffic Signals Ordinance O-2025-12**

Recommendation:

Recommend that the Ordinance be referred to the Municipal Services, Facilities & Infrastructure Committee for their review and recommendation.

Attachments:

1. O-2025-12 City Code Traffic Signal Updates

Background:

Based on a recent audit by the Engineering Division and the Public Works Department of the City's traffic signal infrastructure specified in the City Code, it was identified that some of the listed locations of traffic signal infrastructure have been removed and replaced with roundabouts or alternative infrastructure as part of road infrastructure improvement projects. This ordinance provides an update to the City Code's listed traffic signal infrastructure based on the current installed and inventoried locations.



CITY OF KEENE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand and Twenty-Five

AN ORDINANCE Relating to the Amendment of City Code for Traffic Signals

Be it ordained by the City Council of the City of Keene, as follows:

That the City Code of the City of Keene, New Hampshire, as amended, is hereby further amended by adding the bold text and deleting the stricken text from the provisions of Section 94-34, “Red, Yellow, Green Traffic Signals”, Section 94-35 “Flashing yellow or red signals”, in Division 1, “Specific Street Regulations” in Article IV of Chapter 94, entitled “TRAFFIC, PARKING AND PUBLIC WAYS” as follows.

Sec. 94-34. Red, Yellow, Green Traffic Signals

Ash Brook Road at Ash Brook Court.

~~Court Street at Maple Avenue.~~

~~Main Street, Marlboro Street, and Winchester Street.~~

~~Main Street pedestrian light at St. Bernard’s Church.~~

~~Route 101 (12) and Winchester Street.~~

~~Winchester Street and Key Road.~~

Section 94-35. Flashing yellow or red signals

~~Park Avenue at Arch Street, and a red flashing light for traffic on Arch Street at such intersection.~~

~~Winchester Street at Ralston Street for traffic on Winchester Street, and a red flashing signal for traffic on Ralston Street at such intersection.~~

Jay V. Kahn, Mayor



CITY OF KEENE NEW HAMPSHIRE

ITEM #1.4.

Meeting Date: April 3, 2025

To: Mayor and Keene City Council

From: Bryan Ruoff, City Engineer

Through: Elizabeth Ferland, City Manager

Subject: **Relating to an Amendment of the City Code, Regarding Vehicle Turning Limitations
Ordinance O-2025-13**

Recommendation:

Recommend that the Ordinance be referred to the Municipal Services, Facilities & Infrastructure Committee for their review and recommendation.

Attachments:

1. O-2025-13 City Code Division 3, Turns Updates

Background:

Based on a recent audit by the Engineering Division and the Public Works Department of the City's traffic turning limitation signage and median infrastructure that is specified in the City Code, it was identified that some of the listed locations of turning limitation signage and medians have been removed and/or added during the improvements of the City's roadway infrastructure. This ordinance provides an update to the City Code's listed turn limitation signage and median locations based on the City's current locations.



CITY OF KEENE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand and Twenty-Five

AN ORDINANCE Relating to the Amendment of City Code for Turns

Be it ordained by the City Council of the City of Keene, as follows:

That the City Code of the City of Keene, New Hampshire, as amended, is hereby further amended by adding the bold text and deleting the stricken text from the provisions of Section 94-266, "Limitations", Section 94-268 "Medians and Islands", in Division 3, "Turns" in Article IV of Chapter 94, entitled "TRAFFIC, PARKING AND PUBLIC WAYS" as follows.

Sec. 94-266. Limitations

Marlboro Street. Right turn lane 7:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. from Main Street to a point 200 feet east of the Post Office driveway

~~Park Avenue at Arch Street, and Arch Street at Park Avenue. No right turn on red signal.~~

Section 94-268. Medians and Islands

Ash Brook Road.

Ash Brook Court

Production Avenue

Jay V. Kahn, Mayor



CITY OF KEENE NEW HAMPSHIRE

ITEM #1.5.

Meeting Date: April 3, 2025

To: Mayor and Keene City Council

From: Municipal Facilities, Services and Infrastructure Committee, Standing Committee

Through:

Subject: Relating to the Installation of a Stop Sign on Wilber Street at Water Street Ordinance O-2025-14

Recommendation:

On a vote of 5-0, the Municipal Services, Facilities, and Infrastructure Committee unanimously recommends the City Manager be directed to draft an Ordinance to add a stop sign on Wilber St. at its intersection with Water Street.

Attachments:

1. O-2025-14 Stop Sign on Wilber St

Background:

Mr. Ruoff stated that this request for a stop sign came in through the "See Click Fix" program. He continued that this is an area they have been talking about a lot recently for safety concerns. Someone brought up the concern that on Wilber St. at Water St. there is limited sight distance looking left for westbound traffic on Water St., and they recommended the City look at installing a stop sign on Wilber St. The agenda packet shows an overhead view of the location and a picture of the line of sight. Due to the horizontal geometry of the curve, there is less than adequate sight distance to see a vehicle coming on Water St. In light of that, staff recommend that the Committee recommend the City Manager be directed to draft an Ordinance to add a stop sign at this location.

Chair Greenwald asked if Committee members or members of the public had any questions. Hearing none, he asked for a motion.

Councilor Filiault made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Tobin

Mr. Ruoff stated that in conjunction with this, staff have noticed a few locations in City Code where stop signs are listed but are no longer at those locations. There are also some yield signs listed where that is no longer the configuration, and traffic lights listed in places that have changed to roundabouts. Some of these date back to 20 years of roadway improvements and changes. They did an audit of the entire City Code for all traffic enforcement signals, and they submitted Ordinances to the Council to update all those discrepancies between the Code and what is actually installed within the city and confirmed what is appropriate as well.

Chair Greenwald asked if there was anything further on the Wilber St. stop sign. Hearing none, he called for a vote.

On a vote of 5-0, the Municipal Services, Facilities, and Infrastructure Committee unanimously recommends the City Manager be directed to draft an Ordinance to add a stop sign on Wilber St. at its intersection with Water Street.



CITY OF KEENE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand and Twenty-Five

AN ORDINANCE Relating to the installation of a Stop Sign on Wilber Street

Be it ordained by the City Council of the City of Keene, as follows:

That the City Code of the City of Keene, New Hampshire, as amended, is hereby further amended by adding the bolded underlined text to the provisions of Section 94-321, "Stop Signs" in Division 5, "Specific Street Regulations", in Article IV of Chapter 94, entitled "TRAFFIC, PARKING AND PUBLIC WAYS" as follows.

Wilber Street for southbound traffic at the intersection with Water St.

Jay V. Kahn, Mayor



CITY OF KEENE NEW HAMPSHIRE

ITEM #K.1.

Meeting Date: April 3, 2025
To: Mayor and Keene City Council
From: Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee, Standing Committee
Through:
Subject: Relating to the Appropriation of Unassigned Fund Balance for the FY 25
Fire Department Personnel Budget
Resolution R-2025-10

Recommendation:

On a 4-0 vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends adoption of Resolution R-2025-10.

Attachments:

1. R-2025-10 Relating to the Appropriation of Funds from Unassigned_referral

Background:

The Manager addressed the next item, which is the Resolution for the overtime funding throughout the remainder of the year. Staff is estimating all wage lines in the fire department where they will be over budget between now and the end of the fiscal year plus supporting the 12 minimum staffing for the third ambulance - from now until the end of the fiscal year.

Councilor Chadbourne made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Lake.

On a 4-0 vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends adoption of Resolution R-2025-10.



CITY OF KEENE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand and Twenty-Five

A RESOLUTION Relating to the Appropriation of Funds from the General Fund Unassigned Fund Balance

Resolved by the City Council of the City of Keene, as follows:

WHEREAS: Resolution 2024-32 Relating to Fiscal Policies states all departments are authorized to vary actual departmental spending from line-item estimates provided the total department budget is not exceeded within each fund; provided however, that any item specifically eliminated by the City Council during the budget approval process cannot be purchased from another line item without City Council approval; and

WHEREAS: Any unexpended funds in a personnel line related to a vacancy cannot be expended without approval from the City Manager and the City Council unless funds are being expended to fill a vacancy, recruiting, or to employ temporary help including professional and contract services;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council that the use of General Fund Unassigned Fund balance in the amount of four hundred ninety thousand (\$490,000.00) be used to fund an appropriation to provide for supplemental fire shift staffing (up to 2) providing resources that would allow a third ambulance to be staffed and respond for the balance of the fiscal year and for over expenditures in the Fire Department personnel budget.

Personnel wage and overtime expenses	\$400,679.91
Personnel benefit load (NHRS/FICA/WC)	<u>\$ 89,320.09</u>
	\$490,000.00

Jay V. Kahn, Mayor

In City Council March 20, 2025.
Referred to the Finance,
Organization and Personnel
Committee.

City Clerk



CITY OF KEENE NEW HAMPSHIRE

Meeting Date: April 3, 2025

To: Mayor and Keene City Council

From: Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee, Standing Committee

Through:

Subject: Relating to the Appropriation of Funds from the General Fund Unassigned Fund Balance - Fire Department Staffing Resolution R-2025-11

Recommendation:

On a 4-0 vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends the introduction of a resolution to appropriate funds to hire four additional firefighters (one per shift) for approximately \$529,000 per year.

Attachments:

1. Fire Department Staffing Memorandum
2. R-2025-11_Fire Staffing

Background:

The City Manager stated this item is funding Fire Department over-time lines. Staff is requesting an additional \$529,000 in overtime for the fire department. She indicated this is needed for a variety of reasons. She noted there are overages in the wage lines and are anticipating an estimated overages in the wage lines as well funding minimum staffing level of 12 firefighters per shift to be able to run the third ambulance.

At the present time there is a minimum staffing level of 10 and bringing in two individuals on overtime which is costly.

The request is to take money from fund balance, one-time allocation to the budget. She added there are plans to submit a Safer Grant for four additional firefighters per shift. That grant has not come out yet, but staff is prepared to submit once it does. In the meantime, there has been a lot of stress placed on the firefighters. The increase in calls is being divided by those 10 firefighters, which means they are getting fewer breaks between calls, causing a lot of strain. Hence, immediately moving to the 12 per shift allows the department to split those ambulance calls with three ambulances instead of running just the two. The Manager explained a Resolution will be drafted. It would be referred to the full City Council and then they would refer it back to the Finance Committee again for a recommendation. It would then go back to the full City Council for a vote.

The first item in regard to fire department staffing and adding four firefighters, one per shift is the start

of what would then be a Resolution that would be on the Council's next agenda.

The next item is related to the overtime – the committee has already seen this Resolution - it was on the Council agenda. It was referred from council to you and so tonight we'll be looking for action on the resolution, which then will go back for a full vote to the City Council.

With reference to staffing, staff will be applying for the safer grant. If four fire fighters can be hired immediately at a total cost of \$529,000 it will reduce on overtime and the department will only be calling back for overtime, only one person per shift. Councilor Chadbourne asked whether these four potential firefighters would already be trained or just people interested in becoming firefighters. The Manager stated it is a combination; they are not considered laterals because they are not a certified to come in as a lateral, but they have the experience, and some have certifications that we are looking for to expedite the process. They would still need some training and certifications that they would have to get, but it is expedited because they have relevant experience.

The Chairman clarified the \$529,000 is for the rest of the year. The Manager stated \$529,000 is to hire four additional firefighters for a year. The first resolution will only be for a portion.

The Chair asked for public comment. Rob Skrocki Professional Firefighters of Keene stated this was a big step forward for the department and expressed his appreciation to staff and council.

Councilor Roberts made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Lake.

On a 4-0 vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends the introduction of a resolution to appropriate funds to hire four additional firefighters (one per shift) for approximately \$529,000 per year.



CITY OF KEENE NEW HAMPSHIRE

Meeting Date: April 3, 2025
To: Mayor and Keene City Council
From: Jason Martin, Fire Chief
Through: Elizabeth Ferland, City Manager
Subject: **Memorandum - Fire Chief - Fire Department Staffing**

Recommendation:

The City Council approve the appropriation of General Fund Unassigned Fund Balance in the amount of seventy thousand sixty-seven dollars (\$70,067.00) to fund salaries and equipment for four (4) new, additional firefighters.

Background:

In October 2024, the City Manager reconvened the staffing committee to re-evaluate Fire Department operational demands. In December 2024, Councilors Remy and Powers were added to the group. On January 23, 2025, the Fire Department presented a comprehensive update to the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee, including data on staffing impacts and the potential benefits of additional personnel.

On February 6, 2025, the City Council authorized the submission of a 2024 FEMA SAFER Grant, which—if awarded—would fully fund four firefighters per shift (16 total positions) for a three-year period. In the fourth year, the full cost of these positions would transition to the City.

While the City is actively pursuing this grant, the department is also requesting interim support. This resolution requests funding for four (4) additional firefighters through June 2025.. This adjustment is expected to reduce call volume per firefighter and enhance both operational capacity and personnel well-being.

Initial funding is proposed to come from the City's General Fund balance, with ongoing costs incorporated into the annual operating budget. It is recommended that this appropriation be excluded from the FY26 budgetary fiscal policy calculation in Section I(k).

The Fire Department currently has at least four firefighter candidates in the pipeline, which would help expedite hiring if the request is approved.

This request aligns with prior recommendations, operational reviews, and the City's ongoing commitment to ensuring timely and reliable emergency response services for the Keene community.



CITY OF KEENE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand and Twenty Five

A RESOLUTION Fire Department Staffing – Relating to the Appropriation of Funds from the General Fund Unassigned Fund Balance

Resolved by the City Council of the City of Keene, as follows:

WHEREAS: Resolution 2024-32 Relating to Fiscal Policies states all departments are authorized to vary actual departmental spending from line-item estimates provided the total department budget is not exceeded within each fund; provided however, that any item specifically eliminated by the City Council during the budget approval process cannot be purchased for another line item without City Council approval; and

WHEREAS: Any unexpended funds in a personnel line related to a vacancy cannot be expended without approval from the City Manager and the City Council unless funds are being expended to fill a vacancy, recruiting, or to employ temporary help including professional and contract services;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council that use of General Fund Unassigned Fund Balance in the amount of seventy thousand sixty-seven dollars (\$70,067.00) be used to fund the appropriation for four (4) new firefighters in the Fire Department budget as follows:

Personnel and related personnel expenses	\$38,707.00
Operating-related expenses	<u>\$31,360.00</u>
	\$70,067.00

Jay V. Kahn, Mayor